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Title

**Promoting Cultural Awareness among Foreign Language Learners. The
Case Study of Master English as a Foreign Language Students of the
Universities of North Algeria**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the dearest people to my heart. My parents. They have always done their best to offer me a high quality life and education. They have always encouraged me, support me, and instilled in me an eager to widen my knowledge as well as a desire to succeed in all what I undertake. Their love is the most valuable thing I can ever have, and I truly hope that the present work makes them proud and aware of the invaluable role they played in its accomplishment.

Second, my dear husband. I would like to thank him for all what he has done for me. His energy, patience, and presence made this journey more than easy and enjoyable.

Last but not least, I would like to thank every person that participated either directly or indirectly in the completion of the present work.

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Abstract

The development of cultural awareness in foreign language education has been a main issue all along the last few decades, and its significance is constantly gaining interest and power. Thus, the major focus of this study is to shed some light on students' perceptions about their degree of cultural awareness, as well as the role culture plays in foreign language communication. English language learners are required to learn about both their own and others' cultures, to be tolerant towards the divergences that exist in different cultural communities, and to adopt adequate attitudes in cross-cultural situations. This acceptance and adaptation will ensure appropriateness and effectiveness while exchanging with people from foreign cultures and to avoid communication breakdowns with them. On these basis, the aim of this study is to investigate the English as a Foreign language learners' degree of cultural awareness, and their perceptions about the role it plays in the development of their intercultural competence. Moreover, the study attracts learners and teachers' attention towards the positive impact of regarding culture as an integral component of foreign language learning on the process of acquisition, understanding, and communication. In order to achieve the aim of the study, a questionnaire is presented to two hundred and fifty (250) Master 1 and 2 students from five different Universities of North Algeria ; University of Abou- Bakr Belkaid-Telemcen, University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis- Mostaghanem, University of Lunici Ali-Blida 2, University of Frères Mentouri- Constantine 1, University of Badji Mokhtar- Annaba. The obtained data cast light on these Universities' little concern for cultural awareness, which makes EFL learners continue to learn without taking into account the target culture, impacting their langue learning process.

List of Abbreviations

ALM: Audio Lingual Method

CCL: Communicative Language Learning

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM: Direct Method

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

IC: Intercultural Competence

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

UMPI: Understanding, Making understood, Persuading and Influencing

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Abstract(French& Arabic)

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

In our modern time, communication plays an important role in our lives. From the Latin *Communicare* (which means To Share), it represents the conveyance of a message and its symbolic values from one entity into another either non-verbally, through the use of non-linguistic representations (such as chronemic representations, body language, gestures, eye contact...etc.), or verbally through the use of speech and writing. The role of language in the process of communication cannot be underestimated since it is considered as its basic foundation. James Bradac (1999: 12) defines language as “[The] communication agency [...that] allows speakers to accomplish routinized purposes (e.g. exchange greetings) and other purposes that are completely novel. It is highly flexible and adaptable”. Therefore, either for exchanging information and spreading knowledge, creating social relationships, expressing one’s own feelings, desires and needs (such as asking for help), or simply to benefit from the various multilingual brain advantages (cognitive and analytical abilities e.g. mental focus and mathematical skills), learning languages impacts people’s everyday life regardless of their creed, race or the language community they belong to. For instance, according to the results shown by the SIL International (2017), a growing number of countries push for the increase of foreign language education, and so is people’s interest in acquiring them. Statistics show that in 2017, there were approximately 208.1 million of non-native speakers of French, 380 million of non-native speakers of Turkish, 402 million of non-native speakers of Yue Chinese, and more than 743.5 million of non-native speakers of English all over the world, and numbers are constantly increasing over time. The aforementioned statistics show the deep and increasing rooting of foreign language education in people’s life which permits them to explore not only new linguistic territories but new cultural ones as well. Therefore, in order to ensure efficient foreign language learning, avoiding misunderstandings and communication breakdowns, and to benefit from all the advantages it offers, one important point needs to be taken into consideration which is ‘the development of cultural awareness’. This latter is considered as one of the most important features in foreign language learning since a strong relationship exists between the language and its culture.

The crucial position culture occupies in the process of communication is a direct cause to the huge interest that researchers are increasingly devoting to the relationship shared between language and culture in the field of EFL. This can be seen via the numerous works undertaken all

over the world by experts, teachers, and, next to them, Master and PHD students. In order to talk about the relationship between the two notions of language and culture, the contributions of Byram and Kramsch need to be stated. Byram's (2008) version defines culture as "shared beliefs, values and behaviors of a social group"; That is, it embodies all what unites and what is in common between society members either at a micro level (family members) or at a macro level (a whole nation). Kramsch's (2002, 107-124) definition of language sheds some light on the link between discourse and culture. She states that "language is used not just as a tool for exchange of information, but as a symbolic system with the power to create and shape symbolic realities, such as values, perspectives and identities through discourse". Taking into consideration the fact that language and culture are intricately linked and that the two can hardly be disconnected without losing the importance of one of them, nowadays language policies indicate that knowing the theoretical aspects of a foreign language stands on a lower stage than putting that language into practice in natural and spontaneous contexts. That is, the emphasis is put on communication through a language of emergence and understanding of others' customs, values and beliefs, as well as the awareness of others' different cultural communities. "Language, quite simply, is a window through which we can reach out and touch each others' minds. Anyone can reach – regardless of race, regardless of beliefs. It is the most intimate act we can ever perform. We must be sure always, to keep that window open" (Altmann, 1997: 233). To put it in other words, no boundaries exist between language and culture, and once learners know about and respect others' cultural differences, they will assure an adequate acquisition, transmission and interpretation of the linguistic knowledge and a good concordance between that knowledge and the contextual parameters of the different cultures. An important example is the one of the English word 'good' which is interpreted in different manners depending on the culture in which it is used. In the European culture, for instance, 'a good day' refers to a sunny day, while in the African culture the same sentence 'a good day' refers to a rainy day. Another example is that, in English, people avoid using imperatives while making requests such as 'give me the cup of tea' since it may seem inappropriate and even impolite, they rather prefer using indirect requests such as 'can you give me the cap of tea'. The aforementioned examples show the importance of promoting cultural inclusion in foreign language learning in order to prevent cultural misunderstanding and, in some cases, embarrassing situations, since it is impossible to understand a language without having some form of understanding of its culture and vice versa

Valuable contributions to the subject such as the one of Prof. Merrouche in her article “approaches to culture in foreign language teaching”, published in June 2010, add clarity to the space culture learning is gaining in the Algerian EFL classrooms. Since, this latter are considered paying little or, in some cases, no attention to the impact culture learning has on foreign language learning. As a result, taking into consideration the fact that growing numbers of students are planning to move abroad for studies, work, or to live in the foreign country, EFL students may come across serious problems when put in natural communication contexts; leading them to face misunderstanding and confusing situations and creating communications inappropriateness and breakdowns.

The previously-stated concepts and the highlighted main issue is what makes the subject of the present study worth pursuing.

2. Statement of the Problem

In our present time, societies are becoming more and more multilingual and multicultural, and educators face the most challenging issue in foreign language teaching: developing the cultural awareness among English as foreign language learners. Making foreign language learners sensitive and mindful of the cultural differences is of great importance for effective language acquisition and communication in cross-cultural situations (making a link between language and social and cognitive contexts). The problem explored in the present study is that of the non-awareness of the Algerian EFL learners of the interdependent relationship between language and culture, since it has not been paid due importance in a big number of academic settings and institutions, and many teachers and learners have the tendency to lose sight of the fact that culture-specific meanings and the knowledge of grammatical systems have to be complemented. The Algerian EFL learners’ non-awareness of the cultural parameters of foreign language societies constitutes a handicap in putting the foreign language into practice in natural situations, hindering adequate meaning communication, and creating language conflicts due to peoples’ reactions towards certain norms; i.e. when sounds, words and gestures differ in meaning according to the culture in which they are used. The cultural awareness constitutes an important issue in foreign language learning, and ignoring it represents the chief source of communication difficulties that hinders learners’ efficient learning process. Therefore, some measures need to be taken in

order to overcome these difficulties and guarantee better acquisition and transmission of the foreign language's communicative meaning.

3. Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the Algerian foreign language master students' degree of cultural awareness, and their perceptions about the role it plays in the development of their intercultural competence. In addition to quantitative methods, qualitative methods are used in order to shed light on the impact that the promotion of cultural awareness has on learners' learning and performances. Therefore, the study may attract learner's attention to regard culture as an integral component of language learning for bettering the quality of language acquisition, comprehension and transmission.

4. Research Questions

As this study investigates the notion of cultural awareness in foreign language learning, the three main questions that ought to be asked are as follows:

- What does cultural awareness mean to Algerian English as Foreign Language learners?
- Do English as Foreign Language students regard the development of cultural awareness as a mean to overcome some of the issues they face during their learning path?
- According to the English as Foreign Language students, are sufficient measures taken for the purpose of developing cultural awareness at some of the Universities of North Algeria?

5. Sample of the Study

The sample of the present study is made of two hundred and fifty (250) Matser 1 & 2 students. The students are extracted from a population of 1250 students from the English Language departments of five different universities from North Algeria; university Abou Bakr Belkaid- Telemcen, university of Abdelhamid Ibn badis- Mostaghanem, university of Lounici Ali-Blida 2, university of Frères Mentouri- Constantine 1, and university of Badji Mokhtar-Annaba. In order to assure more validity to the sample, the rule of one-fifth quorum is applied on it. That is, the parent population from the five different Universities is divided into five equal-sized groups

which each of them is made of fifty randomly-selected students.

The reasons behind choosing to work with Master 1 & 2 students can be summarized in the following three points:

- a. Knowledge about the educational system at the Algerian Universities (between three to four years of studying English at the University).
- b. Experience in terms of communication (minimum three years of studying oral expression)
- c. Economy of time and efforts (due to their advanced level of language)

Therefore, the main objective behind the choice of the population and the sample is to make the process of data collection easier and faster, as well as to ensure better quality of the gathered information and more validity to the results.

6. Research Tool

For the sake of gathering data, a group of two hundred and fifty (250) Master 1 & 2 EFL learners from five different universities of North Algeria are asked to answer a questionnaire which encompasses questions (of different types) with regard to the concept of cultural awareness in foreign language teaching. By means of these questions, the EFL learners' degree of knowledge about the subject is quantified. In addition, their viewpoints about the role that plays the promotion of cultural awareness in their learning process is examined.

7. Structure of the study

The present study is divided into two parts. The first part is of a theoretical nature and the second part is of a practical one. Firstly, the theoretical part of the study contains three chapters. The first chapter presents some definitions of the two concepts of language and culture. The main characteristics of both of them, the synergy that exists between the two, as well as a historical overview about how that synergy developed with regard to foreign language teaching. The second chapter introduces some culture related concepts, tackles the notion of cultural awareness, its degrees and levels, the position it holds from different

perspectives as well as the notion of intercultural communicative competence and its relationship with cultural awareness. The third chapter embodies the different ways of developing cultural awareness in foreign language learning, some common approaches to incorporating it within EFL class's contexts and the techniques and activities used to achieve this purpose along with some examples of the issues teachers may encounter during culture inclusion in the classrooms. Secondly, the practical part of the study incorporates three chapters. The three chapters comprise a detailed quantification, tabulation and description of the gathered data. Before being rounded off, the practical part of the study proposes some pedagogical recommendations for both teachers and learners in order to deal with the issue of developing cultural awareness in foreign language learning.

