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Culture

in English language learning and teaching.

DEDICATION :

To my parents,

and my grandfather.

To my sister Chainez

and my brothers Ramzi, Karim and Khaled.

To all my friends and relatives,

all who, truly, love me and wished me this success.

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I also thank all the students who kindly filled in the questionnaire.

ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on a correlational study that investigated the impact of one factor – the cultural competence – on the proficiency of English as a foreign language, i.e. how a foreign language learner’s learning proficiency is affected by her or his culturally-defined world views, beliefs and thoughts. It provides a description of the instruments used to measure the variables, the result of which indicated that the learner’s cultural background of the target language culture played an important role in predicting proficiency in foreign language learning.

Also, the study shows that positive attitudes towards the target culture and speech communities where the foreign language is spoken can positively influence foreign language learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Empirical research showed that there is an intimate and permanent unity between language and culture from the early stage of the individual socialization to the full participation in the social institutions. That is, in learning a foreign language, the cultural values of the learner's society can be expected to have a strong influence on the learning process as well as on their performance in the foreign language. In other words, the learner's native culture can only affect many, if not all, aspects of second and foreign language learning, such as understanding, production, interaction and use.

Studies illustrated that through the study of a foreign language, students are exposed to learn something about societies and their cultural dimensions, where that language is spoken, because the words and expressions used by English speakers, for instance, convey English cultural aspects.

Researchers pointed out that a language and its use are significant parts of human behaviour in the social structure and interactions within the community, and that behaviour expresses culture and determines how language is used to express meaning.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Part of the problem is in the predominant perspective of teaching language as a system and not as a medium. Language teachers, educators and educational systems still emphasise the learning of grammatical system as the important element, and the rest is viewed as just supportive.

The learning of a foreign language was, in early stages, grammar learning. The grammar-translation approach, for instance, which was challenged by the audio-lingual method asserts the authority of the linguist to reveal the grammatical patterns of the foreign language. Chomsky's work on the theory of language and its role in human development and functioning, as well as the behaviourist's assumptions about language learning, called for approaches in which the use of grammatical rules should be meaningful in contexts.

Moving from the framework of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) where the focus is on language as a system to be acquired, to substituted goal areas (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities) where the focus is on what can be accomplished through a foreign language, many approaches were proposed. Based on an analysis of how languages are used in communication, on the 'functions' people use them for, and the 'notions' they use to express themselves, those approaches rejected any grammatical system.

This leaves opportunities to make the right decisions for the language classrooms and a number of teaching methods developed in which communicative competence can be best acquired by using the language as a medium rather than studying it as an object.

The shift of emphasis to communication, and the fact that language teaching should not only be limited to the mediation of linguistic competence but other (communicative) competencies which should include mediation of knowledge about the culture from which the language arises, call for intercultural approach. Many educational systems (countries) see it as a potential threat to national identity because it introduces learners to different beliefs and values. They even see that this threat may be minimized by those teaching methods, based on grammar, and which involve seeing another language through one's own language and one's own beliefs and values.

From this perspective, in which language learning and teaching are affected by the degree of social and psychological distance between the learner and the target language culture, many

theories, holding cultural dimensions in language teaching, were proposed. These theories assume that the knowledge of the grammatical system of a language has to be complemented by an understanding of culture-specific meanings. Developed by Mc Donough (1981), Krashen (1981), Schumann (1978), and McLaughlin (1987), their major critique is that understanding the target language culture is appreciated in these theoretical approaches but generally only as a support to linguistic proficiency (Byram, 1994).

Foreign language teaching is incomplete if it ignores the foreign culture, and the challenge is to go beyond superficiality and to consider the cultural dimensions that may affect learning.

2. OUR HYPOTHESIS

The relationship between language and culture is a settled issue to anthropologists and anthropological linguists, describing the interface of language and culture, since the language is a part of culture, and cultural aspects are transmitted and expressed through language behaviour and practice. When this is true, then language acquisition is culture acquisition, and foreign language learning is foreign culture learning. This becomes clear when studying a foreign language with its ways of particular cultural and linguistic behaviour such as introductions, greetings, everyday sayings,...etc. So, through foreign language learning, learners inevitably gain knowledge about the culture associated with that language. And if we would teach culture while teaching foreign language, then learning would be enhanced. But the question is, if foreign language learning can rarely take place without addressing the culture of the community in which it is used, what role does culture play in foreign language learning process? To what extent knowledge about the target culture impacts learners performance and production? And what aspects and dimensions of foreign language learning are affected by ignorance of the target culture?

3. AIM OF THIS STUDY

The focus of this research is to explore the relationship between language and culture, and the impact of the learners' cultural background on a foreign language education. University students' written and oral performances require conscious effort and much practice in composing, developing, and analyzing ideas. Students' performance in the English language as a foreign language is faced with social and cultural challenges.

Thus, this study aims to investigate the influence of Algerian learners' cultural background on their performance and learning proficiency when learning English as a foreign language. It aims to measure their attitudes towards foreign people, foreign cultures, and especially that of English speaking societies, as well as their readiness to learn about the culture, values, assumptions, beliefs and the way of life related to the societies where the language is spoken. And finally, to know about the self-access materials, Algerian students need to learn about the cultural aspects and the way of life of the foreign societies, in order to help in designing the authentic and appropriate materials that represent rich sources in providing knowledge and information about culture.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Language learning is, by definition, intercultural. Bringing a foreign language to the classroom means connecting learners to a world that is culturally different from their own.

The first chapter explores the inseparability of language and culture as claimed by anthropologists and linguists; emphasising how the development of language is related to the development of culture, through one of its components which is vocabulary.

The second chapter examines the theoretical and research literatures pertaining to the influence of culture on language education. The topic of cultural dimensions in language learning has been a matter of considerable interest to language educators and much has been written about the role of culture in foreign language instruction over the past few decades. This part investigates, particularly, the foreign culture impact on the two modes, i.e. the oral and the written ones.

Through the third chapter, we tried to provide frameworks and theoretical approaches towards conceptualizing the nature of language proficiency, as well as testing learning proficiency. Then, we describe the test used in our study and provide the reasons of our choice.

The fourth chapter represents an insightful analysis of the collected data for the reasons settled for this study. A detailed description of the goals of this study provides a correlation study to illustrate to what extent the contribution of the cultural competence is on the learning proficiency of English as a foreign language.

The fifth and last chapter shows how the field of culture and language teaching is highly interdisciplinary in nature. Thus, contributions to the knowledge base have come from psychology, linguistics, anthropology, education, and intercultural communication.

In this chapter we discuss views on the teaching of culture, approaches in which the aim is an intercultural speaker instead of a native-like speaker, a brief definition of the ethnographic approach, learning about the self as a cultural being, and learning how to learn, i.e., becoming an effective language and culture learner. Finally, we provided a model for language and culture teaching, and we mentioned the role and the objectives of the language teacher as culture teacher.

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INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, philosophers, anthropologists, and linguists highlighted the relationship between language and culture, searching for how cultural differences express themselves and are created via various forms of linguistic practice and discourse, how culturally different conceptual systems and world views are contained in the semantic and pragmatic systems of the various languages and how language development and socialization contribute to the development of cultural identities and cultural models of the world.

In this chapter, we will investigate the relationship between language and culture through one of the culture's aspects which is the individual's thought, and one of the language's components which is vocabulary. Also, we will show how the development of language is related to the development of culture.

But first, we need to know what culture is? And what are the aspects and dimensions of culture?

1. DEFINITION OF CULTURE

The term culture has different definitions. According to Hinkel (1999), we are not exaggerating when we say that there are nearly as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, and behaviour. One definition is, at best, oversimplification and, at worst, insufficient. It is best to consider several definitions that can have applications at different times and in different contexts (Geertz, 1973).

There is, first of all, the classical conception explored by the anthropologists of the eighteenth century in which culture and civilization were almost synonymous, and opposed to barbarism. The conception of all that constitutes excellence in art, literature, manners and social institutions.

As in the definition of the English anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1903) as quoted by Rysager (2006:40):

'Culture and civilization , taken in its wide ethnography sense , is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morale, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'

This historical view was challenged by Herder, who was critical of the idea that the eighteenth-century European culture, dominated by the French culture and language, represented the top of human progress.

He described culture as a complicated concept when he said: *"Nothing is more indeterminate than this word, and nothing is more deceptive than its application to all nations and periods"*. (Quoted by Williams, 1976:79 in Lyons, 1984:301)

Thus, for later anthropologists, culture is employed out of its classical concept, without implication of human progress from barbarism to civilization, or prior value judgement.

In this sense, it is taken as it is used by cultural anthropologists, according to whom, every society has its own culture, and the several sub-groups within a society have their own sub-cultures. Culture is something that everybody has.

The term is used differently by different anthropologists but it generally refers to characteristics shared by a given society and it may distinguish it from the others. So, culture is what binds people together.

Some definitions emphasize what is called 'material culture'- the artefacts, arts, traditional dress, culinary practices, and clothing of the community- which is found only in 'cultured circles' (Hudson, 1996 :70), i.e. in opera houses, universities and the like.

Other definitions focus on the ideological and social aspects: the ideas, beliefs, and knowledge of groups:

'...the material for the reconstruction of culture is ever so much fragmentary because the largest and most important aspects of culture leave no trace in the soil ; language, social organization, religion- in short, everything that is not material ...'

(Boas 1982 [1940] :250)

Our operating definition is that culture may be taken as *socially acquired knowledge* (Hudson, 1996:71). It is the all integrated pattern of human behaviour of a given society, learned and shared by people as a result of belonging to a particular group, it includes knowledge, meanings, thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, views, values, attitude, customs, art, cooking, clothing, courtesies, rituals, law, manners of interaction and roles, relationships and behaviours of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group, that categorized under either material culture, social culture or ideological culture. This facet of human knowledge and behaviour is borne by a society and transmitted from a father to a son and from one generation to the succeeding one.

Thus, culture is every part of daily interaction with other members of the society from the choices they do about what to wear and have to eat, to the ways they behave with the colleagues at work, with the family and the friends... everything that makes us humans different from animals.

Some groups of people share a distinct cultural knowledge within the same society, that is, the same culture carry distinct layers of mental programming at different levels.

- The national level which is associated with the whole nation.
- The regional level which is associated with ethnic, linguistic, or religious differences that exist within the nation such as Berbers in Algeria.
- The gender level which is associated with the gender differences between female and male.
- The generation level which is associated with the differences between generations; grandparents and parents; parents and children.

Social and cultural anthropology were the basis that led to the development of culture theory. Culture theory explores the conceptual properties of culture, and cultural meaning system, and also the relationship between language and culture as far as the cultural aspects are expressed through the language.

2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Language is an evitable part of culture, that is, a part of the socially inherited arrangement of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives. And it also reflects culture. Linguists and anthropologists recognized that the forms and uses of a given language reflect the cultural values of the society in which the language is spoken. *Language does not exist apart from culture.* (Sapir, 2005[1921]: 221)

This close relationship between language and culture has long been a settled issue thanks to the works of many philosophers, anthropologists and linguists.

For early linguists such as Saussure, language was a symbol system used for communication. That we use it not just to communicate in the sense of transmitting information through words, but also to share social expectations and beliefs, to convey social attitudes, to build community, and to maintain cultural norms.

2.1. LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND THOUGHT

The extent to which language, culture, and thought have influenced one another, and which is the dominant aspect of communication, have been matters of controversy for three quarters of a century.

Edward Sapir and his colleague Whorf pointed out that there is a systematic relationship between the language a person speaks and how that person both understands the world and behaves in it. Thoughts, feelings and actions are somehow socially inherited, as culture is

arrangement of thoughts, beliefs,...: life style of that society. This life style has to do with the learned ways of acting, feeling and thinking, it determines the human nature. Although human beings can choose the ways of life they prefer, people are what they are conditioned to be. Human beings are passive creatures and do whatever their culture tells them to do.

The core of their theory is that we perceive the world in terms of categories and distinctions found in our native language and what is found in one language may not be found in another language due to cultural differences. Another related view is that language and thought (social or individual) are identical. In this sense thought is considered as completely determined by language.

‘Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.’ (Sapir, 1958 [1929], p. 69)

This view extended in the 1930’s by Whorf who noted that the relationships among thought, abstract notions, and language as a means of expressing thoughts and notions, were complex. He argued in another passage:

“We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way - an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and instated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees.”

(Whorf, 1940, pp. 213–14)

How do I know what I think about till I see what I say (Forster cited in Kramersch, 1993: 105), language is the formative organ of thought. Intellectual activity, entirely mental, becomes through sounds. So, thought and language are inseparable from each other, and it is the same for the language and the thoughts of nations. In the glossary of Old English, the number of warlike words is noticeable, but the tribes of Ancient Britain were a warlike people, a fact that is naturally reflected in their language, hence, in their literature, which reflects their thought. In certain cases, cultural traditions may encourage or discourage certain types of thinking, and those cultural patterns may be reinforced by the structural characteristics of a particular language. Bloom’s contrastive study between English and Chinese (1981) illustrated very well the difficulties of achieving conclusive evidence that supports the relativist position. Like speakers of other languages, Chinese speakers are perfectly capable of talking about unreal states of affairs. However, the syntactic structure of Chinese does not explicitly encode some semantic differences associated with unreality, in contrast, the English verb system explicitly encodes differences,

such as those seen in the sentences. (1)If you burned your finger, it would hurt, and (2) if you had burned your finger, it would have hurt.

The syntax of Mandarin allows for one type of sentence construction to apply to both types of conditions described in the two English sentences. Thus there is no special syntactic device in Chinese to signal the differences between a hypothetical state of affairs (in the first sentence) and a counterfactual state of affairs (in the second sentence) in which an event that did not take place (a finger burned) is talked about as an imaginary event in the past. The absence of such an overt distinction is, according to Bloom, consonant with certain Chinese intellectual traditions.

2.2. CULTURE AND VOCABULARY

It is well known that the vocabularies of languages tend to be 'non-isomorphic' (Lyons 1984) to the extent that some elements will be more codable in one language than they are in another. For instance, the Eskimo has no single word for snow, but different words for different kinds of snow. Yet, they fail to consider all the words used for the rain in warmer climates. The reason is very obvious, the difference between one kind of snow and another is in the everyday life of the Eskimo. English has no more specific words than snow. However, skiers, who may be interested as the Eskimo in the various types of snow, can use expressions like 'powdery snow', 'spring snow', etc.

The same is for Australian languages which have no word meaning 'sand' but several words for several types of sand. So that, the importance of language for, not only the definition and transmission, but also for the expression of culture is undoubted.

As we have seen the codability of some elements of a given languages as one example, we can deal with another one: the codability of certain distinctions of color in one language than in another, that lead to the expected effect on memory and perception. For example a monolingual speaker of Zuni, an American-Indian language, which is said to not encode the difference

between orange and yellow, has more difficulty than any other monolingual speaker of any other language. The effect was not that the Zuni were unable to perceive the difference between a yellow and an orange object, if they are asked to compare them. However the Zuni, who also knew English, after a period of time, re-identify objects of color that was codable in English, but not in Zuni.

'Language is felt to be a perfect symbolic system, in a perfect homogeneous medium, for the handling of all references and meanings that a given culture is capable of. The content of every culture is expressible in its language'.

(Sapir, 1986: 07)

Language differences have always been important symbols of cultural differences. This interface between language and culture led some scholars to consider that all human languages carry hidden cultural charge. According to Harrison (1990), the use of any given language carries a message in addition to its simple reference value.

In this sense the use of the word 'fenêtre' in translation cannot be used as an exact equivalent of 'window'. Though for many purposes such translation may be perfectly adequate, 'fenêtre' has a cultural history which gives it an emotive force quite different from 'window' or 'fenster' or 'okno'.

The differences of vocabulary items go beyond the names of objects, they apply as well to the mental world. As Sapir claimed, it would be difficult for some languages to express the distinction between 'to kill' and 'to murder', for the simple reason that the underlying legal philosophy which determines the use of these words in the societies where English is spoken does not seem natural to the other ones.

Some languages can not provide exact equivalents for some items in other languages, simply because the meanings, values, and the beliefs themselves which are part of some cultures do not exist in the other ones. And the words can not be borrowed as the cultural features themselves cannot so. Such words may be of religious meaning. For instance, the word 'aljihad'

in Arabic which is related to Islam, in translation cannot be 'struggle', 'militancy', 'fight' nor even 'holy war'. So, truly translation, particularly the literary works, is virtually impossible because the cultural and the linguistic influence that resulted in the original work is lost in the translation.

Vocabulary of a language can serve as a set of symbols to refer to the cultural background of the community. In this sense, and to a great extent, it reflects the complexity of culture. If the complexity of language is related to the complexity of vocabulary, there will be a correlation between the complexity of language and culture.

The interests of culture can be reflected in the vocabulary of its language. So, the content of language is closely related to culture, but we have to warn that language can not be identified only with its vocabulary; language is more than its vocabulary.

We can conclude that language can be seen as a way to describe and represent human experience and understanding of the world. Social groups share systems of beliefs, assumptions, views, and histories, which are communicated, expressed and transmitted through language, what leads to a close connection and inseparability between language and culture of the group.

2.2.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE AND VOCABULARY

Boas (1940), the founder of modern anthropology who originated the notion of "culture" as learned behaviours felt that one could only begin to understand a culture by taking on a complete survey of its mythology and tribal lore, religion, social taboos, customs, physical appearance, diet, handicrafts, means of obtaining food, language, and so on.

He pointed out that the analytic study of the history of culture provides us with the history of its different aspects such as the language. Both are results of historical processes. (Boas 1982[1940]):

'...there is a close parallelism between the history of language and the history of general cultural development...' (P: 286)

'...the history of language reflects the history of culture...' (P: 631)

As for the linguist and anthropologist Sapir who conceived that the development of culture and language may have taken place, in a primitive group among whom the beginnings of language and culture are as yet hardly in evidence, and may be supposed to behave in accordance, determined, as he supposed, partly by race mind, and partly by physical environment. On this basis a language and a culture would slowly develop. And as they are determined by factors of race and physical environment, they will parallel each other, so that the forms of cultural activities will be reflected in the linguistic system.

In this sense, there is a correspondence between the form of language and the form of culture of those who speak it. Thus, the words of the language will serve as symbols for the cultural elements at all periods of development.

'With a gradual change of group psychology and physical environment more or less profound changes must be effected in the form and content of both language and culture' (Sapir 1986: 102).

Boas provided the methodological foundation for cultural relativism: elements of a culture are meaningful in that culture's terms or language, even if they may be meaningless or take on a radically different meaning in another culture.

2.2.2. LINGUISTIC BORROWING

The term linguistic borrowing refers to the process of implantation of a foreign element in the receiving language, whether it is phonological, grammatical, morphological, or lexical. Lexical borrowing in this case can be a whole word, which can be also called loanword. But the question is why do languages borrow from one another?

According to Bloomfield in his book *Language* (1994 [1933]), every speech community learns from its neighbours. Objects both natural and manufactured pass from one community to the other, and so do patterns of action, such as technical procedures, warlike practices, religious rites, or fashions of individuals conducts. This spread of things and habits is studied by ethnologists, who call it cultural diffusion. When the community acquires new items or concepts from abroad where another language is spoken, it needs new terms to go along with this new acquisition. This spread of words is studied by linguists and it is called linguistic borrowing.