Chapter One

The relationship between Language and Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

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Chapter One

The Relationship between Language and Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

Introduction

In our present times, a plethora of research works are dedicated to the concepts of language and culture as well as to the coactive relationship between the two. Regarding the nature of the two concepts, their characteristics, and how each one interfere in the development and efficiency of the other, researchers agree on one major point which is ‘the learning and use of one can hardly be fruitful without the learning and use of the other’. Thus, successful communication is not assured, solely, by linguistic competence in foreign language teaching contexts, and cultural competence is a must for efficient language use. Therefore, language and culture learning can hardly be separated in the EFL teaching and learning process. The present chapter is devoted to the two notions of language and culture as key concepts in FLT, shedding some light on the synergy that exists between them and providing an insight on the development of that relationship over time.

1. The Notions of Culture and Language

Language and culture are two cornerstones in the field of foreign language teaching. The following small sections deal with the two notions separately with the objective of defining them and putting stress on the influence of each one on the other and the relationship they share in the English as Foreign Language teaching and learning.

1.1. Culture

This section is devoted to the notion of culture; some definitions, components, and characteristics. It aims at adding clarity to the concept and making it comprehensible from different view angles.

1.1.1. Understanding Culture

The term ‘Culture’ is a complex, elusive and not easy to define (Apte, 1994). It has always been a major concern of an important number of researchers from different fields of study (anthropology, linguistics, sociology, etc.). Savor and Poter (2003) draw attention on

the fact that scholars, through their works, attempt to shed light on two important points when it comes to studying culture; either the numerous definitions of the notion of ‘culture’ or the characteristics and dimensions it encounters. Similarly, O’Neil (2006) affirms the fact that culture has drawn interest of a large number of scholars due to its multiplicity of descriptions, which is an indicator of the term’s complexity. Hinkel (1999) states that “as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities”. Also, Damen (1987) explains the wideness of the word’s meaning by stating “the term culture may be regarded by an anthropologist as a major unifying force, by a communication professional as a major variable, or by a psychologist as an individual mental set” (20).

Therefore, culture can be defined in all domains and human aspects and it has always been seen through the lens of complexity. This point is discussed in the present section.

1.1.2. Perceptions of the Concept of Culture

As explained previously, due to the myriads of definitions given to the concept of culture, the latter is viewed from different perspectives, and seems to hold various characteristics depending on the angle from which it is approached.

“What we are is very much a matter of what culture has made us”, suggests Daniel Dennett (1995). She claims that the culture to which people belong impacts them both internally and externally. In other words, culture plays a no negligent role in modifying peoples’ perceptions, values, and feelings which are translated to real life through their attitude and behaviour. Another prominent figure who contributes to this way of perceiving culture is the anthropologist Goodenough (1964: 36), who sees it as an internal, mental framework which is shared by members of a society and which has a direct impact on their behaviours, habits, manners and rituals. He summarizes that as follows:

A society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members...Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behaviours or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in their mind, their models for perceiving, reacting and otherwise interpreting them (IBID)

To put it differently, the culture of a given society is a mental processing, an abstract organization of elements that influences their way of perceiving and doing things, through drawing the boundaries of what is acceptable or not for the members of the society in

question. Therefore, Culture has to do with the shared governing rules of doing things not with the actions themselves. It acts as an adhesive that joins members of a society under the same rules (Benedict, 1959).

In the past, cultural studies concentrated on elements related to history and civilization (Turner, 1996). Culture is, then, according to this view, seen as loaded visions from history and civilization. In order to explain more this perception of the concept of culture, some light has to be shed on the distinction between two important dimensions; Subjective culture and Objective culture. The former, also referred to as formal culture or small c, includes elements of culture that are not corporeal; it incorporates imperceptible traits such as values and beliefs. In other words, subjective culture has to do with internal and abstract aspects. The latter, also referred to as deep culture or big C, is the facet of culture which is tangible and physical and which encompasses materials such as buildings, cloths and food. Therefore, culture incorporates both physical and abstract elements that characterize members of a given group of people. These members share the same definitions of what is appropriate or not and the same way of expecting, viewing things and behaving.

Following the same line of thoughts, Sanovar and Poter (2003) describe culture as follows:

...the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notion of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations thought individual and group striving.

In other words, elements of cultures come under two groups. The first group is all what is touchable, physical and tangible in real life. The second type is all what is non-pictorial, notional and what is not material. These denoted elements by culture are acquired through time and shared by members of society, and they put weight directly on their behavior and environment.

Another prominent view is the one that considers culture as a system of codes used in order to communicate. These symbols have meanings shared between members of a society and are realized in their everyday perceptions and behaviors (Robert et. Al., 2001). In addition, Shaules (2007) pens that culture is a framework which plays the role of a guide for peoples' behaviors and their interpretations. He delineates the concept of culture in the following words:

...the unconscious meanings, values, norms and hidden assumptions that allow us to interpret our experiences as we interact with other people. These shared meanings form a framework which acts as a starting point of our sense of what it means to be human, what constitutes normal behavior, how to make normal or ethical choices and what we perceive as reasonable

Shaules' contribution draws attention to two important points. Firstly, it demonstrates the importance of meaning in culture, since one aspect of culture has multiple interpretations and people see it differently. As a consequence, they react and behave in different manners as well. Secondly, it points out the symbolic nature of culture which is said to create an arbitrary meaning and to lead to shaping peoples' behaviors.

Eliot (1949) puts emphasis on the difference between viewing culture as an individual, as a group or as a society. He pens:

The culture of an individual is dependent of a group or a class, and that the culture of the group or a class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which that group or class belongs. Therefore, it is the culture of the society that is fundamental, and it is the meaning of the term culture in relation to the whole society that should be experimented first

So, according to Eliot, society's culture represents the whole; it is put on a higher scale than the culture of a group and the culture of an individual. He explains it as it is a pyramid regarding its importance, but where each level depends on the other and has its impact on it. To put it differently, an individual is a part of a group and a group is a part of a society and between the three exists a double sense relationship. This reciprocal relationship contributes and determines the whole which is the shared culture.

Another contribution that needs to be stated is the one of Brooks (2004:17), who says that "Culture is the relatively stable set of inner values and beliefs generally held by groups of people in countries or regions and the noticeable impact those values and beliefs have on the peoples' outward behaviors and environment". That is, according to Brooks, the manifestation of culture is obvious in all what society's members do in their everyday life, and it shapes in a grouped manner their beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and interpretations of their surroundings. Thus, one can note that, here, the emphasis is put on the behavioral and functional nature of culture.

William (1961; in Jenks, 2003) points out that the definition of the term culture comes under three (03) sections. Firstly, what is called the “Ideal”. It is considered to be the universal reference; it is seen as the absolute perfection of human values. Secondly, what is named the “documentary”. It refers to human experiences, thoughts and conventions that are recorded, observed and analysed. Finally, what are called the “social definitions”. It includes behaviors, norms, values, practices, etc.

Moreover, according to the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1996), Culture is believed to encompass philosophical perceptions, behavioral practices, and both physical and abstract products of society. The relationship between these three components is illustrated in the following figure:

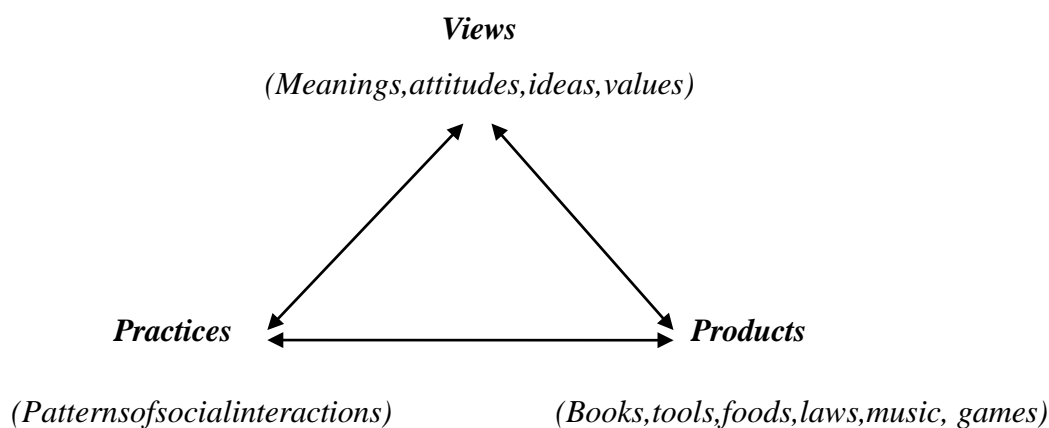


Figure01: Components of culture (The National Standards for Foreign Language learning 1996, p. 43)

In a nutshell, the aforementioned contributions to the definition of culture back the idea that it is a chief concern of a large amount of research works. These works have been proven to be in various domains; linguistics, anthropology, social sciences, etc. The viewpoints hold different, but interwoven, considerations about culture. Seen as a loaded vision from civilization and history, as shared rules that govern peoples’ behaviors, as a blend between abstract and tangible elements of life, or, adding to this latter physical perceptions and behavioral practices, this multiplicity in the angles from which culture is viewed demonstrates the fact that it has always been a corner stone of research works, and draw attention to the pivotal position it has in the FLT field. Moreover, the definitions cast light on some characteristics that serve for defining culture as a concept (its systematic and dynamic nature). These characteristics are discussed in the next section.

1.1.3. Characteristics of Culture

Taking into account the aforementioned definitions of ‘culture’, we can clearly come to the point that it holds a number of characteristics that are worthwhile discussing in order to add more clarity to the study. Some of these characteristics can be stated as follows:

1.1.3.1. Culture is learned

Culture is neither an inherited nor an inborn social phenomenon. In addition, it has nothing to do with genetics or instinct. Rather, culture is acquired and transferred from ancestors and members of the same group via either an active or a passive process. This latter comes under the name of enculturation, which can be defined as a gradual acquisition of social norms and cultural elements by members of a group through a process of communication, interaction (direct and indirect) or history derivation (further explained in chapter three).

1.1.3.2. Culture is symbolic

Culture is based on a set of symbols that are used in order to represent other things. These symbols have arbitrary meaning in the sense that one symbol may refer to different things depending on the group or culture from which it is interpreted. In other words, the meaning of symbols varies cross-culturally. In addition to that, symbols may be physical elements such as, flags, food, art, cloths, or abstract elements such as, values, beliefs, interpretations, and they establish rules that enable people to communicate successfully.

1.1.3.3. Culture is dynamic

Culture is constantly changing due to globalization and the continuous interactions between cultural communities. These latter exchange and modify multiple symbols in order to be capable of adapting to the ever-changing environments. That is, individuals may adopt certain elements from the foreign culture in order to make communication smooth and appropriate and not to seem rude or disrespectful. By doing so, they integrate a new cultural

trait to their native culture (or modify their own), and participate (either consciously or not) in a process of cultural modification. Therefore, one can say that cultures are constantly adjusting, and that, even if only one component of the system changes.

1.1.3.4. Culture is integrated

This refers to the fact that all aspects of culture are interconnected and lose their significance when dealt with in isolation. In other words, all elements of culture are links of the same chain; they constitute the whole in which each part is essential and cannot be separated from the rest otherwise it loses its significance. Therefore, learning about a given culture and understanding its symbols in an efficient manner requires dealing with all its parts as a whole.

1.1.3.5. Culture is shared

Culture has a shared nature. Members of a group agree on things, behaviors and attitudes as being appropriate or not. In addition, they tend to predict how other members of their group perceive things and react to them. Therefore, society's members share collective guiding rules that define them as a group and meet their common needs and expectations.

To sum it all up, culture holds a number of characteristics that support its complex nature as a concept. These properties are the same all over the world; they are applicable on all cultural communities. The cultural communities' members learn, share and transmit its interwoven symbols through a process of acculturation. Through this latter, culture expresses its dynamic nature and its ability to adapt to the constantly changing environments. Therefore, in order for EFL learners to be able to overcome the obstacles they may encounter during real world interactions, they need to be aware of the different aspects of the nature of culture and how it interferes in the success of their learning and communication process.

1.2. Language

This section is concerned with the notion of language; its definition from different perspectives, and some of its common characteristics. It aims at understanding the concept of language which is an essential element of this study.

1.2.1. Understanding Language

Defining language is a corner stone in the field of linguistics. Experts have always associated language to definitions that do not give a full picture of it, i.e. they have always been insufficient in some aspect or the other. An infinite number of research works were carried out in regards to understanding the concept of language. Therefore, defining it requires passing through some of the commonly approved definitions and contributions added by linguists over years and years of research. The present section deals with four prominent contributions, that are believed to provide the discussion with more depth and clarity; Sapir's, Bloomfield's, De Saussure's and Chomsky's.

1.2.2. Perceptions of the Concept of Language

First, Sapir's views language as a method that people use in order to transmit messages, emotions and desires. For him, it is a conscious process of communication which is exclusively concerned with human beings. In addition to that, Sapir claims that language carries the characteristic of being extrinsic; that is, it is not an in-born phenomenon. To him (1921):

Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntary produced symbols

This contribution is considered as being weak due to the fact that it does not cover all elements of language communication. In other words, the definition excludes other important implications such as language of body and language of signs.

Second, Bloomfield (1933) pens in regards to language definition:

The study of language can be conducted...only so long as we pay no attention to the meaning of what is spoken

Through observing this quote, one can clearly notice that Bloomfield puts form on a higher scale than meaning, and considered it as the basis of language. He defines language as a system; small units that constitute utterances, produced by members of a community. These utterances are observed and should be dealt with in separation from the meaning they convey. This definition of language is considered to be incomplete since it separates the study of form and meaning.

Third, according to Ferdinand De Saussure (1959) language:

Is not to be confused with human speech, of which it is only a definite part, though certainly an essential one. It is both a social product of faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty.

De Saussure also adds (1959):

Language is a structure, a functioning whole in which the different parts are determined by one another.

From the two previous statements, we can notice that De Saussure puts emphasize on the systematic nature of language; a system where exists an interaction between its elements. To put it differently, De Saussure claims that language is a system of signs that include both objects and the expressions referring to them, and that speech covers sounds and expressions used in order to communicate.

Then, the contribution of Noam Chomsky is not to be neglected when it comes to defining language. He focuses on the structural features of language. Chomsky argues (1957):

From now on I will consider language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements

That is, according to this view, language is considered as a number of sentences that can be limited or unlimited and which are made of a restricted number of components.

In a nutshell, taking into consideration the previously mentioned view points on language, we can say that each expert focuses on certain aspects of language, shedding some light on them and ignoring other aspects that are of the same importance. However, what can be agreed on is the fact that in order to understand language, two main points are to be taken into account. Firstly, viewing language as a linguistic system, where each component interacts with the others in order to make sentences. Secondly, viewing language as an abstract concept, where the element of purposeful communication is included.

Bearing in mind the previously-mentioned definitions of language and in order to better understand this concept, another point is discussed; which is the properties that characterises it as a linguistic concept. The following section is fully dedicated to this point.

1.2.3. Properties of Language

Language has always occupied an emblematic position, and researchers dedicate an uncountable number of studies in order to define its characteristics and to determine the crucial role it plays in research. Taking into account these studies as well as the aforementioned contributions of specialists one can clearly notice the complexity of the language nature. Therefore, in order to make both its definition and the position it occupies clearer, the present section is devoted to some of its characteristics.

1.2.3.1. Language is non-instinctive

Language is not an inborn phenomenon. It is not related to instinct or genetics; it is rather an acquired ability. In this sense, behaviorism believes in what comes under the appellation of “Tabula Rasa” also known as “blank Slate”, which is a theory that stipulates that no individual is born with a built-in mental content. In other words, according to this theory there is no innate logic behind language, and that at birth individuals do not have a mental predisposition of it; but rather, to learning it. This “Tabula Rasa” allows the positive/negative reinforcement to take place, and by the same occasion the language learning process to be possible.

- Example to consider

Steven Pinker (1994) gives an example that illustrates this property of language:

Obviously no language is innate. Take any kid from any race, bring them up in any culture and they will learn the language equally quickly. So no particular language is in the genes.

But, what might be in the genes is the ability to acquire language

In a more simplified manner, according to Pinker’s statement, individuals are born with mental capacities of learning language; they are not born with integrated mental content about it. The example is that the language acquisition process is not influenced by the changing of the original ethnic environment of the new born; that is, the process takes the same amount of time and passes through the same gradual learning stages. Therefore, one can say that language is not related to peoples’ biology or instinct, it is an acquired ability that

starts with an imitation process and develops via external elements such as experiences, exposure, interaction, etc.

1.2.3.2. Language is arbitrary

There is no natural link between the signifier and the signified, i.e. there is no logical connection between words and the meanings to which these words refer. In other words, the meaning attributed to a given word has no inherent connection with the thing or concept it describes. Rather, the words are picked and agreed on with no rules governing the process. This characteristic is shared between all languages and it is the main reason why there is huge number of different languages in the world and also why the learning process of these languages requires a long period of time.

- Examples to consider:

The word cat (in English), chat (in French), gato (in Spanish): Whatever in which language is the word, there is no logic that governs its attribution to the animal it represents; neither looks like it nor sounds like it. Nevertheless, there exist some exceptions. These exceptions refer to the words that are formed by taking into consideration the sound associated to what they represent; they are known as onomatopoeias. Such as:

Meow=for cats,

Plash=for something falling or striking into liquid, and

Click= for the action of pressing a button.

1.2.3.3. Language is symbolic

Language is a system of symbols. These symbols do not have the same meaning than the concept or thing they are referring to; their meaning depends on several factors such as individual past experiences, peoples' interpretations and the context in which they are used. In simple words, symbolism is the idea of using representation in order to convey meaning; it is when something represents an idea, thing or concept without necessarily having a relationship with it.

- **Examples to consider**

The dove is used to symbolize peace

The olive is used to symbolize a truce

The red rose is used to symbolize love

The flag to symbolise patriotism

The chain is used to symbolize imprisonment

These examples are among the most common symbols in the world. They make clear the idea of association and representation between words and concepts/ things that bear no natural relationship. In addition, as we previously mentioned, symbols can carry different meanings at once. This is what can be observed in the last example, since a chain may also represent a completely different idea which is “union”. Therefore, one can say that the intelligibility of a language relies on the adequate interpretation of its symbols.

1.2.3.4. Language is dynamic

Language is not stable; it is constantly evolving. This evolution plays a crucial role in the adaptation to the era in which the language is used, as well as in the accommodation of new technologies and disciplines. One can observe that language is changing not only at the level of words but also in the way these words are used and interpreted. In order to understand this point, some examples of the ways by which language changes are to be stated.

First, what comes under the noun of loan-words. These words are the result of borrowing from other languages mainly due to cultural interactions and trade. Some examples are illustrated in the following table:

Loanword	LanguageofOrigin
Sabotage	French
Cliché	French
Tsunami	Japanese
Karaoke	Japanese
Cosmonaut	Russian
Chaos	Greek
Mosquito	Spanish
Algebra	Arabic
Alcohol	Arabic
Diva	Italian
LinguaFranca	Italian
Kindergarten	German

Table01-Examplesofloanwordsandthesource languages-

In fact, the process of borrowing happens at any time and at all levels, enabling people to adapt to new situations and to bring the communication to a more precise level.

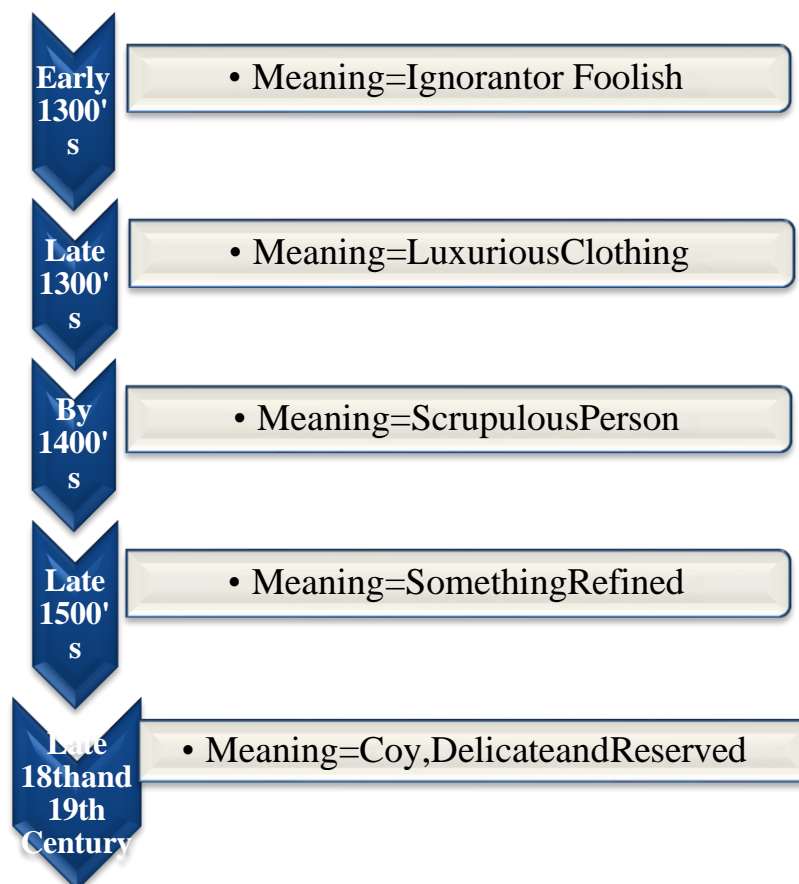
Second, what is known as the Portmanteau words. These words refer to a result of fusion between two different words, leading to the creation of a new one that represents a concept that did not exist before. Some examples are illustrated in the following table:

Word	Combination
Emoticon	Emotion+Icon
Brunch	Breakfast+Lunch
Infomercial	Information+ Commercial
Motel	Motor+ Hotel
Blog	Web+Log
Sitcom	Situation+ Comedy
Biopic	Biography+Picture
Telethon	Telephone+Marathon

- Table02-Examples of Portmanteau words and their Combinations-

In order to sum up the list of examples, a consideration has to be given to the most prominent one which is the word “Portmanteau”. This word gives credit to its definition since it is made from the combination of two other words; “port + manteau”. These words are French words; therefore, it is also a good example of loanwords explained previously.

Third, another way by which language develops is “new meanings acquisition”. That is, overtime, some words’ meaning receive some slight or complete changes. The most often word given as an example of this process is the word “nice”. The meaning evolution of the word “nice” can be illustrated as follows:



-Figure02: The Evolution the meaning of the word “Nice” from Early 1300’s up to nowadays-(Algeo and Pyles; 2009)

These examples are a great support for the idea that language is a dynamic phenomenon that changes and develops over time. The main purpose of this development remains in the fact that environments in which language is used are constantly changing as well; therefore, there is a perpetual need for adaptation.

Coming to this point, it can be said that the characteristics of language add clarity to the concept and brings attention to the fact that there is a number of similarities and connecting points that can be observed in some points of the previous sections about language and culture. These points are worth to be studied and, as a matter of fact, this brings the discussion to the following point of the study which deals with the synergy that exists between language and culture.

2. The Coactive Relationship between Language and Culture

The growing attention put on the interconnected relationship between language and culture, overtime, has brought debates and studies on it to a level of satisfaction. Philosophers and linguists put stress upon the crucial and reciprocal role played in the study of one another until considering them as two facets of the same coin. That is, language cannot be taught separately from culture and vice versa; each of them is seen to be the entity of the other. A huge number of studies are based on this affinity that exists between language and culture, Brown (2007: 189-190), for instance, pens that “A language is part of culture and culture is part of language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. The acquisition of a second language, except for specialized, instrumental acquisition (as may be the case, say, in acquisition of reading knowledge of a language for examining scientific texts), is also the acquisition of a second culture”. In addition, Byram (cited in Pulverness, 2000, p.2) advocates that “Language is regarded as a cultural phenomenon, embodying the values and meanings particular to a specific society, referring to the traditions and artefacts of that society and signalling its peoples’ sense of themselves- their cultural identity”. Inherited in these two statements is the idea that Language and culture are deeply rooted in one another. One cannot learn or teach language and communicate in an effective manner without taking into account the foreign culture of the language in question, and similarly, language is seen as a means for the spread and development of culture.