This explains, for instance, why many languages share the same words for:

‘Tobacco’ (Finnish *tupakka*, Indonesian *tembakau*, Japanese *tabako*, ultimately from Arabic *tabaq* via Spanish *tabaco*).

‘The historian finds that some of the later adventures of the borrowed form are due to its foreign character...’ (Bloomfield 1994 [1933]:444).

If the contrastive analysis of the Maori and English languages, shows some words such as, *tiriti* (treaty), *niupapa* (newspaper), *motoka* (motor car), we may say that Maori and English are related languages. However, if we look at the core vocabulary of Maori words like: *rua* (two), *manu* (bird), *ike* (fish), it appears that the two languages are not historically related. And if we know something of the history of Maori people, and the colonization of New Zealand, by English speakers, then we realize that the Maori language has borrowed words from English for concepts that were foreign to their culture. (Baker and Jones 1998:130)

Bonine and Kiddie (1981) cited prestige, foreign education, translation and necessity as causes or reasons for the borrowing. The term necessity, in this context, refers to the need for a lack of certain cultural phenomena, objects, ideas, or social and political institutions that stimulates the borrowing.

The example we consider is used by Robinson (1997) to discuss arbitrariness of signifier and signified. The use of words of French origin, in English, to describe animals as they are eaten (pork, beef, mutton) as opposed to the use of Saxon terms for the same animals (pig, cow, sheep) which originated in the relationship with the signified. This use is clearly affected by the fact of limits of existing vocabulary because of their different cultural and social attitudes towards animals, that is, the Normans used to eat them while the Saxons tended them. So, when English people begin to use the words above from the French origin, it was connected with cultural practice they have already had.

Bloomfield even referred to the linguistic borrowing as a cultural borrowing:

'... Cultural borrowing where the borrowed features come from a different language...' (Bloomfield 1994[1933]: 444)

'Cultural borrowing of speech forms is ordinarily mutual; it is one-sided only to the extent that one nation has more to give than the other.'

(Bloomfield 1994[1933]: 461)

Thus, Persian language borrowed from the Arabic language during the Islamic conquest, so that 60 % percent of the vocabulary in Modern Standard Persian is of Arabic origin.

Also, during the missionary period, from the seventh century onward, Old English borrowed Latin terms relating to Christianity, such as: church, minister, angel, devil, bishop, monk, shrine, and imitate Latin semantics in the way of loan translation, but Old English gave nothing, at that time in return.

We conclude that the linguistic borrowing process is a part of cultural borrowing process: a cultural feature flows from one society to another accompanied by a new word.

'Vocabulary is very sensitive index of the culture of a people, and changes of meaning, loss of old words, the creation and borrowing of new ones all dependent on the history of culture itself...' (Sapir 1986:26).

CONCLUSION

We can assume that a reciprocal relationship does exist between language and culture. Language reflects the associated cultural reality (thoughts and interests) in which culture is an integral part; it embodies cultural reality which symbolizes, and it shapes as it is shaped by the associated cultural reality. Language and culture can not be separated and can not be treated independently.

Fishman (1985, 1991 and 1996) has distinguished between three links:

- Language as a part of culture;
- Language as an index of culture;
- Language as a symbol of culture.

(Fishman in Risager, 2006: 13)

CHAPTER TWO

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Introduction

1. Culture in language learning
2. Culture and communication
 - 2.1. Expressions of politeness
 - 2.2. Interpretation of implicatures.
3. Culture and English writings
4. Language transfer

Conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

We can assume a semantic relativism where meanings are not fully shared between languages and where the difference is a consequence of the effect of culture upon language, as a final contention, it is important for investigating this effect of culture upon learning a second or a foreign language.

'...it makes no sense to say that language and culture can be separated. Human always includes language, and human language can not be conceived without culture. Linguistic practice is always embedded in some cultural context or another.' (Risager, 2006:4)

The theme of this chapter is to show how cultural aspects can influence foreign language learners' comprehension, as well as their performance in the foreign language.

1. CULTURE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Linguists and teachers used to emphasize the learning of the grammatical system rather than the provision of information about the society or the societies where the language is spoken. Grammar is the important element and the rest is just background.

Later, linguists become aware of the impact of cultural dimensions in foreign language learning.

Kramsch (1998) argued with a 1992 advertisement from the reputable Paris department store, the Bon Marché Rive Gauche, the ad shows one elegant looking woman with a diadem in her hair, holding up a credit card and looking straight at the viewer. Above her, the statement: *'Rive Gauche, il existe encore des privilèges que nul ne souhaite abolir'* (On the Left Bank, there still exist some privileges that no one wishes to abolish).

This ad is complex in its message and many interpretations given of it by learners from different cultures, *illustrate well the potentially intercultural place of the non-native speakers attempting to learn another person's language and culture.* (Kramsch, 1998: 17)

For native speakers, the ad refers to the night of the 4th of August 1789, the famous 'nuit de quatre août', is very obvious, in which the nobility abolished its birthrights on the Altar of the Revolution. And the mention of the Left Bank of Seine evokes for French native speakers the Quartier Latin with its May 68 demonstrations for social justice and civil rights. In this ad, however, both privileges of birth and civil rights have, courtesy of the Bon Marché, been replaced by the prerogative of the credit card.

The non-native speakers in the United States and Germany had quite different interpretation of what 'privileges' might consist of. For Americans here, a privilege referred simply to what you can buy with a credit card if you have the money. It had nothing to do with birthright. It was the prerogative that comes with the card-bearing membership in a community of consumers.

The West Germans had yet another notion of privilege, they said, it is what you acquired through meritorious work, a reward for services rendered in a *leistungsgesellschaft* or performance-oriented society, neither birth nor money, only merit is the right entitlement for them.

Here, the different interpretations of American and West German can not be considered as wrong but it was read differently. These different readings resulted from the different sociocultural backgrounds.

This example shows obviously the differences between the perceptions of native and non-native speakers towards cultural events and texts.

Then we believe that information about social institutions, history, geographical features of the country -family structure, education systems, political parties, regional industries for example- is a necessary background for language learning.

'...language acquisition research cannot (yet) make reasoned statements about the contents of foreign language teaching since it does not yet have a grasp of the connections, relevant to the contents, between communicative action and foreign language way of life...' (Lebenswelt 1987:118).

Another experience with Kramersch (2003) was in one of her German classes with undergraduate students, when discussing the story of 'Yuksel Pazaraka' *Deutsche Kastanien* that they have read the night before. The story is about 6-year-old boy, Ender, born and raised in Germany of Turkish parents. Ender is snubbed one day in the schoolyard by his best friend who does not want to play with him anymore because, he says, Ender is not German but an 'auslander' [foreigner]. Ender runs back home to his parents: 'who am I? Turkish or German'. The mother does not dare to answer but the father tells him the truth that he is a Turkish born in Germany. Then, they moved to the questions, the first question was about the causes that lead people to leave their countries. The students were quick to answer, stating the different causes with no difficulty to express themselves in German. When they moved to the second question that is about what they do associate with the 'word auslander'? They were silent, hesitating to answer, then, one said different. Kramersch says: yes, different, foreign (and she wrote both words anders, fremd in the board), then, she asked, in America who 'is auslander'. It was a long silence this time, one student answered with a question: is there any auslander here in America? So, a strange silence for students who have no problem to express themselves in German. Their silence and especially the student's question prove that the problem was not in their grammatical and linguistic competence but in their cultural competence.

This unexpected reaction was a result of ignoring the German culture, they live in America where any person, born there, is an American. In this sense the linguistic competence is not enough in learning a foreign language.

'What we do in the language classroom is affected by who we are; the views we hold, and the societies we are part of' (Harrison, 1990:1).

Oxford (1996) saw that the importance of culture is reflected in the concept of “*situated cognition*”, which holds that the setting and the activity in which knowledge is developed are not separable from learning, nor are they neutral, but they are an integral part of the learning. Thus in language classroom, the activity and cultural influences can not be separated from what is learned. Language learning is fully situated with a given cultural context. *Meaning and values are learned concurrently with language*(Bruner, 1974).

Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English as a foreign language are a consequence of the degree to which their native language and culture differ from English.

Culture is not static, it evolves as people conduct their daily lives, it denotes a body of shared knowledge, that is, what non-native speakers ‘*must know in order to act as they do, make the things they make, and interpret their experience in the distinctive way they do*’ (Quinn and Holland, 1987:4).

“Act” in this sense includes verbal acts – whether in the spoken or the written modes. The shared knowledge in a verbal behaviour refers to the familiar conventions followed in using the language, which makes it easier for non-native speakers to interpret or make sense of one another’s utterances and actions.

2. CULTURE AND THE ORAL MODE

In oral learning and communicative conversation, many factors may represent difficulties and even may cause conversation breakdown, the variability of patterns of social interaction across cultures can be one of them (Corbett 2003).

‘...even with a shared language, successful communication may depend on sociocultural factors, which include conventions of language use’

(Kachru in Hinkel, 1999: 77).

If communication is to be successful, the people involved need to share the same referential meaning of the words they are using. So, speakers who have nativelike control of the language's syntax and vocabulary may fail in real-life communication if their conversational strategies differ from the norms of native language and culture.

Some cultural differences can be marked, silence as an example can be interpreted differently in different societies and cultures as can be many other paralinguistic features and behaviours. Foreign language learners can be encouraged to investigate the differences in these kinds of interactional patterns in the target culture as a part of the sociocultural context in which communication takes place. Duquette (1995) argued that learners should be aware of the fact that speakers convey meaning through the use of verbal behaviour as well as non-verbal behaviour (body movements, facial expressions, facial gestures...) and non-verbal paralinguistic elements, such as the way the voice is used, that represents important clues for interpreting what is being listened to and differs considerably between cultures. It may be hard to believe that the average American speaks is only ten to eleven minutes a day, and that more than 65 percent of the social meaning of a typical two-person exchange is carried by nonverbal cues (Birdwistell 1974).

Cultural aspects are relevant factors that help listeners' understanding in another language (Duquette, 1995: 34). The meaning has to be interpreted within the particular cultural context.

Developing oral proficiency requires more than simply being able to speak but also to understand the context and culture of the target language to respond appropriately to its expectations. So, in listening comprehension, social and cultural aspects are important factors in which the listener must pay attention to, to be able to determine which type of verbal behaviour should be appropriate when responding.

In many ways, reading and listening comprehension problems are very similar. Learners may have not a problem with the words' meaning of the text (when reading or listening) but with the presentation of the information that presupposes some familiarity with the target language

culture when they lack sufficient knowledge of the culture, which may lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

'...listeners' knowledge of the speakers' cultural norms would have a great influence on their listening comprehension in that language and culture'.

(Roost, 2001 in Duquette, 1995: 34)

Implicatures and expressions of politeness are kinds of verbal behaviour in which different cultures can derive different messages and understanding from them.

2.1. INTERPRETATION OF IMPLICATURES

A considerable difficulty for non-native speakers when tackling oral conversation in English is that of what is said in an indirect way or what Grice (1975) labeled as conversational implicature.

The conversational implicature discussed first by Grice (1975). Grice stretched out a theory of pragmatic implication distinct from semantic implication, as a tool for resolving certain linguistic problems in the theory of perception. Consider an utterance such as 'it looks red to me'. Grice denied that it is simply by virtue of the semantic of the phrase 'look to me', implies the acknowledgement of some doubt or denial of the box being red, rather such an implication arises from a general feature or principle of the use of language. It is the hearer's tacit knowledge of such principle, governing the speaker's use of the language rather than any peculiar semantic feature of the phrase. "looks to me" enables him to infer, on hearing the speaker says, that the speaker means to acknowledge by implication that some doubt has been cast for the box's color being red.

Grice (1975) proposed that participants in a conversation should base on what he called '*cooperative principle*'. Interlocutors in a conversation expect each other to follow four basic maxims which are: '*be sufficiently informative to meet your interlocutor's need*', '*be truthful*',

'*make what you say relevant*' and '*be clear*'. When the literal meaning of someone's speech does not seem to be sufficiently informative, or true, or relevant, or clear, people assume that the speaker was cooperative, and it is a misunderstanding of his speech and they look for the intended message, which is appropriate to the conversational context. These indirect messages are derived through the use of implicatures.

Examples:

E.g. 1. Lee: how do you like my new sweater?

Sandy: it is an interesting color.

E.g. 2. George: what do you think of the house?

Sheila: well, it has a nice mailbox.

George: are there any other houses we can visit?

In these examples, Sandy and Sheila are indirectly criticizing the things being discussed. They don't directly say, "I don't like that sweater/house", but they imply their dislike by praising a quality of each item that is relatively minor.

When Sheila says that the mailbox is nice, she is implying that the more important aspects in the house are not nice.

Examples like this occur frequently, in everyday communication. They are part of any native speaker's communicative competence.

'...conversational implicature is an absolutely unremarkable and ordinary conversational strategy...' (Green, 1989:92).

(Keenan, 1976; Spencer-Oatey, 1993) indicated that people from different cultural background infer different messages from the same utterance in the same context.

But Grice (1975) indicated that the use of implicatures can only be a successful conversational strategy in cross-cultural interactions as the interlocutors have a shared understanding of four factors:

1. the literal meaning of the utterance in question ;

2. the roles and expectations associated with each of the participants in a conversation;
3. the situation in which the conversation is taking place and the nature of the conversation itself;
4. the world around them as it relates to the occasion.

But later research and experiments showed that the non-native speakers of English may face difficulties in interpreting implicatures the same way native speakers of English do.

Example:

Paul: do you expect Sheila to be late for the party tonight? (1)

Georgette: is the Pope Catholic? (2)

The answer of the question (2) is yes (the Pope is the leader of the Catholics), Georgette's answer to Paul's question (1) is yes.

In 1986, Bouton started a longitudinal study to answer the question if the use of implicatures in cross-cultural interactions can be a barrier to communication.

Between (1986-1988), Bouton gave a questionnaire in which each item contained a dialogue in which at least one utterance is expressing its message through an implicature. Students were asked to write in their own words what they thought the message was. The degree of consensus among American students was surprising, they tend to interpret a great number of implicatures in the same way. Whereas for non-native speakers students who had just arrived in the United States, their answers were quite different.

For one thing, the non-native speakers derived the same messages as the American from the various items for about a half of the time overall, for the other, the performance of the students on the overall test was significantly affected by their cultural background.

When the two different culture groups were compared with each other, significant differences between the groups in thirteen of the twenty-one items were found.

In this study, the students' cultural background was significant when comparing native speakers of English and non-native speakers, and it also distinguished the message derived from by one culturally defined group of non-native speaker from that of another.

The same study was carried out in 1990, using a revised form of the test instrument, a comparison of the results achieved by individuals from different cultural backgrounds provided similar patterns (Bouton 1992).

Here we can say that the results of this study showed quite vividly the impact of the person's cultural background on the message he or she draws from an implicature.

2.2. EXPRESSIONS OF POLITENESS

The expression of the universal notion of politeness varies considerably in different societies. For instance, what is considered as an apology in one culture may be seen as an expression of thanks in another, and what is considered as a request in one culture may be seen very rude in another.

Odlin (1989) reported a framework hold by Brown and Levinson (1978) for understanding how politeness may be interpreted by different cultures in different ways.

They stated out that all people have a strong interest in preserving face which has two aspects: positive face, the self image and the self respect that a person has, and negative face, the claim to privacy, freedom of action and other elements of personal autonomy. As individuals and social needs may lead to actions that threaten the positive and negative face of other people, which lead an individual to perform positive or negative politeness which are strategies that minimize threats to positive and negative face.

Non-native speakers were students who had just arrived in the U.S.A, six groups from six different societies: Chinese, Taiwan Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German, and American Latin.

The study resulted stretching from the Americans in pole to the Republic of China on the other, with the middle positions being filled by the Germans, Latin Americans, Taiwan Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese. The culture groups added in the carried study were from, France and Malaysia/Indonesia.

The politeness strategy that may be used in any given context depends on situational as well as cultural factors. According to Brown and Levinson, speakers opt for positive politeness in some societies and for negative politeness in others. They argued that there can be important differences in the speech acts of two communities even if they share the same sociolinguistic norms, and this depends on how much the members of those communities use positive and negative politeness in their speech acts such as requests and apologies...etc.

Odlin illustrated with an example given by Godard (1977) of France and United States which are very similar in their sociolinguistic norms, but there is at least one context in which the norms differ. For instance, in using the telephone in France, more frequently, requires callers to make an apologetic statement because they see that telephone calls are kind of impositions. So, consequently, telephone calls between French and American individuals who are not familiar with the telephone etiquette may give rise of bizarre or rude behaviour.

In requests, speakers of different languages choose different levels of directness. For example, German speakers prefer more directness in their requests with the modals which show a sense of obligation as in *Du solltest das fenster zumachen* (You should close the window), whereas the British English speakers prefer forms with weaker force as in *Can you close the window?* So German speakers prefer declarative statements in relation to English speakers who prefer interrogative ones. In sentences such as *Can you close the window*, *You should close the window*, and *Close the window*, in English speaking societies, the first sentence is considered as the most polite and the third one is the least polite. While the sentence *Du solltest das fenster zumachen* and *Kannst du das fenster zumachen?* Have formally equivalents of English, *You should close the window* and *Can you close the window?*, socially are not translation equivalent. The two German sentences do not have different politeness values as do the two English sentences.

Apologies, also, show a considerable variation of two kinds: variation in the frequency of use of apologetic formulas, and variation in the relations between apologies and other speech

acts. This may pose problems for foreign language learners. For instance, expressions such: *Excuse me* and *I'm sorry* are used inappropriately by Thai and Japanese English language students because of the imperfect matches between those forms and analogous forms in the students' native languages. A Japanese student's answer of *I'm sorry* as a response of an American saying, *I have so much work to do!* Occurs because the relations between apologies and expressions of gratitude seem to occasion particular difficulty. (Borkin and Reinhart 1987) stated by Odlin (1989).

Greetings are likely language universal but the use of them can vary considerably in cross-cultures contexts. While English shows variable patterns of greeting, Arabic shows fixed ones. Proverbs are frequently used in the Middle East and Africa for arguing, complimenting, and even in expressing condolences, while proverbs are common in English-speaking societies.

Culture-specific idioms do not always have close translation equivalents in other languages, some of them are quite simple while others are quite complex. This may pose a challenge for foreign language learners until they become familiar with the new patterns of the foreign culture.

3. CULTURE AND ENGLISH WRITING

Kaplan (1966), claimed that the writing of non-native of American and British English way differs from that of native speakers in systematic and identifiable ways. And also, for the rhetorical organization of a text and its progress are often determined by the thought of members of a particular culture.

'...using a common linguistic medium (English) does not mean that discourse strategies are shared' (Smith, 1987:5).

Since Kaplan's work, researchers came to a conclusion, that the structure of a written text and the rhetorical paradigms are based on cultural frameworks derived from different stylistic, religious, ethnic, and social notions. What represents a logical development and well

construction of a text to communicate the writer's aim is related to concepts which are not necessarily shared by members of different cultures.