Making allowances for the previous sections about language and culture, one can clearly notice that there are a number of characteristics shared between the two. These characteristics play a pivotal role in blurring the line between the two concepts of language and culture, and also in strengthening the synergy that exists between them. Among the points of articulation between language and culture can be stated the following:

- Language and culture are both arbitrary
- Language and culture are both non-instinctive
- Language and culture are both symbolic
- Language and culture are both dynamic
- Language and culture are both social phenomena

These characteristics are one way in which the strong link between language and culture is demonstrated; they emerge, manifest and develop in similar manners. Within these processes the interference between the two happens inevitably; for example, among the ways that allow for culture dynamism is linguistic exchange.

Another way in which the link between language and culture is made meaningful is in the fact that language has a strong hand in both the cultural constructions and the cultural changes. That is, it is considered as a tool which enables culture to emerge in a given environment and to develop and receive changes as well. These processes are made via the gradual inclusion of new elements. These modifications of culture have as a purpose the cultural adaptation to the constantly changing environment. Kramsch (1993:23) makes a clear statement about this point:

Culture in the final analysis is always linguistically mediated membership into a discourse community that is both real and imagined. Language plays a crucial role not only in the construction of culture, but in the emergence of cultural changes

Following the same line of thoughts, Agar (1994: 6) demonstrates language and culture interference via explaining one of its outcomes which is the creation of new combined words. One example of these new combined words is the word “Languaculture” that he explains as being “the necessary tie between language and culture” (Agar, 1994: 28). In other words, languaculture is a combination of two words (language and culture) and it refers to the fact that language does not include only words, sentences and grammar rules, but the culture elements as well. In addition, he states that:

Language fills the space between us with sounds; culture forges human connection through them. Culture is in language and language is in culture” (1994:28)

Agar statement shed a direct light on the reciprocal relationship between language and culture, and the mutual existence of each of them in the development of the other.

Furthermore, the link is made clear through observing the role played by language as regards to culture. This role comes under two points; as an element of culture and as a tool for it. In the former, language serves for cultural manifestation of any social group; i.e. it is the field in which peoples' behaviours, beliefs, artefacts, and other cultural elements are expressed. In the latter, language is regarded as an instrument that enables the detection and identification of features of culture. Langacker (1999:16) summarizes this point by defining language as follows:

Language is an instrument a component of culture whose reflection in linguistics structures is persuasive and quite significant

Following the same reasoning as in the previous contributions, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is not to be neglected. In their hypothesis, Sapir and whorf believe that peoples' way of thinking is determined by the structure of the language they speak. That is, people perceive and interpret elements of the world around them in different manners according to the language they speak; the language they speak builds meaning and shape their behaviours and thoughts. To put it differently, "because different languages categorize objects, relationships and meanings differently, one's view of the world is said to reflect perceptual categories learned in the process of acquiring one's native language" (Shaules, 2007: 42). This clearly shows the relationship between language and culture in the sense that language is considered to be a sub-part of culture in the process of communication.

Coming to this point of the discussion, it can be said that the relationship between language and culture has been made clear by a large number of linguists and researchers, and has been proven in different manners by them. The link is considered to be strong and reciprocal in the sense that language and culture cannot be dealt with separately, and the learning of one necessitates the learning of the other in order to maximize the quality of the learning process and develop learners' competencies.

3. Culture and FLT: Historical background

From the previous section about the strong relationship between language and culture, we can clearly come to the point that one cannot be taught in separation from the other, culture studies necessitate language studies and vice versa. This point is suggested by McLeod (1976: 212) in his statement:

By teaching a language...one is inevitably already teaching culture implicitly

To put this differently, language teaching is culture teaching (Lessard- Clouston, 1997). Therefore, the presence of culture is not a recent concern; it undergone significant changes over time, which modifies its position in regards to the teaching process. These changes can be observed through the historical development of the methods and approaches used in FLT. This section is dedicated to the discussion of the way in which these methods received gradual changes in order to meet the FLT objectives, and the position occupied by culture at each level of the development.

3.2. Teaching Methods

Prior 1960's, language and culture were regarded as separate entities, and the only reason to learning FL was to be able to read literature. This point is explained by Allen(1995: 138) in his statement:

...prior to the 1960's, the lines between language and culture were carefully drawn. The primary reason for second language study in the earlier part of this century was an access to the great literary masterpieces of civilization

As a matter of fact, culture was absent from the teaching methods used at that time and teachers gave little concern to it. However, the development of sciences, technologies as well as inventions and advancements in various domains, studies increasingly shifted to the role played by culture in FLT.

3.2.1. Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Also referred to as the classic method (Larsen- Freeman, 2000), due to the fact that it was first used in order to teach classical languages which are Latin and Greek. “ Latin... was taught through rote learning of grammar rules, translation, and practice in writing in sample sentences, sometimes with the use of parallel bilingual texts and dialogue”, explained by Richards and Rodgers (2001: 3). The Grammar Translation Method was considered as the dominant approach of the era. The two main aspects on which this method was based are grammar and translation, as it can be seen from its appellation. The Grammar translation method is characterized by a number of points, among them:

- Grammar and vocabulary are emphasized at costs of pronunciation
- The dominant language in the classroom is the native language
- New words’ meaning is taught via translating words into the native language
- Error correction is very important
- Culture is regarded as consisting of the fine arts and literature
- Behaviour culture is ignored

Inherent in these principles, some key points need to be discussed. First, as regards to culture, it has not been given its due credit as part of FLT; it was seen to be the collect of information related to literature and fine arts. In other words, in this method the cultural aspect of the target language refers to the “big C” (achievement in literature and arts), as well as the presentation of events from the history of the target country; such as, the Pilgrim Fathers and the Boston tea party (Neuner, 1997). Second, the chief practices in the GTM is based on translation and grammar in the sense that learning about the grammatical rules as well as translating words into the mother tongue were believed to be the basis of FLT. This process, as a result of the strong focus on grammar and translation, was resumed to “a tedious experience of memorizing endless lists of unusable grammar rules and vocabulary attempting to produce perfect translation of stilled literary pieces” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 6). Third, the dominant language in the classroom is the native language; since the pronunciation is not considered to be of great importance in the FL teaching/ learning process. That is, using language for communicative purposes was not an objective for this method. Byram (1989:10) explains this point by stating that “[a] speaker of the language on the model [...] of a native

speaker” is not one of the GTM concerns, rather it is “a native reader and writer” for which this approach aims (Byram, 1989: 10).

Taking into account the aforementioned principles of the GTM, some of the main activities used in order to achieve its goals can be mentioned as follows:

- *Translation of literary passages,*
- *Reading comprehension,*
- *Finding synonyms and antonyms,*
- *Gap filling,*
- *Using words in sentences, and*
- *Memorization*

Observing the types of activities used in the GTM to reach FLT objectives brings the discussion to the fourth, and last, point in regards to the method’s principles; the fact that in the GTM reading and writing are overlooked. To put it differently, the goals and activities of the Grammar Translation Method are based on the reading and writing skills, i.e. they are the primary skills taught and much less attention is given to speaking and listening. This point meets the ones discussed previously in the sense that the GTM does not seek for communicative purposes.

Despite of all of its advantages, the Grammar Translation Method has been criticized and rejected by modern scholars; it has been deprived from its status of a legitimate FL teaching method. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explains this as follows:

[T]hrough it may be true to say that the Grammar-translation method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rational or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory.

In addition to that, Kramsch (1996) joins the previous statement and explains that the lasting dominance of the GTM is a result of inability to provide learners with an understanding of Romans and Greeks way of speaking or way of thinking. Later, Neuner (1997) adds that the GTM decline is due to the fact that institutional FL teaching was exclusively dedicated to an elite group said to be “ideal educated and refined gentlemen”. Moreover, Celce-Murcia (2001: 6) argues that “this approach is usually an inability on the part of the student to use the language for communication”. In respect of the shortcomings

highlighted by a number of scholars, some key notions were integrated in order to overcome the weaknesses of the GTM as well as to remediate for its deficiencies. Therefore, this led to the emergence of a new method as a reaction to the GTM's non-success; the direct method.

3.2.2. The Direct Method (DM)

This method received its name from the fact that, unlike the GTM, the meaning is directly related to the target language words; no translation is needed in the teaching/ learning process. This method was introduced around 1900 due to two main factors during that era. First, people in Europe began to be increasingly interested by oral proficiency; a clear focus on pronunciation and communication. Second, international communication was increasingly developing due to advances in technology such as the invention of new means of transportation (such as, trains). Accordingly, oral skills began to gain more interest to become a corner stone in the DM, diminishing the importance given to listening and writing in the previous method.

Belonging to the natural approach of language teaching, the DM has a number of characteristics that are well explained by Richards and Rodgers (2001: 12) in their book of Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching:

- *Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language*
- *Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught*
- *Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small intensive classes*
- *Grammar was taught inductively*
- *New teaching points were introduced orally*
- *Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas*
- *Both speech and listening comprehension were taught*
- *Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized*

In regards to culture, in the DM, it is considered to be consisting of the teaching of history, geography and information about the daily life of the target language speakers (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 29). In order to make the inclusion of culture possible, culturally-oriented pictures were used as a tool to enhance students' awareness about the situations they

may face in the target culture (River, 1968;Omaggio, 1986). In addition to that, among the teaching activities used in the direct method can be stated:

- Reading out loud
- Conversation practice
- Gap filling exercise
- Dictation
- Map drawing
- Paragraph writing

From these activities one can notice that in the DM, there was an overemphasis on native-like fluency (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Despite, the fact that there was a clear interest in the inclusion of cultural elements in the DM, its teaching remained implicit and no light was shed on it in the principles of the method (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Moreover, as Long-fu (2001) pens “the lack of well-defined sociolinguistic and socio-cultural basis made the teaching cultural content incidental and subordinated to the teaching of language in this method”. Therefore, it does not meet the main expectations of FL teaching and does not make it possible for learners to reach the objective of successful communication. Accordingly, a number of research works were carried out in order to remediate for the DM short falls; on that account, the Audio-lingual method took place.

3.2.3. The Audio Lingual Method (ALM)

This method came in the 1940’s as a remedy for the deficiencies of the DM. It came into being in order to full fill the pragmatic needs of specific groups. To explain it more, the method was developed to provide the American soldiers with information about foreign cultures, as well as to help them communicate in an effective manner with these cultures’ community members. Therefore, the major aim of the ALM is to achieve successful communication in both ways; making soldiers learn how to make themselves understandable by foreigners and make them able to understand others at an international level.