Writing is often determined by the conceptualization of the purpose of writing, the text's audience, and the notion of what represents a good writing, which are related with the culture of the writer and the audience for whom the text is created.

According to Halliday (1985), language is not a set of isolated sentences but a set of interrelated texts with an actualized meaning, which people express to serve some social goal.

Writers develop their grammatical and textual forms to express their contexts of culture.

Academic writings in a foreign language are also affected with ideologies related to the learners traditions and culture, so that, native like proficiency in writing may not be easily attainable for foreign language learners.

We will discuss the main issues that deal with the influence of culture on a foreign language writing and the outcomes of learning to write in a foreign language.

Based on Johnson's (1985) study and Burtoff's (1983) product-based study on Japanese, Arabic, and English native speaker discourse strategies, Krapels (1990) concluded that foreign language learners tend to rely on their first language when they generate ideas about culture-bound topic. She also reported Galvan's (1985) ethnographic study in investigating the cultural and linguistic factors in composing processes, in which through the collected data from interviews, direct observation, and assessment of writing skills, bilingualism and biculturalism, he found that second language and therefore foreign language writing was generally influenced by both first thinking and first culture.

Kachru discussed the aspect of the interaction of cultural meaning and rhetorical style in writing across languages and traditions of literacy. He concentrated on what is called contrastive rhetoric, which is an area of research developed out of pedagogical concerns related to writing by international students in English as a foreign language. In a big part, it deals with writing across cultures and with the teaching of writing in English to speakers of other languages. As

Kaplan claimed that, not only spoken language but also, logic and rhetoric are culture specific.

He said:

'Logic ...which is the basis of rhetoric, is evolved out of culture; it is not universal. Rhetoric, than, is not universal either, but varies from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture' (1966: 2).

Researchers in this area (Kaplan, 1972; Scollone and Scollon, 1981) pointed out that different speech communities have different ways of organizing ideas when writing.

While English native speakers employ the expository prose to be developed as a sequence of claims and follow the Aristotelian notions of persuasion and argumentation, non-native speakers use the rhetorical development of text which is different from what Anglo-American reader expect.

'The foreign-students paper is out of focus because the foreign student is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native reader' (Kaplan, 1966: 4).

Kaplan described the structure of English exposition as linear, because a paragraph in English begins with a topic statement supported by examples that are related to the central theme, but paragraphs in other languages have different typical structures. In contrastive rhetoric between Arabic and English writing, Kaplan (1966, 1972) claimed that Arabic writing is characterized by a series of parallel constructions. In Arabic, a paragraph progress follows the principle of coordination through parallel constructions, both positive and negative. The Arabic writing contains more discourse units (supporting ideas), than the English writing, which frequently begins with superordinate, universal statement, and ended with some type of formulaic or proverbial statement.

We consider Kaplan's (1972) example, an English coordinate sentence, "The boy was here, and he drank the milk", could be transformed to a subordinate sentence through a semantic subordination "The boy was here. He drank the milk" or a grammatical subordination "Milk was

drunk by the boy who was here". Subordination is the form preferred in English, whereas the coordination form is the one preferred in Arabic.

The finding of Arabic writing suggests that the preference for parallel construction is related to sociocultural and situational factors rather than linguistic influence. Many scholars claim that this preference is explained by an adherence to classical texts, particularly the Koran.

As reported by Connor (1996), Sa'adedine (1989) indicated that Arabic has two styles of text development, "aural" and "visual". Aural style characterized by repetition, a limited lexicon and overreliance on abstract generalizations, visual style has linear development, varied lexis, and complex syntax. The visual style, as determined by the social function, is the one preferred in academic writing.

Connor, also, mentioned William's (1984) contrastive analysis of English and Arabic theme-rheme progression in the development of the coherence of texts, tried to explain patterns of repetition and parallelism. He viewed that Arabic texts contain exact coreference of the theme in a sentence after a sentence as well as repetition of lexical items for esthetic and cohesive reasons.

All these differences marked the non-native speakers writing as '*basic*', '*inexperienced*', '*developmental*' and even the writers themselves may be considered as '*unskilled*' (Johnson and Roen, 1989:6). It is then necessary for other cultures' members to write in English the same way English native writers do.

According to Kachru, establishing comparability of genre is important, because there may be genres in one or more languages and cultures that have no counterparts in other languages and cultures; as there may be different rhetorical patterns associated with different genres, and similar or even identical speech situations may call for different genres across cultures.

Research in academic writing pay more attention to given genres such as the argumentative and the persuasive text structure.

For instance in Hindi there were five categories of essay: descriptive, narrative, deliberative, explanatory, and imaginative, and later, reduced to three genres: descriptive (including narrative), deliberative (including explanatory), and imaginative. And the argumentative essay is not a distinct genre but a subtype of deliberation and explanation genres.

But in Anglo-American English the argumentative text is a distinct genre based on the problem-solution structure for the purpose of convincing the reader of the solution mentioned in the essay as the superior one. The corresponding text in Hindi is the deliberative, where one or more related issues are discussed by mentioning either the writer's opinions and solutions or various opinions and solutions including those of the writer. Connor (1996) reported a study of Al-Jubouri (1984) and Williams (1984). Al-jubouri pointed out that argumentative texts in Arabic reveal repetition as an argumentative strategy at three levels: the morphological level, word level, and "chunk" (that is, phrases, clauses, and larger discourse sequences).

In American colleges and universities, objectivity and credibility are important patterns in academic writings, students have to present their views objectively and support them with appropriate illustrations that serve these views credibility.

Scarcella (1984) said that academic writing of non-native speakers of English does not show a balanced argumentation and objectivity but subjectivity to a greater extent compared with native speakers of English.

Research on Chinese students writing, for instance, showed that they were vaguer and less objective than that of native speakers with similar educational levels and similar training, as they contain fewer justifications, credibility, persuasion, and reasoning devices. As a result, Chinese writers are scored lower than the English native speakers. Chinese students as well as other non-native speakers count more on historical allusions and direct assertions which the instructors found distracting even sometimes inappropriate (Scarcella 1984).

Hvitfeldt (1992), in comparing argumentative essays, found that non-native speakers writing can be highly personalized because in their writing traditions, one's "*idea of truth is the*

result of everyday experience” (p: 33). For her, the tendency to give one-sided presentation instead of a balanced objective argument is a result of the first language discourse traditions, conventions and rhetorical value systems. Decades of research into foreign language learning showed that non-native speakers frequently transfer their knowledge of first language rhetorical paradigms and conventions to foreign language learning.

Kachru pointed out that different language-speaking communities have developed different conventions of writing from their various cultural perspectives.

This can be illustrated with works of some researchers such as the ones reported by Hinkel (1999). Matalane (1985) for instance, argued that because of the Chinese percepts of Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist associated with writing, the writer is supposed to be the champion of the truth announced to the reader. So, the writer is in no need to be knowledgeable as it is assumed, by virtue of writing, to have authority, credibility, and knowledge.

The Japanese rhetorical tradition is also closely bound to the Japanese culture which is based on Confucianism and Buddhism and that Japanese work to achieve “higher perceptions of the truth” derived from “mind to mind” and not words (Tsujimura, 1987:117-118). Objectivity and proof are rarely expected in Japanese writing, while ambiguity and vagueness have a considerable rhetorical value.

Prentice (1987) indicated that Confucian, Buddhist, historical and cultural origins have an impact on the Indonesian rhetorical tradition, in which the notions of harmony and understanding between the reader and the writer have a greater importance than the factual objectivity.

Hinkel worked on a study in which the purpose is to examine and compare the use of objectivity conventions in the composition writing of native speakers and trained non-native speakers -in the light of the current instructional methodologies for foreign language composition writing- and specifically the use of rhetorical objectivity devices, and syntactic and referential markers to identify the specific features that make non-native speakers writing in a foreign language less objective and balanced.

Rhetorical devices that were identified in the texts and used for the examination are: Proverbs and Sayings, Direct Personal Appeals, Contradictions and Juxtapositions, General Rules, Rhetorical Questions and Analogies.

Syntactic and referential markers that were identified and analyzed are: Concessives, the Passive voice, Slot Fillers, Amplifiers and Emphatics, Pronouns and Modal Verbs.

He used essays written by 30 native speakers and 120 non-native speakers, in which 30 were speakers of Chinese, 30 of Korean, 30 of Japanese, and 30 of Indonesian. As mentioned before, each of these language groups represents a culture influenced by Confucian, Taoist, and / or Buddhist philosophy, cultural values, and written discourse traditions.

The non-native speakers whose writings were analyzed, were selected on the basis of their relatively high linguistic proficiency as established by TOEFL scores (ranging from 567 to 623, a mean of 580), and their length of residence in the United States (within 1.5 and 3.1 years, a mean of 2.1 years). They had completed the required composition courses designed especially for non-native speakers and, subsequently, all the composition courses required for native speakers in an American university. They had had extensive instruction and exposure in ESL and foreign language reading and writing academic environment for a period of 4 to 20 years (a mean of 13.1 years).

Both native speakers and non-native speakers wrote the essays during 1-hour, required placement tests written in a response to two prompts (two for native speakers and two for non-native speakers).

The compositions analyzed were selected randomly in sets of 15 per prompts from each group of students (native speakers, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Indonesian).

Prompts for native speakers and non-native speakers:

NSs: 1. What is your major? Describe your values and characteristics that caused you to make this choice.

2. Describe how you or your chosen career can benefit our country.

NNSs: 1. What job or profession are you preparing for? What are your personal views and qualities that made you choose this field.

2. Discuss how you or your training in your major can contribute to the development of your country. Use detailed reasons and examples.

All essays were written in the rhetorical mode of argument/ exposition with the purpose of convincing/ informing an unspecified general audience.

Objectivity devices and markers employed in the non-native speakers' texts were compared to those in the essays written by native speakers of American English.

To determine whether the native speakers and non-native speakers similarly used objectivity devices and constructions, the number of words in each of the 150 essays was counted, followed by a count of the occurrences of each of the rhetorical markers and syntactic / referential markers in that essay. For example, native speaker essay 1 consisted of 250 words and included one occurrence of a concessive, and three instances of the slot filler *it*. To ascertain the percentage of usage of these markers in the essay, a computation was performed for concessive ($1/250=0.4\%$), and then repeated three occurrences of *it* ($3/250=1.2\%$).

Rhetorical devices and constructs:

- Phrases starting with *people say, I heard it said, there is a proverb in my country, there is a common saying...* which are considered as proverbs and sayings; were used more frequently in the essays of non-native speakers than those of native speakers, for the purpose of persuading readers of the credibility or believability of the piece of writing.

The use of proverbs and sayings does not represent a rhetorical strategy commonly accepted in Anglo-American composition and academic writing, but not in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indonesian compositions, when writers feel that they need to support their position by referring to assumed common knowledge embodied in proverbs.

In Arabic, for instance, writing proverbs and other formulaic utterances are frequently employed as aids in arguing, in complimenting, and so forth.

- For direct personal appeals, distinguished by the generic usage of *you* and imperative such:

- *you want to graduate and have a job, so you can have your own life;*

- *don't you wait until the decision what to major in comes to you. Decide and stick with your answer.*

Non-native speakers use the direct personal appeals than the native speakers do, which is a strategy to avoid in Anglo-American composition and academic learning because they are viewed as devoid of rhetorical objectivity.

- *Do you know what the most important thing in the world is? What can people do to help their country?*

Can any person meet this goal?

Direct and tag questions are not desirable in Anglo-American composition and academic writing because they are viewed personal and subjective. In fact, the number of direct and tag questions was greater in non-native speakers than native speakers.

- Analogies: comparison of the unfamiliar to the familiar marked by comparatives as: *as, like, similar to, the same as,* For example: *Doing the routine tasks everyday is like doing laundry by hand...*

Although analogies are desirable in the Anglo-American academic writing as an explication device, both native speakers and non-native speakers did not use them to a great extent.

Syntactic and referential markers:

- For concessives such as *although, though and even though*; which can be used to introduce background information or present balanced arguments which account for opposing views. Suggested formula using *although* to create a balanced thesis statement and presenting the writer's position objectively.

In general, the structure in non-native speakers writing considered simplistic, but the writing of advanced non-native contained a higher rate of concessives than did that of native speakers.

- Non-native speakers used passive constructions more frequently than native speakers did.

The passive voice is one of the more typical markers of composition and academic writing to convey objectivity

- Personal pronouns, for example the first person singular (*I, me, my, myself*)

The better university I graduate from, the more chance I will get to find a good job, but how can I be accepted in a famous university?

Native speakers use more first person singular pronouns in their writing than the non-native speakers did, because its use in the Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist writing traditions is not acceptable as it is associated with the individual rather than the collective identity.

This study demonstrated that native speakers and non-native used analogies, third person singular pronouns, and predictive modals at similar rates but their writing differed in the use of the other 17 devices and markers of rhetorical objectivity.

Advanced and trained English learners, from different cultures influenced by Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist precepts, used the rhetorical objectivity devices and markers related to the Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist writing traditions, but not to those in the Anglo-American composition and academic writing.

Even though the non-native speakers of English were extensively trained and achieved a high linguistic proficiency, the rhetorical devices and the syntactic referential markers associated with the Anglo-American notions of objectivity still not attainable. Conventions of Anglo-American composition require rational argumentation, objectivity in the writer's position and views, and factuality in justification and proof..., are not accepted in many other writing traditions.

This study confirms Kaplan's views of the transfer of the first language cultural conventions to second language performance, and that the rhetorical patterns in writing are culturally determined.

4. CULTURAL TRANSFER

A fundamental issue in the study of the relationship between language, culture and thought is the semantic transfer.

Byram (1989) indicated that the deliberate attempt of language transfer is made, as in those countries where English is taught from textbooks which refer only to the native culture of the learners, the absolute separation of lexical items from their original reference is extremely different. There is however a need to take a careful account of the implication of separating language from culture in the foreign language context, the representation of that cultural whole is largely limited to the foreign language classroom, and learners' experience of the foreign culture is largely vicarious. Thus although the warp of language can be teased out from the weft of culture, the learners need to see the web of the whole.

Odlin (1989) said that expressions, such as "learning to think in English", reflect a belief that learning a particular language requires adopting a world view which, to some extent, is unique to that language. He added that the only implication of this belief is that if English language learners, for example, do not "think in English", they must still be using their native language and culture as a reference point. Some researches suggest that cross linguistic differences in structure, sometimes, reflect differences in thinking. There are differences in the thought patterns of people in different speech communities.

Language transfer is closely related to behaviourist theories of foreign language learning. According to behaviourist theories, the process of language learning is a process of habit formation, and the old habits, that formed when learning the native language, would get in the way of learning new habits in the foreign language, thus leading to errors.

Learners may avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult because of the differences between their native language and the foreign language. It's a complicated phenomenon, and Kellerman's (1992) attempted to classify it into three types, indicated that

apart from the learner's first language knowledge, the learner's knowledge of foreign language, and the learner's attitudes towards his or her own culture and the target language culture, act as determinants of avoidance behaviour.

In his influential book *Linguistics across Cultures*, Lado claimed:

' Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture---both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives. '

(Lado, 1957: 2)

The fact that the foreign language learner is a native speaker of at least one language raises that fact of transfer from his native language to the target language, in which the focus is on syntax and phonology. As soon as the semantic transfer arises, the interdependence of language learning and culture becomes evident.

The association of a native language meaning with a foreign language word is a '*cultural transfer*' (Byram, 1989:42), the foreign language word is being used to refer to a native language cultural phenomenon.

'... just as a teacher expect to cope with syntactic and phonological transfer/ interference, they must also beware of cultural transfer/ interference and cope with it appropriately' (Byram, 1989:42).

CONCLUSION

Expressing and interpreting messages in any language involve two types of knowledge: *systematic knowledge* which refers to the formal properties of language as the syntactic and the semantic aspects, and the *schematic knowledge* which is socially acquired (Alptekin, 1993).

The way in which people use the spoken, written or visual language creates meanings that are understandable to the language they belong to. So, culture plays an important role in learning a foreign language, it is an essential part to the full grasp of meaning in learning the associated language.

In learning the mother language, individual's schematic knowledge and systematic knowledge develop concurrently, whereas in learning a foreign language, the learners rely on their already established schematic knowledge when developing new systematic knowledge. For this reason, it is necessary to give culture an important place in the teaching of foreign languages (Alptekin, 1993)

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL APPROACH TO LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Introduction.

1. The nature of language proficiency.

1.1. The structure of language competence.

1.2. Language proficiency and academic achievement.

1.3. Conceptualization of communicative language ability.

2. Language proficiency testing.

2.1. Integrative tests.

2.2. Communicative competence research.

3. Considerations in language proficiency tests.

3.1. Reliability.

3.2. Validity.

3.3. Other considerations.

4. Choice of the test.

Conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

Before engaging in discussing language proficiency testing, it is first necessary to consider language proficiency. Language proficiency or linguistic proficiency can be considered as the ability to speak or perform in an acquired or a learned language. But having strongly asserted that a proper conceptualization of language proficiency is at the core of the study and investigation of language learning and teaching.

Since ancient times, major investigations and theoretical work tended to describe the nature of second and foreign language proficiency, resulted different definitions debated by teachers, linguists, philosophers, psychologists, and researchers. These different attempts failed to provide a definition of proficiency in a way to satisfy the different investigators.

1. THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Since palmer's definition of proficiency, there has been a great evolution

'Language learning, like all other arts as contrasted with sciences, is a habit forming process. Proficiency in the understanding of the structure of a language is attained by treating the subject as a [science] by studying the [theory]; but proficiency in the [use] of a language can only comes as a result of perfectly formed habits'.

Palmer (1922/1964) in Stern (1983:318).

Cummins (1984), for example, stated that the nature of language proficiency has been understood by some researchers as consisting of 64 separate language components and by others as consisting of only one global factor. Valdés and Figueroa (1994) indicated that:

'...what it means to know a language goes beyond simplistic views of good pronunciation, "correct" grammar, and even mastery of rules of politeness. Knowing a language and knowing how to use a language involves a mastery and control of a large number of interdependent components and elements that interact with one another and that are affected by the nature of the situation in which communication takes place'. (p. 34)

1.1. THE STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

In order to describe the nature of language proficiency, a theoretical framework of linguistic competence was developed by the structuralist view of linguistics. In the early 1960's, Lado (1961), tended to centre on language skills and components, proposed a skill-and-component model of language proficiency. The components comprise grammar, vocabulary and phonology, and the skills comprise listening, speaking, reading and writing. The underlying assumption was that proficient foreign language learners would be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the components (grammar, vocabulary and phonology) in the context of the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Grammatical knowledge for Lado consisted solely of morphosyntactic form. Much of the practice of language teaching and language testing was based on the assumption of that these twelve components could be taught and tested separately.