The emergence of this method was a shift to a more pragmatic vision of the FLT concept. First dedicated to specific groups (USArmy), it was later adapted to concord with

the needs of “the ordinary learners” (Neuner, 1997: 20). The ALM has a number of properties such as:

- *Cultural information is dealt with via dialogues*
- *Most of the attention is received by the oral skills*
- *From the start, pronunciation is seen as important in the learning process*
- *The use of contrastive analysis between the TL and the MT*
- *Grammar is taught inductively; no explicit rules are presented*

Following the same line of thoughts, Celce-Murcia (2001:7) summarized the principles of the Audio Lingual method as follows:

- *Lessons begin with dialogues*
- *Mimicry and memorization are used, based on assumptions that language is habit formation*
- *Grammatical structures are sequenced: listening, speaking-reading, writing postponed*
- *Pronunciation is stressed from the beginning*
- *Vocabulary is severely limited in initial stages*
- *A great effort is made to prevent learners' errors*
- *Language is often manipulated without regard to meaning or context*

As a matter of fact, at this stage of the discussion one can notice that in the ALM “communication begun to take a centre stage, along with spoken rather than written language, and what is often termed small “c” culture” (Steel, 1989 cited in Lessard Clouston, 1997). To put differently, Culture seems to be suitable to the ALM despite the fact that it is not considered as one of its objectives. Larssen-Freeman (2000:45) explained the presence of culture in regards to the Audio Lingual method by stating:

Language cannot be separated from culture. Culture is not only literature and the arts, but also the everyday behaviour of the people who use the target language

In other words, the ALM aims at including the cultural elements of the foreign country in the dialogues and activities used to achieve the teaching objectives. These cultural elements may include topics such as: shopping and asking for directions (Neuner, 1997: 20). To do so, various kinds of activities are used in the classroom. Among these activities:

- **Repetition:**

Example: This is the last stage => This is the last stage

- **Inflection:**

Example: I saw the beautiful woman => I saw the beautiful women

- **Replacement:**

Example: He takes care of the neighbour => He takes care of him everyday

- **Completion:**

Examples: I'll do my work and you do => I'll do all my work and you do yours

- **Contraction:**

Example: Put the books on the desk => Put the books there

- **Integration:**

Example: They have to wait. This is important => It's important that they wait

These activities and others of the ALM have been resulted in a number of advantages at an extent that the method has been considered to be of a powerful impact in FLT. These advantages of the ALM include:

- Correct pronunciation is acquired
- The ALM suits large groups of learners, and makes it easy for teachers to work with them
- The use of visual aids which is of a great help in the process of FL learning
- Speaking is emphasized
- Structure is important

Nevertheless, with the emergence of humanistic pedagogy, this method has received a lot of criticism from modern scholars which led to the diminution of its scientific credibility and the rapid drop in its popularity at that time. That is, the ALM was said to be unable to develop skills that can be used for communication in natural contexts, that learners have a passive role in the learning process and that they have no control on the content, as well as no creativity or innovation while putting that content into practice. In addition to that, it was believed that the ALM results in boring and unsatisfying learning; learners are not interested in what they are learning, rather they are doing it systematically. Another argument against the ALM was that "Language is not a habit formation. Ordinary linguistic behaviour characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences and patterns in accordance

with rules of great abstractness and intricacy” (Chomsky, 1966: 153; in Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 65).

These arguments led to the questioning of the method underpinnings; so, other innovative methods were proposed as alternatives in order to overcome the shortcomings of the Audio-lingual method. These prominent methods arise from humanistic approaches and were also referred to as “designer methods”. They include Suggestopaedia, Silent Way and Community Language Learning. These proposals strengthened the position of culture in the field of FLT and shed more light on its role and the link it has with FL teaching. To provide more details about the innovative teaching methods, the following table summarizes some of the main points that one need to bear in mind as regards to them:

<i>The method</i>	<i>Silent way</i>	<i>CLL</i>	<i>Suggestopaedia</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Gattegno (1979)</i>	<i>Curran (1976)</i>	<i>Georgi Lozanov (1979)</i>
<i>Learners' Concern</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Learners are aware of the difficulties they may face during the FLT process</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Learners are given the freedom to express themselves about their own linguistic and personal problems and have the capacity to decide their curriculum</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The language learning process is accelerated three to five times.</i> • <i>Learning is based on how the brain processes.</i> • <i>Learning through music and games.</i>
<i>Culture Concern</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Culture is joint to language.</i> • <i>Language reflects culture and everyday lifestyles, art and literature should be learned.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Culture is regarded as part of language and social life, customs and habits should be taught.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Culture learnt about is related to everyday life of the target language speakers.</i>

Table03: Summary of the innovative Teaching Methods (Larsen-Freeman, 2000)

Later, other approaches were suggested for the sake of meeting FLT objectives. At the top of these approaches an eclectic one referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This method was put forward as an umbrella-approach that included some relevant principles from the previously mentioned method-suggestions.

3.2.4. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The Communicative approach was first introduced in the seventies as a result of the greater interest in communication within cultural contexts. It replaced the Audio-lingual method boosting the position that culture has in the FL teaching process and focusing on developing learners communicative skills. The CLT is regarded as a collection of ideas from the previous standpoints about language nature and language teaching; i.e. it is an amalgamation of some ideas that give the same importance to the strong link between language and culture (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). By the same token, Littlewood (1981) defines the Communicative approach as

[...] combine[s] the newer functional view of language with the traditional structural view; in order to achieve a more complex communicative perspective

Bearing in mind the principles of the previously-discussed methods as well as the main objectives and expectations of the researchers of the era, one can say that inherited in this definition the CLT is considered as an approach which principles are communicative in nature. In defining these principles, Brown (2001: 43) mentioned six long-winded ones:

- ⇒ Classroom goals focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence.
- ⇒ Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes.
- ⇒ Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- ⇒ Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
- ⇒ Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own style of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.
- ⇒ The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

Through observing these principles, the essence of the CLT can be summarized in two main points. First, language should be taught as both form and function. The development of learners' linguistic competence only does not guarantee appropriate communication which stands as the chief objective of the CLT, and learners should work on their abilities to use grammatical rules and vocabulary effectively in real FL contexts. To put it differently, mastering the grammatical structures does not represent the basis for interaction; rather, it is knowing when, where and how to use them (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Following the same line of thoughts, Hymes (1972) argues that successful communication is not the result of learners' linguistic competence. The relevance of this point has been proven by the shortcomings of the previously discussed teaching methods where more attention was put on linguistic competence at cost of the communicative one. Second, learners should be able to choose the teaching strategies. This is intended to say that one of the CLT central principles remains in the fact that learners should be introduced with the concepts of appropriateness and accuracy while using grammatical structures; i.e. they know what strategies suit them best. This opportunity leads to autonomous learning making learners aware of their own learning styles and what strategies concord with them in order to achieve the FLT objectives in an effective manner.

In regard to culture, the CLT equips learners with a rich knowledge about the foreign cultural features and allows them to convey meanings with consideration to the socio-cultural contexts where communication takes place. Culture in this approach came to be seen as being the expression of everyday lifestyles and elements of peoples belonging to the foreign community.

Nevertheless, although culture has been given worth and its importance has been recognized, its implementation is discarded. That is, culture is taught implicitly and following a systematic procedure (Byram,1997). Puverness (2014:428) gives a clear explanation of this point. He pens:

Communicative language teaching, in its emphasis on authentic text and genuine interaction, privileges meaning over form, but excluding cultural meaning. It promotes a Model of language that is restricted to transactional functions and referential uses of language

The huge interest in including culture to FLT processes continued to be a centre interest after the CLT. Cortazzi and Jinn (1999) explain that by stating that “communication in real situations is never out of context, and because culture is part of most contexts communication is rarely culture -free. Thus, it is now increasingly recognized that language learning and teaching about target cultures cannot realistically be separated” (p. 197). To put it simply, language cannot be taught in isolation from culture and similarly culture cannot be taught separately from language. Byram and Morgan (1994:5) join this statement by arguing that “it is axiomatic in our view that cultural learning has to take place as an integral part of language learning and vice versa” (cited in Hinkel 1999:7). In addition, they add (1994:43) that “learners are committed to their culture and to deny any part of it is to deny something within their own being”. Therefore, the gained importance of culture in FLT is reflected in later-proposed modern approaches such as Task-Based Language Teaching, Content-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Teaching (in which a great focus on culture and social awareness can be observed) , as well as in nowadays perspectives where researchers agree on the fact that the integration of culture is crucial and inevitable in FLT.

Conclusion

To sum it all up, Langue and culture are two notions that cannot be dealt with separately; each one is considered to be the entity of the other and the two hold a relationship of dependence. The position of culture in FLT has been a key notion that received multiple changes over time. These changes are expressed through the gradual introduction of the multiple teaching methods and approaches discussed previously, where the importance of culture has not been equally the same. That is, starting from a teaching method that isolates the study of language from culture to an approach that gives it its due worth and calls for cultural inclusion to the teaching process. Consequently, a multiplicity of nowadays' research works shifted to the study of the coactive relationship between language and culture, putting stress on the role of this latter in FLT and investigating its impact on the development of learners competencies. On that account, developing learners' cultural awareness, teaching language and culture in tandem, and on what techniques teachers need to focus in FLT classroom in order to achieve these objectives, are the soul topic that generates inventory researches.

Chapter Two

Cultural Awareness

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Introduction

As explained in the previous chapter, the presence of culture in FLT as well as the way in which it developed through the various teaching methods and approaches constitutes evidence that culture teaching and language teaching have been proven to share a relationship that cannot be divorced. The importance of this relationship remains in the ever-growing need for effective communication. Via communication, people express themselves, transmit knowledge and interact with others, and since they belong to different linguistic and cultural communities, they tend to interpret and perceive things differently. Therefore, being unaware of these points of dissemblance engenders unconnectdness between words and their intended meanings. As a result, misunderstanding situations and communication breakdowns are encountered. This idea is well summarized by Cotazzi & Jinn (1999) who explain that:

It is crucial that foreign language learners should become aware of differing cultural frameworks, both their own and those of others; otherwise they will use their own cultural system to interpret target language messages whose intended meaning may well be predicated on quite different cultural assumptions (p 197)

Learners, therefore, should be introduced to “cultural awareness” in order to overcome such situation that they may face in natural contexts and which may lead to embarrassing, offensive and confusing interactions. As claimed by many authors, such as Byram (1989), Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991), Byram and Morgan (1994), and Morgan and Cain (2000), the important dimension of cultural awareness in foreign language teaching is often ignored. The present chapter is concerned with the concept of Cultural awareness, its importance as well as stages and levels of its development. In addition, a section is dedicated to the notion of intercultural communicative competence.

2.1. Culture-related Terms

In the discussion of the undivorced relationship of language and culture and learners’ development of cultural awareness in EFL, a number of culture-related terms need to be clarified and the line should be drawn between some of them so that each process can be put under the appropriate appellation and confusion can be avoided while moving forward in the present work.

2.1.1. Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to all what constitute people’s elements, associations,

experiences that are related to their culture and that they share with their community. To put it differently, it is regarded as part of one's personal identity that defines its belonging and membership to a cultural group/society. As culture, cultural identity experiences changes and modifications via the process of acquisition of native and target cultures. Learners' cultural identity is constantly exposed to, and influenced by foreign cultures (Kramer, 1994), which explains its dynamic nature.

2.1.3. Culture Shock

The term of culture shock was first introduced by Oberg in 1958 who explains it as being the result of anxiety due to losing learners' own familiar signs and symbols. Culture shock is a well-known phenomenon by learners of foreign language in a second culture. It is an experience that ranges from a mild irritation to serious psychological issues such as crisis and panic (Brown, 1986). The culture shock process includes five stages. These stages are explained by Brown and Eisterhold (2004) as follows:

- The Honeymoon Stage
- The Disintegration Stage
- The Reintegration Stage
- The Autonomy Stage
- The Interdependence Stage

To elaborate more, during the first stage learners are excited and motivated towards the differences that exist between native and target cultures. During the second stage, learners experience frustration and helplessness feelings, which usually results in depression and isolation from society. In the third stage, learners react defensively and do not respond positively to the foreign culture manifestations. In the fourth stage learners have more chances to react positively to the target culture on the basis of the perspectives they construct about it. Coming to the last stage, learners adopt a new, either bicultural or multicultural, identity. Cultural shock is regarded as an intermediate stage in the process of acculturation.

2.1.4. Acculturation

It is a commonly-used term that refers to the process of discovery and adaptation to a new culture. That is, acculturation "involves the process of pulling out the world view or ethos of the first culture, learning new ways of meeting old problems, and shedding ethnocentric evaluations" (Damen: 1987: 140). Acculturation is usually confused with the

process of enculturation.

2.1.5. Enculturation

It refers to the acquisition and adaptation to one's native culture. It is when a learner "builds a sense of cultural or social identity, a network of values and beliefs, patterned ways of living, and, for the most part, ethnocentrism, or belief in the power and the rightness of native ways" (Ibid.)

2.1.6. Culture Bump

Like culture shock, culture bump results from the dissimilarities encountered between native and foreign cultures in terms of ways of thinking and behaving. However, whereas learners experience culture shock over an extended period of time, culture bump occurs instantaneously during the exchange (often over minutes or even seconds) and its consequences are long-lasting (Archer, 1986). It is important to mention that both learners and teachers can experience a culture bump, and despite the fact that it has its negative consequences; it can be used as a source of instruction and knowledge within the classroom.

2.1.7. Cultural Relativism

It refers to the fact that peoples' beliefs and behaviours should be interpreted on the basis of their own cultural framework. That is, learners have to understand foreign cultural features and deal with them with consideration to the guiding rules of the foreign culture, rather than based on their own. Cultural relativism is considered to be one of the EFL classroom objectives. Teachers aim to develop it in order to achieve EFL communicative goals.

2.2. Cultural Awareness

The concept of "cultural awareness" is a recently-integrated one (Savignon, 2000). First introduced by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993), it came later under other appellations such as "cultural sensitivity" (Bennet, 1993; Savignon, 2002; and Pulverness, 2004), and also as "cultural consciousness" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). It is referred to as a crucial objective in nowadays FLT since it is believed that developing it leads to bridge communication in the target language, and that is the starting point for of language competence and the ideal arena for doing so is the FLT classroom.

What is meant by “cultural awareness” is the fact of having the ability to detect and accept what is different from one’s own way of perceiving, interpreting and doing things, having the willingness to learn about what is new and different as well as developing capacities that forge the necessary skills that serve for the adaptation and the overcoming of meanings’ transmission breakdowns. In cultural consciousness learners are “aware of members of another cultural group: their expedition, their perspectives and values. It also means attempting to understand their reasons for their actions and beliefs” (Coratzi and Jinn, 1999: 217). In addition to that, they take their own cultural framework as a reference to interpret the differences that exist in the parts of interaction. For this reason, one’s own cultural identity plays an important role and is regarded as the main tool for “cultural benchmark”. This latter is meant to put stress on the fact that cultural awareness is based on a process of comparison in which the main reference is one’s native culture. Fenner (2000) explains this by stating “cultural awareness is based on knowledge of the foreign culture, but also on the knowledge of one’s own culture. And that any process of comparison or contrasting has its starting point in the learner’s pre-knowledge”. (p. 144-145).

Accordingly, inherited to Fenner’s statement, one can notice that learners should then have knowledge of both native and target cultures in order to make a process of comparison. This process has the precursory cultural knowledge as a foundation.

In addition to that, being culturally aware means having “sensitivity to the impact of culturally induced behaviours on language use and behaviour” (Tomalin and stemplenski, 1993: 5). By way of explanation, the cultural frameworks of individuals influence the way with which they see things and interpret situations and this is reflected in their linguistic, cognitive and behavioural aspects. And being conscious of the impact of these dissimilarities is one of the qualities involved in cultural awareness. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) explain the qualities in question as follows:

- Ability to explain one’s own cultural stand point
- Awareness of one culturally-induced behaviour
- Awareness of culturally-induced behavior of others

In order to rephrase it, cultural awareness encompasses a number of focal points. Firstly, it is about raising individuals' consciousness about similarities and dissimilarities that exist between cultures and the impact they have on communication. Secondly, being self-aware in regards to native culture and how it shapes thinking and behaviour. Thirdly, having the knowledge as well as willingness to understand and tolerate cultural differences, using a process of benchmarking where the native cultural knowledge serves as a basis.

The pivotal role that cultural awareness plays in FLT has been the cornerstone in various works, and it ended to be seen as a major skill that should be worked on “right from day one” in foreign language teaching (Pulverness, 2014: 428), and also as the starting point for intercultural communication competence. This role is translated in the fact that developing cultural awareness enables learners to acquire a new vision towards their own cultural framework as well as those of others, and make them switch from an ethno-centric reasoning where they judge cultural differences and view them through the lens of their own cultural perceptions, to an ethno-relativism reasoning where they consider all cultures as equally valid and deal with them with respect and tolerance. Byram (1991: 19) puts this whole process under the word “modification” explaining that “developing learners’ cultural awareness is considered as modification of monocultural awareness”. In plain words, learners are considered monocultural until they enter the process of developing a culture-bound awareness and begin an experience of discovery and comprehension leading them to multiculturalism. As a result, they promote their openness and tolerance, facilitate the shift between cultures and bring intercultural communication to a higher rank.

2.2.1. Stages and Degrees of Cultural Awareness

In the discussion of the development of cultural awareness, a large number of works explain that there are number of stages through which learners pass. Varying from brief points to detailed explanations, these stages are approaches from different angles, yet; include, more or less, the same elements, and are based on almost the same developmental process. Learners move from one stage to the other via the acquisition of certain knowledge and the development of necessary skills that serve the final objective of EFL. Through understanding the models of cultural awareness, both learners and teachers will be able to determine the stage in which they are or dealing with, as well as the actions to elaborate in order to move forward and refine their level of cultural awareness. This section includes some of the most

prominent contributions that explain these stages and how taking them into account and understanding them can benefit EFL teachers and learners.

Firstly, Kuang (2007) delineated four levels of cultural awareness. The first level is referred to as the parochial stage. Initially, learners are aware of their own way of thinking, interpreting and doing things, and this way, according to them, is the only one that exists. In simple words, learners at this level have the tendency to neglect the differences that exist between cultures. The second level is called the ethnocentric stage. Learners are aware of their own ways but also of others' ways of thinking, perceiving and behaving; however, they consider their cultural features as being superior to others. Cultural differences, at this level, are perceived as a source of problems; as a result, learners tend to reduce their importance and even not take them into consideration while communicating. The third level comes under the name of synergistic stage. It is when learners develop awareness of their own as well as of others' cultural framework and make choice of the best way in regards to the situation in which they are. Learners, at this level, consider cultural differences as having a double-edged impact on their learning and communication (they may be problematic or beneficial) and attempt to search for the best alternatives according to the circumstances. The last level is participatory third culture stage. It is when learners from different cultural background adapt to a particular situation through creating a new culture with new meanings and new rules. This adaptation serves the aim of facilitating the process of communication, and curtailing the obstacles learners may encounter due to cultural diversity.

The aforementioned presentation of the levels of cultural awareness can be summarized as follows:

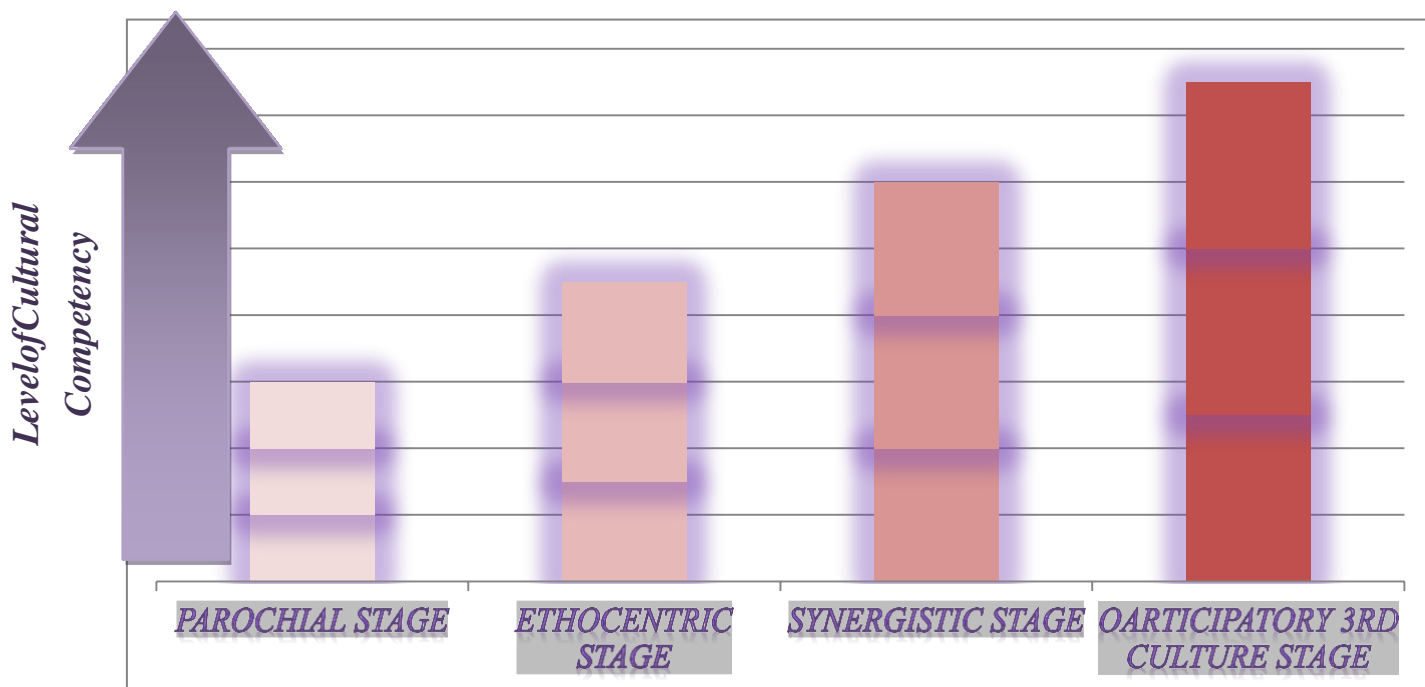


Figure03: Learners level of competency at each stage of cultural awareness (Kuang, 2007)

On this ground, it can be said that learners who experience the four levels of cultural awareness move from a statue of “cultural ignorant” to a stage of “cultural competent”

Secondly, Bennett (1993) adds more depth to this classification by suggesting a model of intercultural sensitivity where six different stages of cultural awareness are discussed. These stages’ comprehension equips FL learners with the necessary abilities to handle themselves and adapt to culturally-diverse contexts, also; they empower them to switch between cultures in an effective manner. The six stages suggested by Bennett include: denial stage, defense stage, minimization stage, acceptance stage, adaptation stage, and integration stage. He considers these stages as sub-steps that come under two main categories; the former three are from what he calls the ethno-centric stage, and the remaining ones from ethno-relative stage. At the first stage, learners are unable to perceive the differences that exist between their own culture and foreign cultures. They tend to consider other cultures in a vague way. That is, learners have the tendency to not take notice of the dissimilarities between cultures. For instance, a learner at the denial stage considers people that are not from his culture as “foreigners” and does not accord importance to the cultural community to which they belong, since, for them, the fact of speaking the same language is sufficient for effective communication. Unlike the denial stage, at the defense stage the cultural differences are detected and acknowledged. Nevertheless, for learners there are two parts in terms of culture;

the dominant and the non-dominant one. People from both sides consider their own culture as being positive and the other one as being negative. To put differently, people that are in the most evolved culture may use expressions like “they are modifying our culture” or “their presence is engendering the loss of our identity”, and tend to view the two cultures as disassociated. Whereas people from the non-dominant culture use expressions such as “they are not like us” or “they will never understand us”, and tend to view their culture as the subordinate one. At the minimization stage, learners, regard their culture as a reference that should be adopted by everyone. The key concept in the minimization stage is the generalization. In other words, learners tend to categorize the differences and to put them into umbrella groups in order to detect the similarities. For example, people at this stage use expressions like “after all! We are all human” or “they are all children”.