Building on Lado's (1961) notion of language proficiency, Carroll (1968) defined language competence in terms of phonology and orthography, grammar, and the lexicon. He expanded Lado's (1961) model of language knowledge by arguing that tests should be designed to predict the use of language elements and skills in future social situations or future tasks that the learners might encounter in life. By relating tests to target language use contexts, Carroll challenged the discrete-point approach to measuring one component at a time (as in Lado's

information to 'extralinguistic context and to interpret it accordingly. This provides a basis, for the test-taker, to predict information for the gap, invoking the notion of 'expectancy'. The type of information the test-taker might be expected to supply could relate to the linguistic form, the semantic meaning, and/ or the pragmatic use, or could in some way, tap into the test-taker rhetorical, sociocultural or topical knowledge. In sum, pragmatic expectancy grammar forces the learner to integrate his or her knowledge of grammar and pragmatic use to complete the task.

Although Oller's (1979) notion of pragmatic expectancy grammar suggested, a radically different or a more complex definition of what generally was understood by grammatical knowledge, he did not identify or clearly defined the distinct components of expectancy grammar. Nor did he clearly specify how these components might be measured separately or how they might relate to a coherent model of language proficiency. On the contrary, Oller hypothesized that pragmatic expectancy constituted a single, unitary ability. Subsequent research in language testing (e.g., Bachman & Palmer, 1982) clearly demonstrated that this hypothesis was not supported by research data and that language ability was, indeed, a multi-componential. As a result, research on pragmatic expectancy grammar was short-lived.

Earlier models tended to be linguistic and ignore the sociocultural background and the sociolinguistic context of language, i.e., the setting and the social contexts where the language is used.

1.1.2. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

According to Cummins, how to conceptualize language proficiency and how it is related to academic development is central in language learning. He made a fundamental distinction between conversational and academic aspects of language proficiency or what he labelled *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) and *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP), i.e., to distinguish a dimension of language proficiency which is strongly related to

model) and proposed that discrete point tasks should be complemented by integrative tasks that would also assess the learner's capacity to use several components of the language at the same time.

These models did not indicate how the skills and knowledge were related. It was not clear whether the skills were simply manifestations of the knowledge components in different modalities, to whether they were qualitatively different in other ways. A more serious limitation of the skills / components models was its failure to recognise the full context of language use- the context of discourse and situation.

During the seventies, influenced by Carroll's (1968) ideas on grammar and language use, Oller (1979) rejected the components-and-skills approach to proficiency, proposing instead a view of foreign language proficiency as consisting of one general factor, in terms of learner's 'pragmatic expectancy grammar'. He defined pragmatic expectancy grammar as a psychologically real system that *'causes the learner to process sequences of elements in a language that conform to the normal contextual constraints of that language, and, and ... requires the learners to relate sequences of linguistic elements via pragmatic mappings to the extralinguistic context'* (Oller, 1979: 38). In other words, pragmatic expectancy grammar attributes the shape of linguistic forms to contextual meanings, which reflect the prototypical norms, preferences and expectations of language in communicating real-life messages. He set out from the assumption that the receptive language use is an active process in which the listener and reader anticipate what the message is likely to be and then compare the actual message received with his anticipations. It is a hallmark of being proficient that one can anticipate language use. Similarly, the productive use of language in speaking or writing involves a corresponding process of planning messages. Both these processes constitute the expectancies.

To illustrate the notion of language proficiency grammar, we consider the gap-filling task. In this task, the test-taker reads a passage with periodic gaps in the text. Reading the passage introduces the test-taker to the context of the passage, allowing him or her to relate the

cognitive and academic skills from manifestations of language proficiency which is embedded within face-to-face communicative context.

The BICS/CALP distinction also served to qualify Oller's (1979) claim that all individual differences in language proficiency could be accounted for by just one underlying factor, which he termed as *global language proficiency*. Oller synthesized a considerable amount of data showing strong correlations between performance on cloze tests of reading, standardized reading tests, and measures of oral verbal ability (e.g. vocabulary measures). Cummins (1979, 1981) pointed out that not all aspects of language use or performance could be incorporated into one dimension of global language proficiency.

Cummins (1984) pointed out that psychological assessments administered to foreign language learners showed that teachers and psychologists often assume that learners can overcome all the difficulties with the foreign language when they can converse easily in the language, i.e., who had attained fluency in English. Yet these learners frequently performed poorly on English academic tasks as well as in psychological assessment situations. Cummins (1981) provided further evidence for the BICS/CALP distinction in a reanalysis of data from the Toronto Board of Education. These data showed, clearly, that was a gap of several years, on average, between the attainment of appropriate fluency in a second or a foreign language and the attainment of grade norms in academic aspects of foreign language. Conversational aspects of proficiency reached peer-appropriate levels usually within about two years of exposure to the foreign language but a period of five to seven years was required, on average, to approach grade norms in academic aspects of the foreign language.

The distinction was elaborated into two intersecting continua (Cummins, 1981) which highlighted the range of contextual support available for expressing and receiving meaning, and the cognitive demands involved in particular language tasks or activities (context-embedded/context-reduced, cognitively undemanding/cognitively demanding).

1.3. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE

ABILITY

In 1980, inspired by the theoretical description of language in use proposed by Hymes, Canale and Swain argued that Chomsky's (1965) notion of competence failed to account for the sociolinguistic appropriateness expressed by an utterance in a context. They maintained that this failing had serious implications since an utterance might be grammatically correct, but sociolinguistically inappropriate. As a result, Canale and Swain (1980) and later Canale (1983) proposed a model of communicative competence consisting of four major components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. This model, significantly, broadened our understanding of the communicative competence by specifying features of linguistic form along side other features of language use. In their model, Canale and Swain (1980) defined the grammatical competence as knowledge of the language code itself, including the rules of phonology, the lexicon, syntax and semantics. Knowledge of the code is framed in terms of understanding the literal meaning of utterances. The sociolinguistic competence refers to the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on such factors as topic, status of participants and purpose of the interaction. The discourse competence involves knowledge, rules and conventions, to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve unified spoken or written texts in different genres such as narrative, argumentative essay, a business letter, scientific report or recipe. This unity of text can be through cohesion in form, and coherence in meaning. Cohesive device includes pronouns, conjunctions, synonyms, and parallel structures which help to link utterances in a logical and chronological way. Coherence refers to the logical sets of the ideas in the text. The strategic competence refers to the mastery of communication strategies used by a speaker either to enhance the effectiveness of

communication or to repair breakdowns in communication which may result from limitations in actual communication or insufficient competence in one or more of the other components.

Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence, with its broadened view of language, had an enormous impact on the field of a second and a foreign language education. It is credited for having provided the framework underlying the communicative language teaching and material development, and it has succeeded in generating considerable discussion and research activity.

Building on this work, a major model of language competence was proposed by Bachman (1990), refined later by Bachman and Palmer (1996). A multi-componental model of communicative language ability which provided the most comprehensive conceptualization considering both language competence and language performance. The model does not include only a grammatical competence, but Bachman and Palmer specified non-linguistic components of communicative language ability in test-taking and language use.

In describing the communicative competence, Bachman specified two general components: (1) organizational competence or how individuals control language structure to produce grammatically correct utterances, sentences or texts, and (2) pragmatic competence or how individuals communicate meaning and how they produce contextually appropriate utterances, sentences or texts. Organizational competence is divided into grammatical competence (or how utterances or sentences are organized) which includes the knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, morphology and phonology/ graphology, and textual competence (or how utterances or sentences are organized into texts) which involves knowledge of conventions for joining utterances together to form a text such as cohesion and rhetorical organization. What is new in the Bachman framework is the pragmatic competence which is composed of two subparts: illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence is the knowledge of how to perform language functions, which are grouped in four macro-functions following Halliday's (1973): ideational (the way to convey meaning and experience), manipulative (using language in

an instrumental way to achieve ends), heuristic (the use of language to discover new things about our world and solving problems) and imaginative (using language beyond the 'here' and 'now'). The other component is the sociolinguistic competence which refers to the ability to use the language appropriately in a particular culture and in the various contexts or situations in that culture. This sensitivity to the context and the situation may entail sensitivity to differences in local geographical dialect and register, sensitivity to speaking a native like natural way which includes cultural variations in grammar and vocabulary. Another part of the sociolinguistic competence is the ability to interpret a particular conversation, one needs inner cultural understanding of a specific language, for example, a Welsh figure of speech as 'to go round the orme' (meaning 'to be long-winded') is only fully understandable within local Northern Welsh cultural idioms.

On contrary to Oller's model, and like the models of the structuralists, Bachman's and Canale's models include several components of language proficiency although the characterisation of the components is different.

2. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTING

Researchers as Johnson and Johnson (1999), and in order to measure second or foreign language proficiency tended to devise language testing instruments on the basis of the domains of language learning and proficiency. Tests which measure proficiency in knowledge of the linguistic system are known as *system-referenced tests* and those which measure proficiency in language processing are known as *performance-referenced tests* (p.209).

2.1. DISCRETE-POINT TESTS

One of the examples of system-referenced testing is discussed by Lado (1961). According to him, proficiency at the level system is not unitary but includes the four elements of phonology, lexis, syntax and discourse, in which every each of them should be measured separately. Tests like this are called *closed-response* or *discrete-point tests* (Johnson and Johnson, 1999: 210).

Discrete-point proficiency tests are the early theories of proficiency tests, influenced by structuralists, in which they considered the knowledge of language as the mastery of features of the language as a system. These tests are composed of several items which address a learner's skill in controlling one surface rule of language related to morphology, phonology, grammar or vocabulary, i.e., they attempt to measure proficiency in specific areas of competence, in the foreign language, in isolation and in a single productive or receptive mode of language use. Thus, the points of grammar chosen for assessment, for instance, would be tested one at a time and would be separated from that of vocabulary. Using the discrete-point testing, to assess the different proficiency components,, is known as psychometric testing which was popular in the 1960's and the 1970's, but came under attack because the test used is different from everyday types of language use.

On the development of language proficiency tests, we comment on the historical development of discrete point tests and the emergence of new views of language proficiency measurement, critical to the notion of discrete-point measurement. Two such views on language measurement are *integrative proficiency testing* and *research in the area of communicative competence* (Duran, 1984: 40). Such views see that language skills can be better evaluated and assessed in contexts where language is used naturally.

2.2. INTEGRATIVE TESTS

The integrative view of language proficiency testing contrasts the discrete-point view in the assumption that proficiency is better be assessed in integrating a number of elements in the scoring of items. Written dictation, cloze procedure completion of sentences, written composition, oral interviews, are types of integrative tests which require the learner to deal with language in such a way to involve coordination of various surface rules of language and may require other sets of social and cognitive skills related to the actual language use. In other words, these tests require use of the language necessary in real-life, meaningful situations.

'...it is the underlying cognitive process which makes performance on integrative tests similar to real life language use' (Rivera, 1984:51).

Students must use knowledge of the syntactic, semantic, discourse, sociolinguistic, and extralinguistic rules of language behaviour to formulate what they are about to say or write as well as to predict what they are about to hear or read. For instance, oral interviews rely on social interaction conventions. Integrative tests can be considered more direct measures of language proficiency.

Oller's (1979) pragmatic proficiency tests are a good example of what integrative tests are like:

'any procedure or task that causes the learner to process sequences of elements in a language that conform to the normal contextual constraints of that language, and which requires the learner to relate sequences of linguistic elements via pragmatic mapping to extralinguistic context'. (p.38)

tests in which language is used in normal ways, that structures of the language are related to real-life communication and not artificial language tasks. According to Oller, pragmatic language proficiency has two major constraints. The first is that the learners' use of language on pragmatic tests is constrained temporally and sequentially in the similar way of the real world occurrences of the language forms, and that comprises test materials or speech in testing situations. The second is that these tests use the language in a way similar to natural occurrences of language outside testing contexts or formal language testing environment. Pragmatic proficiency test in Oller's view require language use in artificial contexts as might happen.

2.3. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE RESEARCH

According to Baker (2006), as language competence is an integral part of language performance and not abstracted from it, measuring language competence needs to investigate the language of genuine communication.

Communicative competence research has been developed independently from research in proficiency testing, by sociologists, ethnographers and cultural anthropologists who were interested in language use and communication in everyday contexts.

Communicative competence refers to the various functions, involved in everyday sociocultural contexts, which can be *referential, social, and directive*. (Rivera, 1984: 49)

Referential functions mark speech acts which convey meanings and information encoded in speech between the interlocutors. Social functions mark speech acts that go beyond transmitting meaning and to include other information such as social roles, relationships, and shared identities

between the interlocutors. Directive functions refer to the use of speech in commands and requests.

These three functions are not separable in real communication, but the three may occur in the same speech. Rivera pointed out that a successful communication is at the core of the communicative competence research. It is viewed in terms of what Grice's 'cooperative principle of communication' shared among participants, *a reciprocal contract of communicative cooperation*. (Rivera, 1984: 49)

One of the main areas of interest for sociolinguists and conversational analysts in communicative competence research is the speakers' control of their discourse which reflects the social dynamics interaction. They investigated the discourse structure of the utterances and the relationship between these utterances in a conversation, such as "adjacency pairs", which refer to the explicit coupling of successive utterances of speakers following conventions of speech use and perceptions of the social purpose of utterances. For example:

The request. Grant A: "May I have some coffee?"

B: "Sure, help yourself."

Complaints- Apology: A: "It's half past 6:00."

B: "Sorry, I'm late."

So, the persons involved in a conversation must be able of understanding what one speaker says and what another is expected to say afterwards. This form of communicative competence is related to the conversationalists shared knowledge of a communicative setting.

Some areas of interest for conversational analysts enter indirectly in assessments of language proficiency, such as the broader organization of discourse in an interactional setting and how interlocutors take turns in a speech act. Unstructured conversations in informal social contexts, for example, show global organizational constraints, require the speakers to use the language effectively.

Another form of discourse behaviour investigated by researchers in communicative competence is *repairs* in a conversation. According to Richards 1980, the term "repair" refers to efforts by speakers to correct interactional trouble spots in a conversation. For instance, when a speaker is uncertain of what an earlier speaker said, disagrees with what another speaker has said, or when a speaker evidences some loss of fluency in speech. In the former cases, he uses a conversational repair such as, "what did you say" or "run that by me again", or some repairs that may reflect differences in points of view among speakers who require polite negotiation through a further discussion as in "Gee,..... I don't know" or "come onyou know better than that". The ability to use repairs is always a positive indicator of communicative skills, but, some forms of repair - such as coping with lack of fluency through - might be viewed as negative indicators of language ability from proficiency point of view.

Communicative competence research investigates the function of paralinguistic cues in speech or what is known as contextualization cues in which a part of the message load in speech. Many researchers show in their works that learners of English may use the contextualization cues inappropriately in speech that may not be understood for native speakers of English.

Integrative language testing might benefit from findings in communicative competence research, because there are aspects of language use that are not addressed specifically in existing assessment methods, and to learn how these aspects of skilled language use contribute to communication.

3. CONSIDERATIONS IN LANGUAGE TESTS

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), the importance of usefulness in language tests designing and developing, is identified in terms of six related features that can not be evaluated independently of each other. The relative importance of these qualities will vary from one testing situation to another. The fundamental consideration is to not ignore any of the qualities to

another. These qualities are: reliability, validity, authenticity, intractiveness, impact and practicality.

3.1. RELIABILITY

Reliability is a quality of test scores. It can be described as the consistency of measurement, the extent to which the same measurement approach would give the same results across different times, test forms, raters and other characteristics of the measurement context, assuming that the behaviour tested has not changed. Various test scores are due to other factors rather than the construct will be measured as the characteristics of the test tasks. In designing and developing language tests, variations in unmotivated task characteristics must be minimized, and then to estimate their effects on test scores to determine the extent to which minimizing such factors, as a source of inconsistency, can be successful.

'The investigation of reliability involves both logical and empirical research; we must identify sources of error and estimate the magnitude of their effects on test scores'. (Bachman, 1990: 161)

In the development and the use of foreign language tests, a fundamental point is to identify the potential sources of error in language measurement and to reduce their effect. Other than the language abilities tested, some factors affect foreign language learners production, such as poor health, fatigue, anxiety, lack of interest and motivation...etc. When these factors are reduced, measurement error is reduced too and reliability is increased, then we are satisfying a necessary condition for validity:

'...in order for a test score to be valid, it must be reliable',

(Bachman, 1990: 160).

3.2. VALIDITY

Validity is an important consideration in developing, interpreting, and use of language tests. This concept is related to the adequacy and appropriateness of test scores interpretation, and also to the other quality in language testing which is reliability. Unreliable test scores can not provide basis for valid interpretation.

With validity, we go beyond reliability of test scores, and we deal with the relationship between test performance and other types of performance in other contexts, that can be selected on the basis of test results interpretation we want to make. Validity was described by Messick (1989: 13) quoted by Bachman (1990:236) as:

'...an integrated evaluative judgement of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores'

Validity refers to the degree to which that evidence supports the inferences that are made from the scores. Validity of tests is related to other factors such as purpose, population and actual use of the test. Some tests may show similarity in form and content, but each one must be individually validated according to its stated purpose, population, and actual use.

Traditional classification of validity breaks it down into three types: content, criterion, and construct validity. However measurement specialists view these as aspects of a unitary concept of validity that includes all of them (Bachman, 1990).

Content validity concerns the specification of domains of content, ability and of test facets. Also to judge the extent to which the tasks included in the test are representatives of those specified in the domains. Bachman (1990) suggested some elements to be specified in test design: what the test measures; the attributes of the stimuli that will be presented to the test-taker; and the nature of response that the test-taker is expected to make (p.245).

Criterion validity concerns with a given measurement procedure and its relationship with other independent criteria. The chosen criteria may occur simultaneously with the administration of the test, and in some cases, it may be future behaviour that we can predict.

Construct validity is considered as the most important of the three types of validity. A test to be assumed valid it must meet standards for construct validity, because it includes matters of content and criterion, so to speak about construct validity is to speak about validity.

Test validation is the process of justifying a particular interpretation of test scores. The justification provided is an evidence of construct ability or an evidence of that the test scores reflect the area of language ability we intend to measure. Construct validation requires testable and interrelated hypotheses related to what we want to measure. When establishing construct validation, major problems may rise: the assumption that proficiency tests are valid according to those who construct and use them, inability to map out interrelationships of the different language elements and behaviour, and the absence of a precise tests' purpose.

Convergent and discriminant validation are two interrelated concepts, have been developed for similar testing conditions, they can help in investigating the construct validity. So that test is considered valid to the extent to which it agrees with other tests measuring the same abilities and skills.

3.3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Authenticity is another language test quality, it refers to the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the characteristics of a test taker, i.e. the interaction that occurs between them. *Interactiveness* pertains to the extent to which the constructs to be measured are involved in accomplishing the test task. *Impact* concerns the different ways in which test use affects the society, and the education system and the individuals

within those systems. Finally, *practicality* refers to the ways in which the test will be implemented in a given context, and if the test will be used at all.

5. CHOICE OF THE TEST

In language testing, language proficiency is conceptualized as the competence or the ability to use a language without considering how, where, and under what conditions it has been acquired. In other words, language proficiency is the ability to use the various components of a language, to communicate through the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), in culturally appropriate practices in real-life situations in the foreign language.

'...what it means to know a language goes beyond simplistic views of good pronunciation, correct grammar, and even mastery of rules of politeness. Knowing a language and how to use a language involves a mastery and control of a large number of interdependent components that interact with one another and that are affected by the nature of the situation in which communication takes place.'

(Valdès & Figueroa, 1994: 34).

In our investigation, about the mastery of the language, our reference to language proficiency will be measured through the students' essays in written expression exams.

This type of test, written composition, in which our study is examined, is for the important reason that it meets the integrative language test. Integrative tests meet the condition of being performance tests, that require the learner to be engaged in an extended act of communication either receptive or productive or both.

In response to the views of communicative language ability and communicative language use, written composition test supposed to measure a wide range of language abilities including grammatical, strategic, discourse, and sociolinguistic abilities. The communicative language use is based on the notion that language is interactive, direct, and authentic.

The essay writing test tends not only to be integrative but also requires the test takers to produce the language that is used in real interaction communication. In the characteristics of this test, authenticity generally refers to the use of communicative ability in authentic situations. Written composition as a type of integrative tests, is presumed to access to the communicative ability of the language learner to a greater extent. It can demonstrate an entire range of learner's competencies such as the cultural competence which is the aim of this study.

'Elements of culture, ... ethnicity, ..., and experience all bear upon the way different people respond to a writing skill...'

Brossel (1986: 175) quote by Krroll (1990: 76-77)

The major barrier to the use of this test is the time required to score the essays. So, written composition measures not only one but a whole range of linguistic and other communicative skills and components, and tends to place much weight on stylistic factors that have more to do with cultural preferences.

CONCLUSION

Testing or assessing proficiency in language teaching and learning is claimed to be important for teachers for the need to know what learners already know, what they have learned through the courses of instruction over a given period, and where their strengths and weaknesses are. So, they can plan their instructions appropriately and guide learners where they need to improve.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STUDY

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THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

We made the hypothesis in the first part, that a sociolinguistic model tends to explain language performance, generally, considered inferior in students with limited background about the culture and social life of English speaking societies.

The experiment aims to answer three major questions. The first question is concerned with the importance of the cultural competence in learning a foreign language and its impact in the learners' production in that language. The second question concerns the impact of the learners' positive attitudes towards the foreign culture and society in learning the foreign language. And the third question is about what can be considered as authentic material to provide information and knowledge about the culture and the way of life of English native speakers.

1. METHODOLOGY

We based our investigation on a correlational study between English language proficiency and learners' cultural background.

1.1. Population

This experience took place during the year 2007 with students of the second year of English, at the University of Guelma.

1.1.1. Choice of the sample.

The number of second year students at the University of Guelma was 119, grouped in five classes. Our study took into consideration a sample of 25 students, i.e., one of the five groups (1/5 of the students) which has been chosen randomly.

A questionnaire, with twenty items, was given to the students to answer in the classroom in time of 30 minutes. Its major aim is to ask about learners' background and attitudes about and towards the target culture.

One of the students has not answered on the questionnaire, so our percentage is based on 24 students.

1.1.2. Choice of the variables

Our study has three major aims, our analysis of the data will be through three stages:

1st aim: learners' cultural competence.

One important point to be in touch with a given culture and society, is to know about the greeting protocol, as it is different from one society to another.

The following table represents the number and the percentage of the students who answered the question if they know or do not, the greeting protocol within communities where English is spoken. And of course for the credibility of the answer, they were asked to illustrate with examples.

Knowledge about the greeting protocol	Yes	No	Total
Number of the students	06	18	24
percentage	25%	75%	100%

Table1.knowledge of greeting protocol.

The next table is about learners' knowledge about some aspects and dimensions of culture such as the prevailing beliefs, values, customs, and norms of native speakers of English. As we showed in the first part, that culture has an influential role in learning a second or foreign language. Like for the previous item, students were asked to illustrate with examples for the credibility of the answer.

Knowledge about values, beliefs, customs, norms...	Yes	No	Total
Number of the students	08	16	24
percentage	33.3%	66.7%	100%

Table2. Knowledge about cultural aspects.

The next point concerns the students' access to the culturally related materials (books, videos, tapes...etc):

Access to culture material	Yes	No	Total
Number of the students	14	10	24
Percentage	58.3%	41.7%	100%

Table3. Access to culturally related materials.

The answers of this question show a contradiction with the two first questions, when fourteen students mentioned that they have access to culturally related materials only eight of them know about the beliefs, customs, values...of English speaking community, and only six of them know about the greeting protocol.

The last question, in this part, is concerned with learners' understanding of the term cultural competence and their awareness to its importance in learning English. So, twenty students have no idea or clue about the term cultural competence and what it can be defined as, and only four students answered this question. Their answers ranged between, '*having the ability to grasp anything, all linguistic elements standing from or related to any cultural aspect*', '*for me cultural competence is a part of the linguistic competence, to learn a foreign language you must show an interest to its culture*', '*learning about other societies' way of life, and all aspects related to its culture*' and '*the way of life of other societies, their beliefs and values, and here we talk about English speaking societies*'.

2nd aim: learners' attitudes towards the target language and culture

The second aim of this study involves the analysis of the students' attitudes towards foreign people, places and towards learning foreign languages.

Research showed that there is a positive relationship between language learners' attitudes and motivation and their foreign language achievement.

'Motivation refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language'.

(Gardner, 1985: 10).

Gardner and Lambert (1972), suggested three categories of attitude related to foreign language learning:

- Attitudes towards the target language community;
- Attitudes towards learning the language;
- And attitudes towards learning languages and language learning in general.

They pointed out that the attitude of the learner towards the target language culture is the most important factor influencing foreign language learning. The three basic conceptions, Gardner and Lambert (1972), focus on are:

1. Authoritarianism refers to antidemocratic feelings and generally measured, reflecting a generalised prejudice of foreign people.
2. Social dissatisfaction or 'anomie' shows the feeling of finding oneself between two cultures rather than belonging to one or the other.
3. ethnocentrism refers to people who are suspicious of or prejudiced towards foreign people or ideas. And this is generally measured through attitudes towards the foreigners.

'Learners who have strong ethnocentric or authoritarian attitude or who have learned to be prejudiced toward foreign peoples are unlikely to approach the language learning task with an integrative outlook'.

(Gardner and Lambert, 1972: 16)

In a previous study, Lambert (1961) demonstrated a link between ethnocentrism and poor achievements in the learning of French. He found that American learners of French, who have American-speaking background and ethnocentric and prejudiced attitudes towards French-speaking people are likely to have poor performance.

'All the research and the experimentation with which I am familiar indicates that the most stable and highly correlated prerequisite for the variable of language performance is that of the attitude taken by the learner to the subject, the country and the people who speak the language...'

(Piepho, 1981: 45).

It was suggested that foreign language instructors should become aware of students' motivation and attitudes in the classroom, of why they pursue foreign language and why they studied the language.

Seven items were used to know about the students' attitudes towards learning English, and cultures and societies where English is spoken. The following table represents students' answers about studying English: whether it was their first choice or not.

First choice	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	18	06	24
percentage	75%	25%	100%

Table4. The attitude towards learning English.

The students whose their answers were affirmative, they were required to mention their reasons for such a choice. They showed a positive attitude and a great motivation to learn English, their answers varied from, *'I like English very much'*, *'English is regarded as the first language in the world'*, *'it's my best language'*, *'I want to live in U.S.A. or England'*, *'it was always my dream to speak English fluently'*.

Then, the students were asked if they are interested in other societies in general.

Interest in other societies	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	24	00	24
Percentage	100%	00%	100%

Table 5. The attitude towards other societies.

Also, they were asked if they like foreign and exotic people from foreign and different cultures.

Liking foreign people	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	19	05	24
Percentage	79.2%	20.8%	100%

Table 6. The attitude towards foreign people.

The following table represents the students' attitudes about experiencing others' way of life and learning about another people's culture, places and customs.

Experiencing and learning others' way of life and culture.	yes	No	Total
Number of students	18	06	24
percentage	75%	25%	100%

Table 7. The attitude towards experiencing and learning others way of life, culture.

Students were asked if they like the way of life of another society more than theirs, and those who affirmed they have to mention which society or societies.

to like a way of life of other societies more than theirs	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	15	9	24
percentage	62.5%	37.5%	100%

Table 8. The attitude towards the way of life of other societies.

The following table represents students' intention to live in a foreign country:

Students' intention to live in foreign country.	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	20	4	24
percentage	83.3%	16.7%	100%

Table 9. Students' intention to live in a foreign country.

What is noticeable here, in the last two items is that eight students mentioned English speaking societies (such as Canada, United States, Britain, New Zealand). And the others mentioned different Arabic countries (such as Dubai, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Golf countries in general), in which the same language, religion, values, traditions...etc are shared with the Algerian society and culture. Comparisons across Arabic countries cultures can very easily stop at the level of superficial customs and habits whose significance as symptoms of underlying beliefs is not explored. It is assumed that beneath the surface all Arabs have essentially the same culture and civilization. So, attitudes towards Arabic countries culture are not regarded as attitudes towards a foreign and different culture.

We noticed that the majority of the students have an intention to move to foreign countries, which may reveal a contradiction with the previous questions. But, in fact, their intentions to live in foreign countries are not because of their positive attitudes but because of the economic and social conditions.

3rd aim: influential materials in learning culture

Another nine questions were used here to demonstrate the influential materials that the learners use and prefer in learning about the target culture.

Newspapers, magazines, books, music, the broadcasting media and the internet, can help in language learning and provide with cultural background. They can be used by learners

independently or what is known as 'self-access learning' (Gardner and Miller, 1994: 53) that can happen anywhere.

'...the use of English in non-interactive contexts such as reading books, magazines and newspapers, listening to songs, watching movies, using the internet, and so on. The category also explicit cultural/ intellectual motives...'

(Munoz, 2006: 249).

'novels, poems, newspaper and magazine articles,... written in the target language for the genre-intended target language audience can all be considered authentic texts'. (Crossley et al., 2007)

Good readers can take advantage from these authentic texts, using them to help in deriving the cultural meanings and aspects of the language. The reading materials cover a wide range of cultural knowledge and provided enough extra-linguistic clues of socio-cultural perspectives.

The following table shows the reading habits of the students:

reading habits	always	frequently	sometimes	never	Total
number of students	05	03	16	00	24
percentage	20.8%	12.5%	66.7%	00%	100%

Table10. The reading habits.

Then, the students were asked to precise the language of their reading. In this questionnaire we specified three languages (Arabic, French, and English), some students may read in more than one language. Students' answers show that most of them read in the three languages which may not represent a credible answers. The following table represents the reading habits in the English language, of the students who really have reading habits (those who have answered with always and frequently).

Reading in English	always	Frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of the students	04	04	00	00	08
percentage	50%	50%	00%	00%	100%

Table 11. The reading habits in English.

The following table represents the reading habits in the French language:

Reading in French	always	Frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of the students	02	01	01	04	08
percentage	25%	12.5%	12.5%	50%	100%

Table 12. The reading habits in French.

The following table represents the reading habits in the Arabic language:

Reading in Arabic	always	Frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of the students	02	03	02	01	08
percentage	25%	37.5%	25%	12.5%	100%

Table 13. The reading habits in Arabic.

Then, the students were asked about what they read, and we have put three major propositions: newspapers, magazines, and books.

According to Mishan (2005), newspapers are the most easily available and accessible of the news media, anyone, anywhere can buy a newspaper (foreign language newspapers are today generally available internationally), the informative value of the newspaper in terms of the quantities of topical and cultural provided in a single issue is unparalleled by any other medium. The following table represents the number of students interested in reading newspapers:

Reading newspapers	always	frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of students	06	06	04	08	24
percentage	25%	25%	16.7%	33.3%	100%

Table 14. Reading newspapers.

The following table represents the number of reading magazines students:

Reading magazines	always	frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of students	01	02	11	10	24
percentage	4.2%	8.3%	45.8%	41.7%	100%

Table 15. Reading magazines.

The following table represents the reading of books:

Reading books	always	frequently	sometimes	Never	Total
Number of students	07	05	09	03	24
percentage	29.2%	20.8%	37.5%	12.5%	100%

Table 16. Reading books.

The students were asked about the nature of books that they read, their answers were ranged between historical, literary, religious, and scientific books. We took into consideration only the two types (historical, literary books), we thought can serve the goal of the study.

Literary books, for instance, represent a rich source for developing cultural competence of foreign language learners, they introduce learners to an unfamiliar experience through responding to the story from different perspectives and identification of a foreign culture.

Literary books invite their readers to view subjectively a nation or an ethnic group by portraying specific values, prejudices and stereotypes, but they also offer their audience the chance to exchange their culturally restricted points of view together with the writer.

These books provide enough space for learners in which they can experiment different perspectives and culturally different points of view as well as compare their own culture to the culture in the text.

The following table represents the number of students who are interested in historical and all literary genres books.

Types of books	Historical	Literary	Historical/ Lit.	Total
Number of students	06	07	02	15
Percentage	40%	46.7%	13.3%	100%

Table 17. Types of books.

Squire views the new media or non print media –of film, television, videotape, photography, filmstrips, records, audio tapes, radio and any other combination of these used in multimedia presentations – as a means of communication, both individual and mass, that offer new ways of learning and knowing in a cultural climate. Gerbner (1974) claimed that:

' Teachers and schools no longer enjoy much autonomy, let alone their former monopoly, as the public dispensers of knowledge. The formal educational enterprise exists in a cultural climate largely dominated by the informal "curriculum" of the mass media'

Quoted by Squire (1977: 97).

The following table represents the type of the music that the students listen to:

Type of music	Oriental	Occidental	Both	Total
Number of students	03	06	05	14
percentage	21.4%	42.9%	35.7%	100%

Table 18. Type of music.

And eight students don't listen to the music for religious reasons as they argued.

language	English	French	Both	Total
Number of students	04	00	10	14
percentage	28.6%	00%	71.4%	100%

Table 19. Language of the music.

Then, students were asked to state their three favourite channels. Their answers broke down between English speaking, French speaking and Arabic speaking channels.

channels	English	Arabic	Eng./ Ar.	Engl/ Ar./ Fr.	Total
Number of students	06	11	04	03	24
percentage	24%	45.8%	16.7%	12.5%	100%

Table 20. TV channels.

We asked the students about what they prefer to watch on TV, and we proposed some suggestions such as: movies and series, news, sports and we left it open to them, expecting some answers such as talk show, real TVbut only few students added cartoons.

So, we are going to consider only news, and movies and series as they serve the study.

TV programmes	Movies and series	News	Both	Total
Number of students	13	03	06	22
percentage	59.1%	13.6%	27.3%	100%

Table 21. TV programmes.

Two students watch only sports.

For those who watch movies and series, they were asked about their type:

Type of movies and series	English speaking American / British....	Arabic	Both	Total
Number of students	05	06	08	19
Percentage	26.3%	31.6%	42.1%	100%

Table 22. Type of movies and series.

Then, they were asked about the news channels.

News channels	English speaking channels	Arabic speaking channels	Both	Total
Number of students	05	02	02	09
Percentage	55.6%	22.2%	22.2%	100%

Table 23. News channels.

1.2. Scores analysis and data collection:

The tests used in this study were students' writing essays in the two term exams. Each test taking lasted 120 minutes but not all students took the whole time.

The questionnaire filling lasted 30minutes.

Once the students passed the second term exam in written expression, we took the scores of the two exams and we worked with the mean of the two marks. According to their scores the students were grouped into 3 classes. Learners' score means were ranged between 3.75 and 13.62

Scale	High level	Intermediate	Low
	Score > 11.5	Score 11.5 <= ... <= 9	Score <9
Number of students	06	12	06
percentage	25%	50%	25%

Table 24. Scale of scores.

As it is a correlational study, and in order to make correlations with some variables, we needed to know the mean score, the score variance and the standard deviation of both tests.

	Test one	Test two	Whole test
Mean Score	9.72	10.22	9.97
Score Variance	5.14	5.85	5.38
Standard Deviation	2.27	2.42	2.32

Table 25. Statistical analysis.

Test two has a higher mean score than test one, which shows a progress in learners' performance. This is due to the lectures about writing techniques that the students had during the whole year and due to the lectures that the students started to have in their second year of civilization and literature associated with the communities (American and British) where English is spoken. These lectures represent rich sources to equip the students with knowledge about the target culture.

The standard deviation is the most common measure of reliability, it refers to the spread of behaviours among the subjects. Here, the standard deviation in both tests showed a high variation.

'The higher the standard deviation, the more varied and more heterogeneous a group in a given behaviour, since the behaviour is distributed more widely within the group'

Seliger (1990: 217)

To examine the reliability and validity of the collected data, we need to use the procedure of correlation. The correlation coefficient measures the degree to which two things vary together or oppositely. First, the maximum positive correlation is +1.00, then if the two standardized variables covary positively and perfectly, the average of their products across the cases will equal +1.00. On the other hand, if two things vary oppositely and perfectly, then the correlation will equal -1.00.

We calculated the correlation coefficient between the two tests, and we got the following coefficient: - Test one / Test two: $r = .96$.

We therefore have a measure which tells us whether two things covary near perfectly and positively, of the coefficient is, say, .80 or .90. So, with correlation coefficient around .96, we say that the corresponding variables closely vary together in the same direction.

2. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

2.1. CORRELATIONS OF VARIABLES AND SCORES:

The number of the variables in this research, conducted in the classroom-setting, was a big. We tried to restrict the number of variables we used in the correlation with the test scores.

A number of variables we used were not really influential such: attitude and motivation towards learning English in which most of the students showed positive attitudes. And attitudes towards foreign societies which can be associated with attitudes towards foreign people. Also the students' intention to live in a foreign country which is because of economic and social conditions and not because of positive attitudes towards other societies. And finally, reading in both languages Arabic and French as we are more interested in the English language.

We started the correlations with the first three variables concerning students' cultural competence.

The following table illustrates the performance as correlated with the students' knowledge about greeting protocol:

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	06	18	24
Score > 11.5	05	01	06
Score 11.5=<...<=9	01	11	12
Score < 9	00	06	06

Table 26. The knowledge of greeting protocol.

For the high scores, five students have background of the greeting protocol, representing a percentage of 83.3%.

The following table illustrates how scores are distributed according to students' cultural background:

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	08	16	24
Score > 11.5	04	02	06
Score 11.5= \dots <=9	03	09	12
Score < 9	01	05	06

Table 27. The knowledge about target culture aspects.

Among eight who have knowledge about the target culture aspects, four with high scores representing a percentage of 50%, and one with low score, representing a percentage of 12.5%.

The following table represents the correlation of students' scores and the access to cultural materials:

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	14	10	24
Score > 11.5	06	00	06
Score 11.5= \dots <=9	06	06	12
Score < 9	02	04	06

Table 28. The access to culturally related materials.

All the students with high scores access to culturally related materials, and only six out of twelve students with scores between 9 and 11.5 who access to culturally related materials representing a percentage of 42.9 %, whereas only two students out of six who with low scores who access to culturally related materials.

What can be noticed with the different items concerning the students' background of the target culture, and with the students of high scores (above 11.5), the cultural competence seems to play an important role in their performance.