The aforementioned stages are put under the ethno-centric category, where people perceive and evaluate others’ cultures on the basis of their own culture. In simple words, they view the world through their own cultures’ lens.

The fourth stage is the acceptance stage. At this stage, people put their own culture and others’ culture on the same scale and believe that they are of the same value. People here tend to accept the cultural differences without necessarily agreeing with them or adopting them. They use expressions like ‘I do not eat pork; however, it does not mean that you do not have to do it’. The fifth stage refers to the adaptation stage. At this stage people are aware of what is appropriate in the foreign culture and behaviour according to that. The adaptation to foreign cultures leads to multiculturalism discussed in the previous section about cultural awareness. At the adaptation stage, people still have their own beliefs, values and behaviours, yet, they widen them by adding new ways of seeing and doing things and by enriching their experiences in multicultural contexts. An example of expressions that may be used by learners at this stage is ‘I have never wear white for funerals, but this time i will, we are in India’. The six, and last, stage is the integration stage. At this stage, learners grow an ability to express their own cultural frameworks and to move smoothly between cultures. They are able to take decisions, find solutions and interact with others without creating any misunderstandings or inappropriateness in their exchanges.

These three last stages come under the category of ethno-relativism, where people develop the ability to adapt to others’ cultures, to feel comfortable while interacting with their members, as well as they can even modify their own culture by integrating some elements from foreign cultures without losing their identity.

To explain Bennett's model in her own words, she (2004) remarks:

“As people became more interculturally competent it seemed that there was a major change in the quality of their experience, which I called the move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. I used the term ‘ethnocentrism’ to refer to the experience of one’s own culture as ‘central to reality.’ By this I mean that the beliefs and behaviors that people receive in their primary socialization are unquestioned; they are experienced as ‘just the way things are.’ I coined the term ‘ethnorelativism’ to mean the opposite of ethnocentrism—the experience of one’s own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities....In general, the more ethnocentric orientations can be seen as ways of avoiding cultural difference, either by denying its existence, by raising defenses against it, or by minimizing its importance. The more ethnorelative world views are ways of seeking cultural difference, either by accepting its importance, by adapting perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into a definition of identity.”

Thirdly, another prominent figure who contributed to the issue of cultural awareness stages is Gaston (1984) by suggesting four stages of acquisition. According to him, the development of cultural awareness begins with the appreciation that there are dissimilarities between ones' own culture and other cultures. Learners realize the existence of cultural otherness and that their native culture is not a universal one; others' cultures do not necessarily share rules and follow the same principles of interaction. This first step leads to one of two different possibilities. First, learners tolerate the differences that exist between the two cultures (native and target), and will presumably enter a process of mediation between them. Second, learners do not tolerate the points of discordance between native and foreign cultures, and will become rigid in terms of integration and acceptance, putting their own culture on a higher level of value. Cultural awareness, accordingly, will be acquired by learners who appreciate both native and target cultures, according them the same amount of respect and acceptance. In Gaston's words, he (1984) explains the different steps as follows:

- 1- Recognition: growing consciousness of [one's] own cultural group
- 2- Acceptance/ Rejection to cultural difference that is either positive or negative
- 3- Integration/ Ethnocentrism:...involves beginning to think biculturally or becoming rigidly ethnocentric.

- 4- Transcendence: [ability] to value and appreciate [one's] own cultural roots as well as...all other cultures.

On this ground, one can notice that, for Gaston, a set of skills should be developed at each stage of the process. The ability that should be developed at the first stage is the non-judgmental observation. The skill focused on at the second stage is the ability to deal with ambiguity. At the third stage, learners have to develop their ability to emphasize. Finally, the skill to develop at the fourth stage should be the ability to tolerate and appreciate foreign cultures.

Moreover, a three-step process is explained by Krasner (1999) in order to define the stages through which learners pass in order to acquire culture. The three steps are suggested by Agar (1994) and include: mistake, awareness and repair. The first step refers to the misinterpretation and the confusion that result from facing unfamiliar situations of the target culture. The second step relates to learners' discovery and comprehension of the first step as well as to their attempts to find alternatives. The last step is learners' adjustment and adaptation to the foreign cultural situation. According to these steps, Krashner adds (1999) that the most critical objective of culture teaching in FLT is students' awareness about the foreign culture.

Taking into account the above-mentioned stages, one can notice the development of cultural awareness in FLT is based on a four-phase pattern. This can be explained in the following table:

	<i>Unawareness Phase</i>	<i>Discovery Phase</i>	<i>Understanding Phase</i>	<i>Adaptation Phase</i>
<i>How</i>	<i>Learners at this stage are not aware of cultural otherness; they perceive, and interpret things according to their native culture framework.</i>	<i>Learners at this stage make notice of the dissimilarities between native and foreign cultures and try to interpret them from their own perceptions.</i>	<i>Learners at this stage are aware of the differences between native and target cultures, understand their guiding rules and react to them either positively or negatively.</i>	<i>Learners, at this stage, adopt the appropriate behaviours according to their knowledge of what is appropriate or not in the foreign culture.</i>
<i>What</i>		<i>Learners widen their vision and acquire a non-judgmental opinion and curiosity towards what surrounds them, they acknowledge the existence of cultural Otherness</i>	<i>Learners develop an ability to deal with what is different and not familiar to them, and acquire an ability to construct an analytic idea and make position according to it.</i>	<i>Learners think bi/multi-culturally and develop the ability of moving smoothly and effectively between cultures depending on the situations they encounter</i>
	<i>how the stage manifests</i>		<i>What skills learners develop</i>	

Table04: Summary of Cultural Awareness Stages

Cultural awareness is, therefore, acquired by learners in different stages and the passage from one stage to the other necessitates the acquisition of related knowledge and the development of certain skills. The understanding of these stages gives hand to both teachers and learners to be aware of their own and others' level of cultural awareness and to use it as a foundation to establish the following steps and skills to work on and develop. Consequently, the cultural awareness parcours is experienced positively, effectively and in an organized and non-confusing manner. At the end, learners will be equipped with the necessary baggage to attain the EFL classroom objectives.

2.4. Importance of Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness plays an important role in a variety of fields; linguistics, sociology, psychology, medicine, business, etc. Its importance can be seen at all levels and in multiple ways. In regards to FLT, it is believed to ensure the reaching of foreign language teaching/ learning objectives, help in overcoming some cultural barriers, and increases learners' bandwidth and skills that prevent them from misconstrued, confusing and even offending situations. The present section deals with these major points through which cultural awareness significance is demonstrated, as well as the way by which it acts as a barricade in order to protect learners from ineffective communication.

2.4.1. Cultural Awareness and other Disciplines

Due to convergence of new and increasingly advanced technologies, cultural awareness spread its influence to a multiplicity of disciplines. It became an important tool that is used for finding new answers and solutions, for elucidating mysteries and to pursue the technological development. Among the fields in which cultural awareness backed its position and pivotal role can be stated: medicine and business.

Firstly, in the field of medicine cultural awareness plays a major role in explaining health problem causes, defining hereditary diseases, studying how they evolve over time and what elements (food, cloths, rituals, dances, etc.) affect their transmission process and in which manner. In addition to that, cultural awareness helps in the development of cures and determines the degree of individuals' responses to the treatments according to their cultural beliefs and practices. One example that backs the importance of cultural awareness in the field of medicine would be the one of the 'Kuru' disease. This latter is very rare and was first discovered in 1930's among the Fore people of Papua New Guinea. The observed symptoms

of Kuru, such as tremors and loss of coordination, were a huge mystery that no one could elucidate at that time. However, few years later, through studying cultural features of the Fore people that light was finally shed on the causes of the disease. In fact, the Kuru cause and transmission are due to peoples' eating habits and rituals of cooking and eating their deceased family members. These rituals emanate from beliefs that by doing so they help to free the spirit of their dead. Therefore, being aware of the cultural features of the Fore helped in discovering causes, searching for the cure, and raising peoples' consciousness about the dangers of cannibalism for prevention and protection actions, and nowadays cultural awareness constitutes an important notion to consider and use for the fields' development.

Secondly, cultural awareness has been proven to be an essential element in the field of international business in the sense that it has a large number of advantages in the work place and in exchanges with foreign colleagues and companies. Being culturally aware makes both employees and employers able to overcome misunderstanding and misinterpretations in their business communication, and to avoid situations of confusion that lead to creating a non homogeneous environment that stifle the sense of creativity and productivity, resulting in a decrease in the business profitability. To put it differently, cultural awareness has a huge impact in the growth and lasting of one's business; it ensures the establishment of adequate working environment as well as of trust and respect in the teams and with leaders and partners. Moreover, cultural awareness helps in establishing a common ground for important decisions and good relationships to be possible. Some examples that illustrate the importance of cultural awareness in business can be seen in the following situations:

- Being on time
- Using of handshakes
- Making eye contact
- Dressing professionally
- Maintaining personal space
- Initiating meetings
- Positioning participants on a meeting table

To sum it up, cultural awareness is present in a variety of fields and its contribution to them is increasingly gaining interest and focus. This presence demonstrates the significance of promoting it among learners in order to help them in the EFL learning process, as well as in the development of new technologies and sciences.

2.4.2. Cultural Awareness and Cultural Barriers in English as a Foreign Language Learning

A cultural barrier refers to an issue which results in unsuccessful transmission of meaning between two or more individuals who belong to different cultural communities. In cultural barriers, the sender's transmitted meaning does not concord with the receiver's understood one, although they refer to the same thing. That is, both parts of the communication interpret and convey meanings according to their own cultural perspectives. As a result, misunderstandings create undesirable situations and communication breakdowns. This section, presents some of the most common barriers learners may encounter during their communication.

One of the mentioned barriers is stereotypes. A stereotype refers to an assumption made by an individual or a group of peoples about another others based on their cultural affiliation and membership. In plain words, individuals are considered to possess the characteristics that their group is associated with. Stereotypes constitute a serious obstacle that hinders effective learning and communication. Some examples of this cultural barrier are illustrated in the following table:

<i>Cultural group</i>	<i>Stereotypes</i>
<i>German</i>	<i>Rigid, Unemotional, Territorial...</i>
<i>British</i>	<i>Principled, Conservative, Class-conscious...</i>
<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Quite, Hardworking, Enigmatic...</i>
<i>American</i>	<i>Loud, Arrogant, Over-optimistic...</i>
<i>Italian</i>	<i>Talkative, Macho, Over-emotional</i>

Table 05: Examples of Stereotypes in Different Cultural Groups

By observing this table one can notice that stereotypes may be positive, negative or neutral, depending on the angle from which they are viewed and the context they are attributed. Nevertheless, they remain a source of hindrance to effective communication, and their impact is seen in the fact that all group members are thought to share the same characteristics neglecting their personal and individual traits. Nancy Kress (2022), an American writer, pens that “ A stereotype may be negative or positive, but even positive stereotypes present two problems: They are clichés, and they present a human being as far as more simple and uniform than any human being actually be”.

Another cultural barrier is body language. It refers to the nonverbal communication. It includes, for instance, body postures, gestures, facial expressions, eye movement, and the use and occupation of personal space, etc. Each of them carries multiple interpretations and conveys various meanings depending on the individual and environment where they are used. Insufficient or non-existence of cultural awareness makes body language a cause of communication breakdowns and learners may be seen as impolite, rude or offensive turning the interaction with others to a complete failure. The following table presents a common example of gesture that is interpreted in divergent manners cross the world; the ring gesture.