Then we analysed the items concerning the students' attitudes towards the target language and culture. The following table illustrates how scores covary with students attitudes towards foreign and exotic people:

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	19	05	24
Score > 11.5	06	00	06
Score 11.5= \dots <=9	09	03	12
Score < 9	04	02	06

Table 29. Attitudes towards foreign people.

All the students with high score (above 11.5) have positive attitudes towards the foreign people, and four out of six with low scores.

This table illustrates how students' performance correlates with the attitude to experience and learn about other's way of life and culture:

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	18	06	24
Score > 11.5	06	00	06
Score 11.5= \dots <=9	09	03	12
Score < 9	03	03	06

Table 30. Experiencing and learning about others way of life and culture.

Also, with this item, all the students with high scores have positive attitudes and desire to experience and learn about the way of life of foreign societies.

For the next item 15 students affirmed their positive attitudes to others' way of life, eight of them mentioned English speaking societies and other European countries, while seven talked about Arabic countries with which we share the same cultural aspects and the same way of life. So, we considered only the other eight students with positive attitudes towards foreign cultures.

	Yes	No	Nbr of stud.
	08	16	24
Score > 11.5	05	01	06
Score 11.5= \leq ... \leq 9	02	10	12
Score < 9	01	05	06

Table 31. Attitudes towards way of life of other societies.

For the high scores, five students have positive attitudes towards the way of life of other societies, and like it more than theirs, representing a percentage of 62.5%, and only two students out of the twelve with intermediate scores do, representing a percentage of 25%, whereas only one student out of six with low score does, representing a percentage of 12.5%.

Through the different items concerning students' attitudes, we noticed that positive attitudes towards foreign people and their way of life, assumptions, values, customs, and concepts, have an impact on students' learning, performance.

The following table illustrates how reading habits covary with the students' scores:

	always	frequently	sometimes	never	Nbr of stud.
	05	03	16	00	
Score > 11.5	04	01	01	00	06
Score 11.5= \leq ... \leq 9	00	02	10	00	12
Score < 9	01	00	05	00	06

Table 32. The reading habits.

80% of the students who always read have high scores. This proves that reading is a fundamental source to competence in learning a foreign language, including the cultural competence.

The following table represents the influence of the language of reading on learners' performance:

	always	frequently	sometimes	never	Nbr of stud.
	04	04	00	00	
Score > 11.5	03	01	00	00	04
Score 11.5= \dots \leq 9	00	02	00	00	02
Score < 9	01	01	00	00	02

Table 33. Reading in English.

The following table represents the students' performance as correlated with reading books:

	always	frequently	sometimes	never	Nbr of stud.
	07	05	09	03	
Score > 11.5	03	02	01	00	06
Score 11.5= \dots \leq 9	02	03	05	02	12
Score < 9	02	00	03	01	06

Table 34. Reading books.

The number of students with high and intermediate scores (above 9), and who read either always or frequently is ten, representing a percentage of 83.3%, whereas only two students with low scores always read.

The next criterion is the types of books which the students read usually:

	historical	literary	Hist. / lit.	Nbr of stud.
	06	07	02	
Score > 11.5	02	03	01	06
Score 11.5= \leq ... \leq 9	03	03	01	07
Score < 9	01	01	00	02

Table 35. Types of books.

In reading the historical and literary books, there are thirteen students out of fifteen with either high or intermediate scores, representing a percentage of 86.7%.

Reading books improve learners' competence, especially for historical and literary books which represent a major source to provide background about the social and the cultural aspects of the society of the writer, or where the story took place

	Oriental	Occidental	Both	Nbr of stud.
	03	06	05	
Score > 11.5	00	02	02	04
Score 11.5= \leq ... \leq 9	03	02	02	07
Score < 9	00	02	01	03

Table 36. Type of the music.

We found that this variable does not correlate with high performance and scores. The number of the students who listen to foreign music is approximately the same in the different groups. The music of the foreign language represents an authentic material that help in improving learners' pronunciation and listening skill, a source of new vocabulary, but not a rich source for cultural background.

The next items represent how media correlates with high score:

	Eng.	Ar.	Eng./ Ar.	Eng./ Ar./ Fr.	Nbr of stud.
	06	11	04	03	
Score > 11.5	04	00	00	02	06
Score 11.5=<...<=9	02	07	03	00	12
Score < 9	00	04	01	01	06

Table 37. TV channels.

All the students of high scores prefer to watch either only English speaking channels or English, French and Arabic speaking channels, representing a percentage of 46.1 %, whereas only two students with low scores watch English speaking channels, representing a percentage of 15.3%.

The following table represents the correlation between performance and TV shows that the students watch:

	Movies & series	News	Both	Nbr of stud.
	13	03	06	
Score > 11.5	02	00	04	06
Score 11.5=<...<=9	09	03	00	12
Score < 9	02	00	02	04

Table 38. TV programmes.

The following table illustrates the correlation between learners who watch American and British movies and series and their performance:

	English speaking American/ British....	Arabic	Both	Nbr of stud.
	05	06	08	
Score > 11.5	02	00	04	06
Score 11.5=<...<=9	03	03	03	09
Score < 9	00	03	01	04

Table 39. Type of movies and series.

All the students who had high scores watch American and British series and movies, whereas only one student out of six with low scores, watch them representing a percentage of 7.7%.

	English speaking channels	Arabic speaking channels	Both	Nbr of stud.
	05	02	02	
Score > 11.5	03	00	01	04
Score 11.5=<...<=9	01	01	01	03
Score < 9	01	01	00	02

Table 40. News channels.

Seven students follow the news on English speaking channels: four of them had high scores representing a percentage of 57.1%, two had scores between 9 and 11.5, representing 28.6%; and only one student with a low score, representing a percentage of 14.3%.

Through the last items, the impact of media in language learning is very obvious. Media is an authentic material, can be used not only to improve linguistic competence but also the sociocultural competence.

2.2. IMPLICATIONS:

Several implications can be drawn on the basis of the findings of this study. One possible implication is that culture teaching should be integrated in language teaching. Addressing the associated culture with the language is very important for learning proficiency. The cultural competence is one of the competencies that foreign language learner needs, to develop and facilitate the learning of a foreign language.

Another possible implication is that the language teacher or lecturer should work on learners' cultural awareness, so that can help them in holding positive attitudes towards foreign people and culture, which can create a great motivation for them, in which researchers have underlined its importance in learning the foreign culture and consequently improving the language learning.

So, culture works not only as a barrier but also as an aid to language learning when the learners are familiar with concepts typical of the target culture.

Similarly, as there is a need to develop the communicative competence as well as the cultural one in language learning and teaching, emerged what is called cultural and communicative authenticity. It is important to consider the authentic materials that can enrich the learners' background about the target culture. In our case, the teacher and the students come from the same cultural background, and here a great importance is in using authentic texts that can establish a *sphere of interculturality* (Kramsch, 1993). Authentic texts are texts created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it is produced.

'Texts used for learning a language have to represent the culture of the target language, they must be ones that are products both of and for that culture; i.e., authentic texts'. (Mishan, 2005: 46)

According to Mishan, the culture presented in some authentic materials is not explicit, students need to be trained to extract the appropriate information from the material.

'Rather like a page written in invisible ink, the cultural message is there to be read, but only if one has learned how to make the invisible writing appear'.

(Mishan, 2005: 46)

Authentic materials can include films, news broadcasts, and television shows, web sites, and photographs, magazines, newspapers, restaurant menus, travel brochures, literary books, and other printed materials.

CONCLUSION

The study, that took place on Algerian students at the University of Guelma, stresses the fact that culture is an important element in learning a foreign language. It showed that the students who have a higher level of proficiency are distinguished from others in various issues.

Students of higher level have a considerable knowledge about the English-speaking societies, their life and their culture, especially about the American society.

They also, have positive attitudes towards foreign people, culture, and the way of life, which create a great motivation to learn about the associated culture, which consequently helps in the English language learning process.

These students are also characterized by their access to influential culturally authentic materials such as literary books, television shows, movies, newspapers and magazines.

Cultural knowledge, positive attitudes towards foreign people, cultures and languages, and the access to culturally related materials, are points needed to consider in learning and teaching a foreign language.

CHAPTER FIVE

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Introduction.

- 1. Views of culture teaching**
- 2. Towards an intercultural speaker**
 - 2.1. The intercultural approach**
 - 2.2. The intercultural communicative competence**
- 3. Ethnographic approach**
- 4. A model for language and culture teaching**
- 5. Language teacher as culture teacher**

Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces approaches towards the teaching of culture in language education, such as the intercultural approach and the ethnographic approach which can improve the learners' intercultural communicative competence and help them to be intercultural speakers. It also shows the importance of the language teacher to be a culture teacher.

'Language is not simply a reflector of an objective cultural reality. It is an integral part of that reality through which other parts are shaped and interpreted. It is both a symbol of the whole which shapes and in turn shaped by sociocultural actions, beliefs and values. In engaging in language, speakers are enacting sociocultural phenomena; in acquiring language children acquire culture... given this theoretical viewpoint, it follows that to teach language without culture is fundamentally flawed...'

(Byram, 1991:18)

1. VIEWS OF CULTURE TEACHING

Background of the foreign culture plays an important role to successful language learning. Foreign language teachers need to focus on culture in language teaching. According to Holme (2003), the introduction of culture into the language curriculum can be according to five views which vary in their perception of how culture is central to language teaching. The first three views: the communicative view, the classical curriculum view and instrumental or culture-free-language view, deal with cultural content as marginal. The two other views: the deconstructionist view and the competence view deal with both language and culture as being learned in a dynamic interaction and each of them is necessary in the understanding of the other.

The *communicative view* is derived from the communicative approach. The focus is on teaching language that can be used in real life situations, but culture is introduced as a source of

what, Holme (2003:18) quoted from Dudley-Evan and St John (1998:11), '*carrier content*' for the language points from which it can be separated. For instance, when a teacher introduces a video about the recent race riots in the UK, the purpose is to reveal the discussion skills and to give the students a language peculiar to this type of contexts, but not to enhance the tension in the multi-cultural Britain. In the *classical curriculum view*, language is a secondary to its function as an access to enhance the modes of thought that community held. This is similar to the ancient learning of languages, associated with their philosophical traditions, where the main aim is to provide learning of principles of logical thought.

The *instrumental or culture-free-language view*. This view is concerned with a hidden political and cultural agenda of a language. English is the dominant language in the world because of the socioeconomic power of English speaking countries (Britain and United States for example), exporting English language to other societies, such as the Arabic countries, is secondary to exporting culture, background and value systems.

The *deconstructionist view* refers to some quite different strands of thought. It might draw upon on the critical literacy perspectives and critical discourse analysis where the cultural construction of text means that the language student may be influenced by the implicit message of the text. The concept of the language as a social construction reflects the language's structure as communicative needs of social context, so that language is seen as a language of a socially constructed meaning of the social order and the value systems implicit in its form of use.

As an example of this approach in the classroom is the grammatical metaphor (expressing a meaning through a lexico-grammatical form that can express different meanings), as in a phrase such as 'glass crack growth'. Such grammatical metaphor complicates the task of using English in a scientific discourse because it is not congruent with the natural reference to things as nouns, and actions as verbs. The metaphor occurs in the previous phrase because the process or the action of growing which must be referred to by a verb, here is represented by a noun phrase.

Deconstructing the use of such nominalisations might provide students with an understanding of certain types of text as well as with a mechanism which can help them in participating in the construction of such discourse.

The *competence view*, according to Byram (1989), and Byram and Fleming (1998), a language's culture is essential and necessary to a full understanding of a language's meaning and to successful language learning. Background of culture represents a necessary competence to grasp the exact meaning of the language, so learning a foreign language must be completed with a sustained and ethnographically structure encounter with the language's culture.

2. TOWARD AN INTERCULTURAL SPEAKER

Learning a foreign language was predicted through the distinction between native speakers and non-native speakers. Traditionally, native speaker competence was regarded as the goal of language learning.

In discussing the nature of native speakership, those who were born into a language were considered its native speakers, with intuitions that non-native speakers did not have. Native speakership was viewed as an uncontroversial privilege of birth. For Chomsky, intuitions are dependent to grammar, in that sense, native speakers had no social reality. But in fact, the social environment plays a central role. Critique of Chomsky, Hymes developed the concept of communicative competence as a necessary component in language learning. To understand language acquisition, emphasis is not only on grammatical competence but also the appropriate use of the language is required.

The question is: what kind of education is necessary to use socially acceptable language? That is the education necessary to acquire all native speakers' capacities, i.e., intuitions about grammar, discourse and pragmatic control, and interpreting capabilities.

For the interpretation capabilities, Kramersch quoted Garfinkel (1972: 304) claim that *'the basis of culture is not shared knowledge, but shared rules of interpretations'*. Kramersch (1998) viewed that, over their lifetime, speakers acquire a range of rules of interpretation that they use consciously and appropriately in the different social contexts related to the world around them. So, what describes a 'competent language user', is not the ability to use the language according to the linguistic and social rules, but rather the adaptability to use accurate and appropriate forms needed in a given social context of use or 'the intercultural competence'.

Byram and Zarate (1994), proposed for foreign language learners, that instead of trying to come near native speakers, they better to be taught how to become 'intercultural speakers'. The learners are not expected to become native or near-native speakers but to become intermediaries, mediating between potentially conflicting behaviours and belief systems in their own and others' social lives. The intercultural speaker is someone, who in a comparative and relative way, is learning about their own and others' cultural practices in a mutually reinforcing relationship as well as comparative perspective, he takes a critical perspective both on their own cultural practices and that of others.

2.1. THE INTERCULTURAL APPROACH

Kramersch (1998) pointed out that instead of a pedagogy oriented toward the native speaker, then better a pedagogy to be oriented towards the intercultural speaker and to develop language learners' 'intercultural' communicative competence. That is learners' ability to analyse, reflect upon and interpret foreign cultural phenomena when using the foreign language.

Corbett (2003) assumed that in communicative methods of foreign language teaching, language is viewed as a means of *'bridging an information gap'*, in which learners can automatically acquire and develop their linguistic components and skills to an extent of native speaker competence. This view of language and linguistic improvement neglect culture, despite

the efforts of many researchers to draw attention to the importance of culture in language teaching. Cultural component still difficult to put in practice and marginal in designing language teaching materials.

Since late 1980s, a number of educationalists pointed out that an intercultural approach to foreign language teaching can improve what a language does and what objectives language teaching should achieve.

Many attempts to integrate culture in language teaching took place, since the importance of language social function is acknowledgeable, and the use of the language for explicitly and implicitly cultural goals is obvious. An intercultural approach broadens the language teaching objectives from an emphasis on the four skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing- proficiency to improve cultural skills, in other words to improve and develop intercultural competence and not only native speaker competence (Byram,1997).

In sum, main goal of an intercultural approach is language development and improvement as well as the aim of intercultural understanding and mediation. The intercultural approach as it contributes to language teaching it has to do with other disciplines such as the traditional ones: linguistics and psychology, the well established: anthropology and literary studies, and recently with media and cultural studies.

Through an intercultural approach to language teaching, learners should have the opportunity to:

- appreciate the similarities and differences between their own culture and the cultures of the communities where the target language is spoken;
- identify with the experience and perspective of people in the countries and communities where the target language is spoken;
- use this knowledge to develop a more objective view of their own customs and ways of thinking.

(Byram, 1994: 15)

An intercultural approach gives teachers as well as learners a clearly defined set of purposes. This process includes changes and reconsideration in attitudes, concepts, beliefs, identity and values.

2.2. THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

In foreign language education context, the intercultural competence is linked with communicative competence which refers to the ability to use the foreign language linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically in an appropriate way. The intercultural communicative competence, then, is based on communicative competence and enlarged to include the intercultural competence (the knowledge, skills and attitudes together make up intercultural competence).

The intercultural competence is the ability to cope with cultural experiences, in which the speakers possess a number of characteristics and competencies such as the ability to see the world through others' eyes, the ability to act as cultural mediator, the ability to look upon oneself through the outside, the ability to use culture learning skills...etc.

The definition of intercultural communicative competence developed by Byram (1997) is based on five *savoirs*, integrated with the various dimensions of communicative competence.

- The first *savoir*, *savoirs* defined by Byram as '*knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor's country on the one hand, and similar knowledge of the processes and interactions at individual and societal levels, on the other hand*' (Byram, 1997: 35). These *savoirs* includes people's behaviours, values and beliefs, words and gestures they use...etc., which always carry cultural meaning.
- *Savoir-apprendre* refers to the capacity to learn culture and to relate the meaning to cultural phenomena

- *savoir-comprendre*, is related to *savoir-apprendre* and it concerns the ability to interpret and relate cultures
- *Savoir-faire* concerns the ability to act in an intercultural competent way, in intercultural setting, and to take into consideration the cultural identity of the interlocutor and to act in appropriate way.
- *Savoir-être* and *savoir-s'engager*, both refer to the general disposition that is characterised by a critical engagement with the foreign culture and one's own culture and the capacity and willingness to get rid off egocentric attitudes and perceptions and the ability to establish a relationship between one's own and the foreign culture. (Byram, 1997: 54).

Byram (1997) developed a definition of intercultural communicative competence, in terms of objectives, emphasizing: attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

Attitudes: refers to curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.

- willingness to take opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality, and to question presuppositions in cultural practices and products in one's own environment;
- interest in discovering other perspectives on the interpretation of familiar and unfamiliar phenomena in one's own and other cultures and cultural practices;
- readiness to experience the different stages of adaptation to and interaction with another culture during a period of residence.

Knowledge: of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.

It comprises knowledge about:

- historical and contemporary relationships between one's own one's interlocutors' countries;

- the means of achieving contact with interlocutors from another country at a distance or proximity;
- the types of cause and process of misunderstanding between interlocutors of different cultural origins;
- the national memory of one's own country and how its events are related to and seen from the perspective one's interlocutor's country;
- the national memory of one's interlocutors country and the perspective on it from one's own;
- the national definitions of geographical space in one's own country and how these are perceived from the perspective of other countries;
- the national definitions of geographical space in one's interlocutor's country and the perspective on them from one's own;
- the process and institutions of socialisation in one's own and one's interlocutors country;
- social distinctions and their principal makers, in one's own country and one's interlocutor's institutions, and perceptions of them, which impinge on daily life within one's own and one's interlocutor's country and which conduct and influence relationships between them;
- the processes of social interaction in one's interlocutor's country.

Skills of relating and interpreting: concerns the ability to interpret a text and event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to events from one's own.

It concerns the ability to

- identify ethnocentric perspectives in a document and event, and explain their origins;
- identify areas of misunderstanding and disfunction in an interaction and explain them in terms of each of the cultural systems present;
- mediate between conflicting interpretations of phenomena.

Skills of discovery and interaction: refers to the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices, and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. It includes different abilities of:

- elicit from an interlocutor the concepts and the values of documents or events and to develop an explanatory system susceptible of application to other phenomena;
- identify significant references within and across cultures and elicit their significance and connotations;
- identify similar and dissimilar processes of interaction, verbal and non-verbal, and negotiate an appropriate use of them in specific circumstances;
- Use in real-time communication an appropriate combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes to interact with interlocutors from a different country and culture, taking into consideration the degree of one's existing familiarity with the country and culture and the extent of difference between one's own and the other;
- identify contemporary and past relationships between one's own and the other culture and country;
- identify and make use of public and private institutions which facilitate contact with other countries and cultures;
- use in real-time knowledge, skills and attitudes for mediation between interlocutors of one's own and foreign culture.

Critical cultural awareness: refers to the ability to:

- identify and interpret explicit or implicit values in documents and events in one's own and other cultures;
- make an evaluative analysis of the documents and events which refers to an explicit perspective and criteria;

- interact and mediate in intercultural exchanges in accordance with explicit criteria, negotiating, where necessary, a degree of acceptance of them by drawing upon one's knowledge, skills and attitudes.

(Byram, 1997: 49-53)

3. ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Ethnography, technically, refers to an anthropological description of a community through a systematic observation, usually, by a person who has lived amongst the community as a 'participant observer'. Ethnographers give a detailed description of language behaviour within the community. The purpose is to come to a deeper understanding of how individuals view and participate into their own social and cultural worlds. Recently, ethnography enlarged to include a range of research techniques in media research, cultural studies, and research on second language learning and teaching. Also, teachers, material designers and learners have urged to develop ethnographic skills.

Social scientists and anthropologists have developed concepts and theoretical models based on the ethnographic approaches.

An ethnographical approach can add an intercultural dimension in learning a language, Roberts (2001) illustrated with the example of the idea of family which is generally covered at two levels: linguistic and communicative. At the linguistic level, a course about 'family' includes the vocabulary of familial relationships, and syntactic structures may be practiced and presented through family setting. At the communicative level, students may be taught a range of functions for communicating with a foreign family, for e.g., how to greet, how to thank. And at the intercultural competence level, *the theme of family involves understanding the discourse attached to the word 'family' as it is used interactionally within a particular community* (p: 36).

This means a dynamic conceptualization of meanings of 'family' for a particular community,

how those meanings are lived in the practices of the daily life, and how they relate to institutional constructions of the term. Roberts stated the study of blind students in Germany, through an exchange program, where many of them were distanced from their families in unexpected ways with a tension between recognising the support the family gave them and resisting it. So, it is difficult to be culturally competent without understanding and experiencing the everyday life of the community.

An ethnographic approach to language learning involves accepting a new set of purposes for language learning and teaching such as integrating cultural and language learning for a successful communication and interaction, i.e., a kind of preparing learners to interact and communicate in societies and cultures where the target language is used. Learners will be ready for a comparison of their own with others culture.

Students are assumed to be a part from the mainstream culture, and therefore require critical decentring from its assumptions.

In short, an ethnographic approach, encourage learning through ethnography as culturally situated, and provide opportunities for learners to link cultural knowledge and awareness with their developing communicative competence.

LANGUAGE LEARNER AS ETHNOGRAPHER

The learner as ethnographer is seen as a participant cultural observer and analyst, as a kind of ethnographer. The learner's practice is similar to the attitude of an ethnographer, language learner seek to understand the cultural phenomena from the viewpoint of the other culture.

'The notion of language learner as ethnographer aims to combine the experience of the ethnographer in the field and a set of conceptual frameworks for cultural analysis with the best practice from communicative and immersion language learning'. (Barro & Jordan & Roberts, 1998:80)

Barro, Jordan and Roberts, agreed with Hymes that we born as ethnographers, trying to make sense of the world through observation, listening and talking, until this strange world becomes familiar and taken for granted. So, we lose this ethnographic habit.

We learn to interact in our social world and to become communicatively competent. So, the concept of 'communicative competence' loses its anthropological notion as it comes to be interpreted narrowly to language use, associated with the discipline of foreign language learning, rather than competence of the social and cultural practices of a language.

Language learners as ethnographers in a speech event, work to develop their communicative competence and culturally specific ways of speaking.

The explicit observation and analysis between language and cultural settings may be seen as a highly specialised skill but it is a skill which is extremely useful for foreign language learners. It is a skill that will equip them for areas of possible misunderstanding in the target culture by promoting better understanding, and it will promote tolerance and enjoyment of the target culture. The student ethnographer learns for one's own mistakes. Every time the student uses own conventions and assumptions to get things done or make a comment, she/ he discovers how her/ his ways of doing or thinking differ from those of her/ his informants.

Researchers such as Byram and Roberts suggested that after a theoretical study of Ethnography, learners need and ethnographic study abroad, i.e., an ethnographic participation and experience in the foreign community in which language learners take part in the every day practices.

Barro *et al.*, (1998), suggested some of the sources that can help language learners as ethnographers to associate language with cultural learning:

- working in the field;
- developing the sense of living in a group as cultural beings;
- the opportunity to grasp ideas, values, and interactional knowledge necessary for being a culturally competent member of the group;

- the habit of comparison, in which the differences are compared with a detailed analysis of one's own cultural world.

4. A MODEL FOR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TEACHING:

Language study and culture study are closely related. Closer investigation on how cultural study may be possible, and how culture may be accessible to foreign language learners took place.

Byram has proposed a model for the teaching of culture in language teaching. According to him, social sciences especially cultural and social anthropology are responsible in determining the disciplines and the concepts to be taught. In their point of view, this foreign culture can be taught through the medium of their native language.

Social psychology has to do with culture teaching, in the way to provide an idea of how to understand and help the psychological processes in which learners may be expected to in the course of exposure to different cultures. It is viewed that learners' concepts must be modified through socialisation and the experiential learning in the foreign language, which itself include the foreign culture.

Therefore, two approaches have been suggested: either to use the learners' first language as a medium without addressing the totality of culture. Or, to integrate language and culture learning by using the foreign language as a medium for continuing socialization, not the socialization of native speakers peers but to develop learners' cultural competence to an intercultural competence.

These two approaches could be associated by the use of the learners' native language to compare native and foreign cultural meaning associated with the teaching of foreign language as a medium to experience cultural phenomenon. This involves major points, language learning in the sense of language competence acquisition, contributed to the conceptualization of the language

as a social and cultural phenomenon. Then, the study of language would be associated with the study of culture by contrasting both through learners' native language. And finally, the direct experience of the foreign cultural aspects from the view point of foreign community would be in the foreign language, which contributes to the language learning process.

This approach can be summarized in four major components: language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness, and cultural experience.

Language Learning:

The process of language learning, took place as communicative language teaching, in response to the emphasis on communicative language use as a social phenomenon. Teaching the language in a real life situation, through authentic materials that provide the learners with a language performed by native speakers of the language.

'The conception of language competence in terms of know-how or skills which have only a tenuous relationship with knowledge about the language in question had led to a re-emphasis of language use as a form of language learning'. (Byram, 1989: 139)

However, the communicative approach provided the learners with a satisfactory process of language learning in introducing the language as a social action, and the use of the authentic materials, the experience of using the language in its culture still limited. So, the focus is on the language and the learner's fluency and accuracy in using the language.

Language Awareness

Language awareness teaching developed to understand the nature of the language and the positive attitudes towards language learning. Language awareness courses deal with various topics ranged between the sociology and psychology of the language as well as the philological and grammatical issues. Topics such as: language dialects, language varieties, historical relationship between different languages...etc.

According to Byram, in his model, the analysis of the sociological and the structural aspects of the language awareness elements contributes to the whole. That is, providing the learners with a chance to relate the language with other culture phenomena, and helping them to relate their acquisition of the language components and skills with the foreign culture.

When language learners acquire linguistic formulae, in the foreign language, which are used in specific situations, the language awareness component will drive their attention to the similarities with and differences from those in their native language. For example greeting formulae which are linked with the cultural knowledge of the social structure. To help the learners to grasp the cultural knowledge, the teacher has to compare with their native culture to make them aware of the cultural differences, in general, and the appropriate language behaviour in the target culture for specific.

We can note that, there is a common point between language awareness and cultural awareness, in supporting language learning and provide an understanding of the nature of language.

Cultural Awareness

In addition to the shared purposes in language awareness and cultural awareness, represented in their interest in general and specific learning, as well as their interest in the relationship between language and culture, the cultural awareness is also concerned with non-linguistic aspects of culture as developing learners' competence from monocultural to intercultural.

Practice of comparison, either by the teacher or the learner, is similar to the work of ethnographer. They look for understanding the cultural phenomena even from the viewpoint of the other culture. In this process, they acquire new schemata and intercultural competence.

'Cultural awareness teaching should, however, involve both viewpoints making the learners both ethnographers and informants'.

(Byram, 1989: 143)

In sum, the cultural awareness component examines the foreign culture for several purposes such as providing an opportunity to a comparative study of the foreign language and learners' mother tongue by using the foreign language in its culture. Learners start reflecting on their own cultural concepts and they may start looking to themselves as others do and changing their cultural competence. The cultural awareness component is dependent on language learning and language awareness in one hand, as well as the cultural experience component in the other.

The Cultural Experience

This component introduces the type of learning a language through a direct experience by providing an opportunity to the learners to practice the abstract cultural study and the linguistic skills. It can be considered as a bridge between culture and language learning. Some examples of cultural experience, such as the educational visits, and what is known in the American educational system, as exchange holidays, focus on the linguistic survival in the foreign context in which a link with the cultural awareness is to be made. Learners need both the skills of fluency and accuracy in the language and awareness of the cultural significance of their utterances.

'Direct experience of the foreign culture is therefore not the culmination of language and culture learning, not the final performance for which all else is rehearsal, but rather an integral contribution to the whole process which is prior to, simultaneous with, and subsequent to other components'.

(Byram, 1989: 145)

It is not necessary for the cultural experience to take place in the foreign country, but it can be made by using the foreign language to cope with a new experience by modifying existing schemata in the classroom, when the learners are taught through the foreign language. Learning foreign cultural aspects through the medium of foreign culture would be akin to, but not as rich and complex as, the direct experience in the foreign country. For example, when teaching

concepts of geography of the country and through the foreign language would involve a non-mediated learning of the foreign viewpoint, provided the geography were taught as it is in the country itself. This process needs a preparation and subsequent analysis in both components of language learning and cultural awareness. This link between the two components would give the learners a chance to put their competence in practice, to turn language rehearsal into performance.

The four components are not to be taught separately from each other, they are supportive and integral to the whole, and the proportion of each will vary within the period of learning the language.

In sum, in Byram's model of language and culture teaching, cultural experience component lead the learners to link between their linguistic competence with the cultural awareness. The direct experience of the foreign culture supply learners with insight into the culture from the native speaker point of view.

5. LANGUAGE TEACHER AS CULTURE TEACHER

Some scholars focus on the foreign language teacher. The recognition of the cultural learning dimensions opens up an unfamiliar ground for many language teachers. For they are English language teachers, they are with an education of civilization and literature of the English language and the theory and practice of teaching linguistic knowledge and skills. But although their education and training, they still need disciplines related to cultural learning too (Byram & Morgan, 1994).

Social components related to modern languages are usually taught by specialists of related disciplines such as politics, economy, history and so on. Few British universities, for instance, have departments of anthropology, and in rare cases they teach courses in social anthropology related to language students. Roberts (2001) suggested that language specialists with an

additional ethnographic training are best placed to develop the language learners as ethnographers for the reasons that:

they have a best idea about the learners' linguistic competence, language lecturers are in the best position to integrate language and cultural studies because the theories of communicative language teaching make available to language some of the inter-connectedness of language and cultural practice, and finally, if language teachers get appropriate training in this area, they will be in the best place to develop language learners as ethnographers, emphasise the difficulty and obvious irrelevance of much anthropological literature to non-anthropology students. Language teachers can supply appropriate guidance and materials.

'Since the aim is to integrate language and cultural experience, it is important to language staff to develop themselves as ethnographers so that they can teach an integrated course rather than bolting on what would be seen as an 'outsider' course given by someone from different discipline'

(Roberts, 2001:36)

The fact that foreign language teachers bring a new language to the classroom, related to a new world culturally different; so that they have to face the challenge of promoting the acquisition of an intercultural competence. The task of the teacher is to develop the students to be intercultural speakers, i.e., to develop their intercultural competence.

To support the intercultural learning process and the development of intercultural skills, attitudes and knowledge, requirements of foreign language teacher needed to be revised. Sercu (2005) proposed that teachers need adequate sociocultural knowledge of the target community, frequent contacts with it, and perfect command of the pragmatic rules of the language use. They need to know the different cultural models and to know how to pervade learners' outlook on life and communication with others. Teachers must control the different components of communication (e.g., notions, speech acts, non-verbal communication) at which an intercultural misunderstanding may arise, and in which they should be ready to negotiate different meanings.

According to Byram, teachers need techniques and methods, which they employ to promote the teaching of the *savoirs* (*savoir-apprendre*, *savoir-comprendre*, *savoir-faire*, and *savoir-s'engager* and *savoir être*). They require being knowledgeable about their learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the foreign people and cultures associated with the target language, and to introduce learners to comparison between one's own culture and others' cultures. As they need to know how to choose and assess teaching materials from an intercultural perspective.

Hudson (1980) claimed that teachers' attitudes also play a central role in language learning process. Negative attitudes held by teachers may serve as merely to reinforce the negative attitudes already possessed by learners towards the foreign people, culture and societies associated with the target language. Kramsch (1998) mentioned a typical case arose in an English class in Hanoi (Vietnam) in which an American textbook was used. When the text is called for reading aloud and translating the sentence 'A healthy diet increases the quality of life and even prolongs it', the teacher smiled and said, 'A healthy diet increases the quality of life. Yes. But prolongs it, that is for fate to decide, isn't it?'. And he turned to the grammatical exercises instead.

Teaching would be considered incomplete, if it ignored the foreign culture. The challenge is to go beyond superficiality and to consider the cultural traits that may affect language learning.

CONCLUSION

As the linguistic competence is not enough for foreign language learners to be competent in that language, foreign language learners can not truly master the language only if they learn both its linguistics and cultural norms. In learning a foreign language, learners are gaining the associated cultural aspects implicitly, imbedded in the linguistic forms. But it is necessary to make the learners aware of the cultural features reflected in the language, so teachers can make these cultural features an explicit topic of discussion in relation to the linguistic forms.

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them (Kramersch, 1993: 01).

CONCLUSION

Cultural information should be presented in a nonjudgmental fashion, in a way that does not place value or judgment on distinctions between the students' native culture and the culture explored in the classroom. Some teachers and researchers found it effective to present students with objects or ideas that are specific to the culture of the study but are unfamiliar to the students. The students are given clues or background information about the objects and ideas so that they can incorporate the new information into their own worldview.

The idea of teaching culture is an important issue to second language teaching, especially if a goal of language instruction is to enable the students to function effectively in another language and society. Understanding the cultural context of discourse conventions such as greetings, forms of addressing people, thanking, making requests, apologizing, expressing gratitude, agreeing or disagreeing with someone, and giving or receiving compliments means more than just being able to produce grammatical sentences, but rather knowing what is appropriate to say to whom, and in what situations. Culture must be fully incorporated as a major component of language learning.

In learning a foreign language, learners need to access to the central code of the foreign culture, to be prepared to encounter culture's ground meaning.

The central code consists not only of customs and properties; it involves above all the culture's ground of meaning: its system of major values, habitual patterns of thought and certain prevalent assumptions about human nature and society which the foreigner should be prepared to encounter (Kramsch, 1993: 177)

According to McKay (2002), culture in language teaching involves providing information about the different dimensions of culture and exactly the ones stated by Asakson, Britten and Fahsi (1990): *'the aesthetic sense'* in which the literature and the music of a target language country are examined; *'the sociological sense'* in which the customs and institutions of this country are explained; *'the semantic sense'* in which a culture's conceptual system embodied in a

language is investigated; and *'the pragmatic sense'* in which the cultural norms that influence the appropriate use of language is examined.

Introducing the cultural component into the foreign language teaching enriches its context and promotes learners' curiosity about the target culture which involves cultural awareness not only about the target culture but also about their own culture. That provides a meaningful context for language learning and sensitivity to the influence of cultural behaviour on language use and communication, and this represents an important step in the language learning process in which the learner identifies himself with the target language culture. When teaching culture, students are guided to recognition of the cultural base of their own attitudes and behaviour, they are ready to consider others in a more favourable way. Through this process what has seemed to be shocking becomes more reasonable and acceptable. And once the foreign language learner comes to an understanding of the cultural behaviour of the target language culture, adding the language becomes easier and simpler on the basis of acceptance of the target language and the knowledge of the target language ground of meaning.

Learning the culture is more than just the transmission of information between cultures, it requires learners to draw comparisons and contrasts between the native culture and the foreign one, i.e., to consider their own culture in relation to the other. So, added to the dynamic understanding of otherness is the capacity to mediate between one's own cultural practices and those of others by developing social relations with the group to be studied.

In contrasting cultures, learners are not encouraged to assume the similarities in a particular cultural behaviour (the shared cultural behaviour between the native and the foreign culture), but more to enhance what meaning a particular behaviour for the members of the foreign culture is different from the one they have.

The process of learning another culture entails a reflection on one's own culture and the foreign one, in which one needs to be encouraged to acquire knowledge about the target culture, but not to adopt it. Learning about another culture is not necessarily to accept it. Kramsch argued

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**CULTURE
AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND
TEACHING**

THE CASE OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH

QUESTIONNAIRE

1- Was English your first choice? Yes No

2- Why have you chosen to study English?

-
-
-

3- Do you read?

always frequently sometimes never

4- In what language?

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Arabic				
French				
English				

5- Of what nature ?

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Newspapers				
Magazines				
Books				

Others :

6- Which type of books ?

-
-
-

7- Are you interested in the other societies? Yes No

8- Do you like people that are exotic and foreign? Yes No

9- Do you like experiencing and learning about others ways of life, culture, places and customs?

Yes no

10- Do you know the prevailing beliefs, customs, norms, values of the native speakers of English?

Yes

No

Illustrate with some examples:

-
-
-
-

11- Do you know the greeting protocol within the community where the English is spoken?

Illustrate with some examples: Yes No

-
-
-

12- Do you have access to the culturally related materials (books, videos, tapes ...etc)?

Yes

No

13- Which type of music you like?

Oriental.

Occidental.

French

English

other: -

Precise:

-
-
-
-

14- State your favourite channels:

-
-
-

15- What do you like to watch: Movies and series

News

Sports

Other

- 16-For movies and series:
- French
 - American
 - British
 - Syrian
 - Egyptian
 - Australian
 - Other:

17-For news, state three channels:

-
-
-

18- Do you like the way of life of another society more than yours? Which society?

-

19- Do you have an intention to live in a foreign country? Yes No

-Which one or ones? -

-
-

20- When you hear the term cultural competence, what come to your mind?

-
-
-

Name :

Year :

Group :

CALCULATIONS

Test one:

Scores (X)	x (deviation)	x ² (deviation squared)
13.25	+3.53125	12.4697
13	+3.28125	10.7666
13	+3.28125	10.7666
12.5	+2.78125	7.7353
12	+2.28125	5.2041
11.75	+2.03125	4.1259
11.5	+1.78125	3.1728
10.75	+1.03125	1.0634
10.5	+0.78125	0.6103
10	+0.28125	0.0791
10	+0.28125	0.0791
9.75	+0.03125	0.0009
9.75	+0.03125	0.0009
9.25	-0.46875	0.2197
9	-0.71875	0.5166
8.5	-1.21875	1.4853
8.5	-1.21875	1.4853
8.5	-1.21875	1.4853
8.25	-1.46875	2.1572
8	-1.71875	2.9541
8	-1.71875	2.9541
7.5	-2.21875	4.9228
6.5	-3.21875	10.3603
3.5	-6.21875	38.6728
$\Sigma X = 233.25$	$\Sigma = 00$	$\Sigma x^2 = 123.2882$

Score variance: 5.14

Standard deviation: 2.27

Mean score: 9.71875

Scores (Y)	y (deviation)	y ² (deviation squared)
14	+3.77083	14.2191
14	+3.77083	14.2191
13	+2.77083	7.6774
12.5	+2.27083	5.1566
12.5	+2.27083	5.1566
12	+1.77083	3.1358
11.5	+1.27083	1.6150
11	+0.77083	0.5941
11	+0.77083	0.5941
11	+0.77083	0.5941
11	+0.77083	0.5941
10.5	+0.27083	0.0733
10.5	+0.27083	0.0733
10	-0.22917	0.0525
10	-0.22917	0.0525
10	-0.22917	0.0525
10	-0.22917	0.0525
10	-0.22917	0.0525
10	-0.22917	0.0525
09	-1.22917	1.5108
08.5	-1.72917	2.9900
07	-3.22917	10.4275
07	-3.22917	10.4275
05.5	-4.72917	22.3650
04	-6.22917	38.8025
$\Sigma Y=245.5$	$\Sigma= 00$	$\Sigma y^2= 140.4884$

Score variance: 5.85

Standard deviation: 2.42

Mean score: 10.22917

Whole test (Z)	z (deviation)	z ² (deviation squared)
13.625	+3.6511	13.3305
13.5	+3.5261	12.4333
13	+3.0261	9.1572
12.5	+2.5261	6.3811
12.25	+2.2761	5.1806
11.875	+1.9011	3.6141
11.5	+1.5261	2.3289
10.875	+0.9011	0.8119
10.75	+0.7761	0.6023
10.5	+0.5261	0.2767
10.5	+0.5261	0.2767
10.125	+0.1511	0.0228
10.125	+0.1511	0.0228
9.625	-0.3498	0.1223
9.5	-0.4739	0.2245
9.25	-0.7239	0.5240
9.25	-0.7239	0.5240
9.25	-0.7239	0.5240
8.625	-1.3489	1.8195
8.25	-1.7239	2.9718
7.5	-2.4739	6.1201
7.25	-2.7239	7.4196
6	-3.9739	15.7918
3.75	-6.2239	38.7359
$\Sigma = 239.375$	$\Sigma = 00$	$\Sigma z^2 = 129.2164$

Score variance: 5.38

Standard deviation: 2.32

Mean score: 9.9739

xy	
+3.53125*+3.77083	13.3157
+3.28125*+3.77083	12.3730
+3.28125*+2.77083	9.0917
+2.78125*+2.27083	6.3157
+2.28125*+2.27083	5.1803
+2.03125*+1.77083	3.5969
+1.78125*+1.27083	2.2636
+1.03125*+0.77083	0.7949
+0.78125*+0.77083	0.6022
+0.28125*+0.77083	0.2167
+0.28125*+0.77083	0.2167
+0.03125*+0.27083	0.0084
+0.03125*+0.27083	0.0084
-0.46875*-0.22917	0.1074
-0.71875*-0.22917	0.1647
-1.21875*-0.22917	0.2793
-1.21875*-0.22917	0.2793
-1.21875*-0.22917	0.2793
-1.46875*-1.22917	1.8053
-1.71875*-1.72917	2.9720
-1.71875*-3.22917	5.5501
-2.21875*-3.22917	7.1647
-3.21875*-4.72917	15.2220
-6.21875*-6.22917	38.7376
	$\Sigma xy = 126.546$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\Sigma xy}{n S_x S_y}$$

$$= \frac{126.546}{24(2.27 * 2.42)}$$

$$= \frac{126.546}{131.841}$$

$$= 0.9598$$

SUMMARY

Since ancient times, research showed a close and reciprocal relationship between language and culture. In which culture is a complicated concept refers to characteristics shared by a given society and distinguish it from others, these characteristics include the material aspects- the artefacts, arts, culinary practices, and traditional dress and clothing of the community; and the ideological and social aspects- knowledge, meanings, thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, views, values, and attitudes.

This relationship between language and culture is very clear in many aspects. In the systematic relationship between the language a person speaks and how that person both understands the world and behaves in it or what is known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, a reciprocal relationship in which language shapes and in turn shaped by culture and thought exists.

The cultural reality is reflected in the vocabulary of the language, and in borrowing new vocabulary items from another language is due to the acquisition of new cultural items and concepts from other societies where the language is spoken, so the development of language and culture takes place in correspondence.

As a final contention, language is a reflector and a symbol of culture, and an integral part of it. So that, language and culture can not be separated or treated apart from each other, since language can not be conceived without culture, and linguistic practice is always embedded in some cultural context or another. Then, it is evident that language learning can not take place without culture learning, because in learning the mother language, the cultural aspects and the linguistic system are developed concurrently, and when learning a foreign language, learners rely on their cultural aspects when developing the linguistic system, i.e., their native culture and their ignorance of the foreign culture will influence the learning proficiency.

In oral learning and conversations, the variability of the social and cultural patterns may lead to breakdown conversation, so successful conversation requires an understanding and interpretation of the context and culture of the language for an appropriate response to its expectations.

Cultural and social aspects play a major role in listening comprehension as well as reading comprehension, as far as the problems of listening and reading comprehension are very similar.

Learners, to derive the correct message from culture-specific expressions, they need more than the linguistic competence- grammar and vocabulary; but also the cultural competence- knowledge about the foreign culture. In dealing with implicatures for instance, people from different cultural background infer different messages from the same utterance in the same context. Implicatures can only be a successful conversational strategy if the interlocutors share the literal meaning of the utterance in question and aspects of world around them.

Culture also influence writing in the foreign language, the rhetorical organization of text and its progress are often determined by the thought of members of a particular culture. The structure of written text and rhetorical paradigms are based on cultural frameworks derived from different stylistic, religious, ethnic, and social notions. What represents a logical development and well construction of text to communicate the writer's aim related to concepts which are not necessary shared by members of different cultures.

Academic writing in a foreign language are affected by ideologies related to the learners traditions and culture, so that, native like proficiency in writing may not be easily attainable for foreign language learners.

Another issue in the study of the influence of culture and thought in language learning is the semantic transfer or what some researchers such as Byram refer to as cultural transfer, in which learners keep using their native language and culture as a reference point because of the absolute separation of lexical items from their original reference in teaching the foreign language.

The experiment which took place on second year students at the University of Guelma, and the results show clearly the importance of the cultural competence in foreign language learning. The study reports the importance of addressing the associated culture in language learning which facilitate language learning process, and also the importance of working on the learners' cultural awareness, so that can help them in holding positive attitudes towards foreign people and culture, which will create a great motivation for them in learning the foreign culture and consequently improving the language learning. What is needed here is the intercultural competence, which is more than the ability to use the language according to the linguistic and social rules, but rather the adaptability to use accurate and appropriate forms needed in a given social context.

Many researchers such as Kramsh and Byram pointed out that instead of a pedagogy oriented towards the native speaker, then better pedagogy to be oriented towards the intercultural learner and to develop language learners' intercultural communicative competence, in which the learner is learning about their own and others' cultural practices in a mutually reinforcing relationship as well as comparative perspective.

Also the ethnographic approach which provide a detailed description of language behaviour within the community and a deeper understanding of how individuals view and participate into their own social and cultural worlds what add an intercultural dimension in learning a language. The learner here is seen as an ethnographer or as a participant cultural observer and analyst in drawing comparisons and contrasts between their own and the foreign cultures. So that, he becomes aware of himself as a cultural product and of his own society, and prepared to look at and accept the behaviour of people from other cultures, and with the acceptance of the other culture comes the acceptance of the other language. Here, the teacher plays a major role not only as a language teacher but also as a culture teacher, and in this case although their education and training they still need disciplines related to cultural learning too.

RESUME:

Les recherches entreprises dans le domaine des sciences humaines ont démontré l'existence d'une relation étroite et corrélative entre la langue et la culture. Ainsi, on peut considérer la culture comme une notion complexe qui fait intervenir plusieurs paramètres, communs aux membres d'une société déterminée. Une culture donnée se distingue d'autres cultures par certaines caractéristiques qui peuvent être d'ordre matériel, comme l'écriture, les arts, la gastronomie, la tenue vestimentaire... La culture peut aussi se manifester sous la forme d'une idéologie sociale, incarnée dans les idées, les croyances, les principes et les attitudes.

Par ailleurs, la relation entre la langue et la culture apparaît sous plusieurs aspects dont les plus importants sont :

La relation entre le locuteur et sa vision du monde, plus connue sous la dénomination *l'hypothèse de Sapir-Whorf*. Dans cette perspective, la langue incarne et s'incarne à travers la culture et les conceptions de l'individu et de la société. Aussi, la langue, à travers son vocabulaire en particulier, est-elle porteuse d'une charge culturelle, de préoccupations individuelles et sociales, voire de croyances religieuses qu'elle reflète. En outre, il convient de signaler que l'emprunt des termes à une langue étrangère implique l'emprunt de concepts et de notions utilisés par les membres de la communauté linguistique. D'où le constat que l'évolution de la langue est liée à l'évolution de la culture.

Il ressort de ce qui précède que la langue est une partie de la culture. De ce fait, elle se charge de la refléter et de l'exprimer. On ne peut séparer l'une de l'autre. Par conséquent, on ne peut enseigner/apprendre une langue étrangère indépendamment de la culture qu'elle véhicule.

L'appropriation de la langue maternelle (linguistic system) par l'enfant suppose l'apprentissage concomitant de la culture d'origine. Il en va autrement quand il s'agit d'apprendre une langue étrangère. Dans ce cas de figure, les apprenants recourent à leur culture d'origine comme système de référence (their linguistic system). Ce qui a des répercussions négatives sur l'apprentissage des langues étrangères.

Dans la communication orale (in oral learning), les différences culturelles et sociales peuvent être source d'incompréhension et de malentendus et déboucher sur l'échec de la communication. Ainsi, la communication sociale requiert la prise en compte du contexte et le bon décodage de la charge culturelle de certains vocables, et ce, pour prévenir tout risque de contresens.

C'est pourquoi, les facteurs socioculturels jouent un rôle capital dans la compréhension orale et écrite. Le bon décodage d'un message donné demande de la part des apprenants, non seulement une compétence linguistique suffisante, mais aussi une solide compétence culturelle (et interculturelle). En l'absence d'une telle compétence, un mot, une expression peuvent être compris différemment par les apprenants, en fonction de leurs références culturelles.

De plus, la culture peut influencer l'apprentissage de l'expression écrite, dans une langue étrangère. Cela se manifeste, en particulier, dans le phénomène linguistique de l'interférence qui montre l'attachement des apprenants à leur système linguistique et culturel de référence.

L'étude que j'ai entreprise avec les étudiants en 2^{ème} année d'anglais, à l'université de Guelma, et ses résultats confirment mon hypothèse de départ : à savoir l'importance cruciale de la compétence culturelle et interculturelle dans l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère. Une meilleure connaissance de la culture de l'Autre motive davantage les étudiants, tout en facilitant et optimisant l'apprentissage.

Ce constat a incité nombre de chercheurs, tels Kramsh et Byram à substituer à la pédagogie traditionnelle dont l'objectif est d'amener l'apprenant à la compétence du locuteur natif, une pédagogie interculturelle, soucieuse d'installer et de développer une solide compétence de communication dans laquelle l'apprentissage linguistique va de pair avec l'apprentissage culturel.

Enfin, l'approche ethnographique fournit une description détaillée du comportement linguistique dans une société et confère un aspect multiculturel dans l'apprentissage d'une langue. Ainsi, l'apprenant peut être comparé à un observateur ethnographe capable de faire des comparaisons entre sa propre culture et d'autres cultures. Ce qui facilite sa prise de conscience

comme le fruit de sa culture et le prépare à mieux accepter les autres cultures, et par conséquent, à accepter les langues étrangères. D'où le double rôle de l'enseignant de la langue étrangère : sa tâche ne consiste pas seulement à enseigner la langue étrangère, mais aussi la culture que cette langue véhicule.

الملخص

أثبتت الدراسات في ميدان العلوم الإنسانية وجود علاقة وطيدة و متلازمة بين اللغة و الثقافة. و يمكن أن نعتبر الثقافة مفهوما معقدا يستدعي عدة معطيات مشتركة بين أعضاء مجتمع محدد، فأي ثقافة ما يجب أن تتميز عن الثقافات الأخرى، فهي ثقافة ذات طابع خاصة من حيث الجانب المادي، مثل الكتابة و الفنون و فن الطبخ و اللباس... و يمكن أن تظهر الثقافة أيضا كـمعتقد اجتماعي إيديولوجي، تجسده الأفكار و المعتقدات و المبادئ الأساسية.

كما يمكن أن تظهر العلاقة الوطيدة بين اللغة و الثقافة من خلال عدة أوجه، لعل من أهمها:

العلاقة المتبادلة بين الفكر الثقافي و اللغة أو ما يعرف بفرضية "Sapir-Whorf"، ففي هذا الاتجاه تتجسد اللغة و تجسد من خلال الثقافة، فكر و مفاهيم الفرد و المجتمع.

فاللغة تكون مشحونة من خلال مفرداتها من خلال مفاهيم ثقافية، تشغل بال الأفراد و المجتمعات، و حتى الألفاظ المقترضة من لغات أجنبية فإنها تستلزم افتراض هذه المفاهيم و تلك العلامات التي تستعملها الشريحة اللسانية، حيث تؤكد التحقيقات أن تطور اللغة مرتبط بتطور الثقافة.

فمن المؤكد أن اللغة جزء من الثقافة، كما أن اللغة هي تعكس للثقافة و تعبر عنها، فلا يمكن الفصل بينهما و لا يمكن أن نعلم لغة أجنبية دون ثقافتها التي تنقلها.

لذا فإنه لا يمكن تعلم لغة أجنبية دون الاطلاع على ثقافة الشعوب الناطقة بهاته اللغة.

إن الجهل بثقافة اللغة محل الدراسة، و الاعتماد على ما تم اكتسابه من الثقافة الأصلية كمرجع في تطوير النظام اللغوي للغة الأجنبية يؤثر سلبا في إتقانها.

ففي تعلم التعبير الشفوي و المحادثة باللغة الأجنبية، و في اختلاف الأنماط الاجتماعية و الثقافية ما يؤدي إلى فشل المحادثات. أما المحادثة الناجحة فتتطلب فهم و تفسير لسياق الحديث و ثقافة اللغة من أجل إعطاء الجواب المناسب لتوقعاتها. وبالتالي فإن فهم اللغة و استخلاص الرسالة الصحيحة من التعبيرات خاصة ذات الفحوى الثقافي يتطلب أكثر من الكفاءة اللغوية و المتمثلة في العلم بالنحو و المفردات و إنما يتعدى إلى الكفاءة الثقافية و المتمثلة في الخلفية و المعرفة الثقافيتين.

أما في تعلم الكتابة باللغة الأجنبية فإن تأثير الثقافة يكون على مستوى النظم الخطائية و التقسيم الشكلي للنص المحددة بالفكر الثقافي للمجتمع. فهيكل النص المكتوب و النماذج الخطائية ترتكز على أطر ثقافية مستوحاة من أفكار نمطية، دينية، أخلاقية، و اجتماعية مختلفة. فما يمثل تطور منطقي و بناء جيد للنص للتعبير عن هدف الكاتب ليس بالضرورة مشتركا بين الثقافات المختلفة.

كما أن الكتابة الأكاديمية باللغة الأجنبية تتأثر بإيديولوجيات مرتبطة بعادات و ثقافة المتعلم، وبالتالي فإن إتقان الكتابة بلغة أجنبية مثل متكلميها الأصليين هو مراد صعب المنال.

مجال آخر يبرز فيه تأثير الثقافة و الفكر الاجتماعي في تعلم اللغات الأجنبية هو تحويل المعاني أو ما يطلق عليه بعض الباحثين كبيرام Byram التحويل الثقافي، حيث أن المتعلم يستمر في اتخاذ لغته و ثقافته الأصليتين كنقطة مرجعية، و هذا نتيجة فصل المفردات عن معانيها أو مرجعياتها الأصلية أثناء تدريس اللغة الأجنبية.

الدراسة التي أجريت على طلبة السنة الثانية انجليزية في جامعة قلمة للعام الدراسي ٢٠٠٦ / ٢٠٠٧ ، و النتائج المتحصل عليها أكدت أهمية المعرفة و الخلفية الثقافية في تعلم لغة أجنبية.

توجيه المتعلم إلى الاطلاع على الثقافة المرتبطة باللغة محور التعلم يسهل تعلمها، كما أن العمل على التوعية الثقافية لدفعهم إلى اتخاذ مواقف ايجابية اتجاه الشعوب و الثقافات الأخرى و حب التطلع لمعرفة يخلق النشاط في تعلم الثقافة الأجنبية و بالتالي تطور اللغة الأجنبية.

و كل هذا دفع بالعديد من الباحثين كبيرام (Byram) و كرامش (Kramsch) بتحويل الهدف التعليمي من البيداغوجيا الموجهة إلى ناطق شبيه بالمتحدثين الأصليين (native like speaker) إلى ناطق متباين الثقافات (intercultural speaker)، بحيث أن هذه البيداغوجيا تهدف إلى تطوير كفاءة التباين الثقافي الحوارية لدى المتعلم، و هنا فإن المتعلم هو في إطار الاطلاع على ممارسات ثقافته الأصلية و الثقافة الأجنبية.

أيضا يمكن ملاحظة التوجه نحو النهج الاثنوغرافي في تعليم الثقافات الأجنبية و الذي يوفر وصف مفصل للتصرف اللغوي في المجتمع، و فهم عميق لفكر الأفراد و مشاركتهم في عالمهم الثقافي و الاجتماعي مما يضيف بعد تباين الثقافات في تعليم اللغة. و هنا المتعلم يلعب دور اثنوغرافي، أو مشارك و ملاحظ و محلل ثقافي في استخلاص الفروق و الاختلافات بين ثقافتهم الأصلية و الثقافة الأجنبية. و هنا تكمن أهمية وعي المتعلم كونه منتج ثقافي من صنع مجتمعه و تحضره للاطلاع على الثقافة الأخرى و تقبل الشعوب الأخرى. و هذا التقبل للثقافة الأخرى يلزمه تقبلا للغة الأخرى.

و هنا لا يمكن إهمال التطرق إلى دور المعلم ليس فقط كمعلم لغة أجنبية و إنما أيضا كمعلم ثقافة أجنبية، و في هذه الحال فهو بحاجة إلى ما هو أكثر من التعليم و التدريب بل يحتاج أيضا إلى مواد تعليمية مرتبطة بالثقافة.