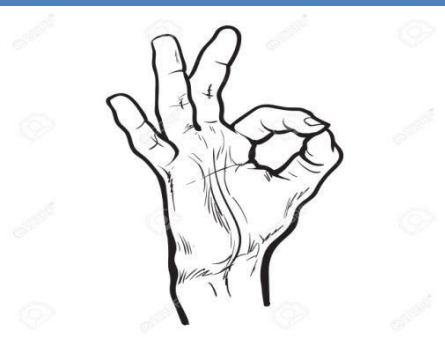
<i>The ring gesture</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
	<i>America and UK</i>	<i>It means “O.K.”</i>
	<i>Russia</i>	<i>It means “Zero”</i>
	<i>Japan</i>	<i>It means “Money”</i>
	<i>Italy</i>	<i>It is used to delineate a specific information</i>
	<i>Brazil</i>	<i>It is an insult</i>

Table06: The Different Interpretations of the Ring Gesture (Mcneil,1992)

Eye contact is another example of cultural barriers. In the U.S, for example, it is crucial to make eye contact while speaking to someone otherwise you may seem uninterested and disrespectful. Nevertheless, in Asian countries, maintaining eye contact is considered as a sign of rudeness and aggressiveness and even in certain contexts as a challenge to authority.

These examples are the evidence that body language carries a multiplicity of meanings and interpretations, and has an important impact on communication. Therefore, the less learners have a sensitivity towards these cultural differences the more they move towards communication failure.

Another example of cultural barriers is seen in how different cultures approach the concept of personal space. Personal space refers to the distance maintained between two people when having a conversation. This amount of space is meant to feel and make others comfortable. It is not used similarly in all cultural communities. That is, the same space may be regarded as too small for one person and interpreted as intrusive behavior in one culture, and may be seen as too great and interpreted as cold and unfriendly behaviour in another culture. A good example to consider would be the following:

One hand, in British culture personal space is pivotal when communicating with people. The usual distance is fixed to approximately 2-3 feet (60-100 cm), and a person using less than that he is considered as rude and aggressive. On the other hand, people from Latin America, Turkey and Arabic countries maintain a closer distance with people they having a conversation with, and some of them consider British peoples' distance as arrogant and unfriendly.

In addition to these cultural barriers exist multiple other examples such as emotional display, eye movement and prejudice that form mainsprings of communication failure. Accordingly, the remedy stands in the essence of cultural awareness. This latter constitutes the kernel of effective interactions in the sense that it serves as a database that guides communication and assures appropriateness and suitability. To put it differently, all the aforementioned obstacles that may face FL learners during communication can be overcome when learners are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with them in natural contexts. For instance, an Algerian learner will not be offended or confused noticing that his Japanese colleague does not make eye contact while having a conversation with him. Similarly, he will not feel uncomfortable when he takes notice that in a British society people

are keeping physical distance with him. These situations become normalized and accepted by the Algerian learner, which leads to make communication smooth and effortless.

2.4.3. Goals of developing cultural awareness in English as Foreign Language classes

This section is integrated into the one of ‘The importance of cultural awareness’ for the reason that each one of the goals set by teachers in EFL classroom is believed to enable learners to acquire a set of specific abilities and skills. Similarly, each one of these acquired abilities and skills is a step forward towards the acquisition of cultural awareness and the development of communicative competencies.

Despite the fact that scholars use different terminology to discuss the goals that cultural awareness helps FL learners to achieve, most of them agree on the crucial role culture teaching plays in this process of development.

According to Valette (1986:180) cultural goals can be classified into four categories that can be stated as follows:

1. *Developing a greater awareness of and a broader knowledge about the target culture*
2. *Acquiring a command of the etiquette of the target culture*
3. *Understanding the differences between the target culture and the students’ culture, and*
4. *Understanding the values of the target culture*

These suggested general goals are an attempt to help teachers set goals for their students in EFL classrooms, and help them condense efforts on them in order to reach the desired goals rapidly and effectively. In addition, it is believed that putting these cultural goals as a basis for learning, learners can have a clear idea about what to target, what skills to develop, and avoid dispatching their focus and their efforts in vein. Therefore, setting specific goals and using them as a starting point in the classroom is a facilitator for both teachers and learners in the EFL teaching/ learning process.

In the same vein, Seelye (1988) argues that there are six instructional goals learners achieve via culture teaching in FLT classes. The first goal is interest. Learners develop their curiosity in regards to other cultures and the dissimilarities between them and their own cultures, which leads to the comprehension of their members and empathy towards them. The

second goal is the ‘who’. Learners become aware of the fact that social variables such as sex, religion, and ethnicity have a direct impact on peoples’ ways of speaking and behaving. This makes learners widen the limits of their expectations. The third goal is the ‘what’. Learners gain an ability to understand that comprehending the association that people make in their minds between things, situations and the culturally-conditioned images is the key to effective communication. The fourth goal is the ‘why’. Learners understand that individuals act the way they do due to the guidelines of what is acceptable or not as well as the expectations that their society establishes for them in order to satisfy their basic needs. The fifth goal is the ‘where and when’. Conventions and situations shape in an important manner peoples’ ways of behaving. The last goal is the ‘exploration’. Learners have the ability to locate and organize necessary information about a given culture from different sources, and have the skills to evaluate a generalization depending on the amount of information supporting it (Seelye,1997: 25). Camilleri (2002) summarizes the goals explained by Seelye. She pens:

Learners realize that their culturally-bound ways of thinking and behaving are not universally shared. They learn different ways of responding to the environment, from very simple comportment such as expressing gratitude to a friend to more complex social interaction such as developing and maintaining an intimate relationship with a member of a different cultural and linguistic community” (p.48)

In addition, Tomalin & Stempleski (1993) take Seely’s list of goals to extend it to seven culture teaching goals. By means of their list, they argue that culture learning/teaching has to centre focus on learners’ knowledge and comprehension, attitudes and awareness, and behavior. They state:

- ⇒ To help students to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviors
- ⇒ To help students to develop an understanding that social variables such as sex, social class, and place of residence influence the ways in which people speak and behave.
- ⇒ To help students to become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture
- ⇒ To help students to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language
- ⇒ To help students to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence.

As it can be observed from Tomalin and Stempleski list of culture teaching goals, these latter can be described in pairs in regards to what culture instruction is targeting, except for the last one. That is, the first two points are both concerned with knowledge and understanding of the dissimilarities that exist between native and target cultural communities, and the impact of these differences on peoples' speech and behavior. In the third and fourth points, the development of learners' cultural awareness of values and perceptions affecting peoples' behavior is included. The fifth and sixth points deal with the enhancement of learners' responses and reactions towards cultural otherness. Finally, the last point concerns the increase of learners' positive attitude and tolerance.

Overall, it is worthwhile to mention that the understanding of these goals helps in two main ways. The first way remains in the fact that teachers use them as a basis for the design and selection of the ways and tools that are suitable to learners. That is, they put the goals on the top of their teaching plan and work according to them through relating them to the appropriate techniques and approaches. This is in order to avoid scattering efforts and to maximize the learning quality and effectiveness. The second way is observed through the fact that, when presented with at the beginning of the instruction, learners are made aware of the importance of developing their cultural awareness by exploring the various skills and abilities they are expected to acquire as well as how these latter help them in the process of communication.

2.4.4. Cultural Awareness and Learners Bandwidth

The Nostrands (1970) suggest nine abilities EFL learners learn via the development of cultural awareness:

1. An ability to react positively and in an appropriate manner in target social contexts
2. An ability to describe a pattern in the foreign culture
3. An ability to recognize a pattern in the foreign culture
4. An ability to analyse and explain a pattern in the target culture
5. An ability to predict the application of a given pattern in a specific situation
6. An ability to manifest or describe an appropriate attitude in the target society
7. An ability to evaluate a foreign culture pattern
8. An ability to explain methods of socio-cultural analysis
9. An ability to identify basic human goals that put emphasis on the importance of understanding the content presented

In addition to all the above-mentioned reasons, developing learners' cultural awareness in the classroom is believed to increase their language proficiency as well as to boost their level of motivation towards foreign language learning (Tsou, 2005). That is, learners develop a sense of curiosity towards unfamiliar things and are stimulated by the process of cultural discovery and juxtaposition.

In regards to learners who travel abroad in order to study, work or even to live, developing cultural awareness is believed to prevent them, or at least to reduce, culture shock.

This latter refers to the feeling of disorientation and confusion when facing unfamiliar cultural situations (further explained in section one of the present chapter).

Moreover, despite the fact that developing cultural awareness in the classroom maybe considered as unreal and referred to as 'mere simulation', scholars argue that its importance and positive impact on learners is still significant. Damen(1987) explains that the advantages of learning culture in the classroom can be summarized in two distinct points:

1. *As an artificial community, the classroom draws a culturally protective wall around those within, bestowing less severe punishment for the commission of linguistic and cultural errors that could be met outside its walls.*
2. *The classroom community is managed, unreal, forgiving, and protective, but it is also an environment that provides unique opportunities for experimental intercultural communication. If administered well, this community may provide the first step on a long voyage of cultural discovery that will end in the world outside the classroom.*

Thus, Damen believes that learning culture in the classroom is advantageous, since learners and the teacher form an ad hoc group that is temporary, and which has the aim of finding solutions and preparing for real situations.

For all the reasons stated previously; cultural awareness multi-field presence, the goals achieved via its instruction, and the abilities EFL learners acquire along with its development, cultural awareness should be given high level of interest and importance in foreign language teaching/ learning. Its crucial role is clearly seen in the core objective of EFL which is the development of learners' intercultural communicative competence (explored in the following section). Byram (1997a) includes this point in his discussion of the three goals of foreign language instruction that he states as follows:

- 1- The development of communicative competence for use in situations the learner may expect to encounter
- 2- The development of an awareness of the target language
- 3- The development of insight into the foreign culture and positive attitudes towards foreign people

As it can be noticed in these goals, effective communication and cultural awareness are cornerstones in FLT. Cultural awareness is believed to pave the way to ICC. Therefore, EFL teachers need to make a proper balance between the two previously discussed perspectives of big C and small c (dealt with in chapter one) and to have the necessary understanding of cultural awareness in order to be capable of selecting and including culture-oriented topics, activities, and materials into the FLT classroom (this point of culture inclusion is further elaborated in chapter three).

3. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

As explained in previous sections communication and culture are interrelated and share a relationship that cannot be divorced. “ Culture is communication and communication is culture” (Hall, 1976), and despite the strong relationship between language education and intercultural education they are frequently regarded as separate areas of study. That is, some educators put culture in a peripheral position in their works and its core issues are being overlooked. Fantini (1997) explains this point by stating that “ language educators who demonstrate interest in “culture” often ignore “intercultural” concerns- that is, the contrast between target and native languages and cultures and the dynamic tension between them” (p.4). However, since the primary goal of teaching English is the application of the linguistic skills effectively in natural foreign contexts, researchers combined efforts and helped in the development of the concept of intercultural communicative competence. This latter was introduced as an extension of communicative competence (Hall, 2002).

First of all, the line needs to be drawn between the two concepts of intercultural competence (IC) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Byram (1997), refers to IC as people’s “ability to interact in their own language with the people from another country and culture” while ICC takes into consideration language teaching and focuses on “the ability to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language”. According to Byram (1997), an individual who has developed ICC is capable of building relationships in the target culture via communication taking into account both his own and others’ viewpoint

and needs, acts as a mediator in interactions between people that hold different cultural backgrounds, and puts as his main focus the development of communicative skills.

In regards to ICC, Meyer (1991: 137) provides a definition of ICC by stating that it refers to “the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures”. What is highlighted in this definition is the adaptability of learners’ skills and attitudes to the situations in which the communication occurs, with the aim of making this latter appropriate and effective. This notion is also highlighted in Aguilar’s (2007: 68) definition of ICC, he claims that it means:

[D]eveloping attitudes of openness and tolerance towards other people and cultures, promoting the ability to handle intercultural contact situations, promoting reflection on cultural differences or promoting increased understanding of one’s own culture

This statement covers two main points. The first one is learners’ attitudes and perceptions’ flexibility to deal with intercultural situations. That is ICC helps learners to develop their abilities and to acquire positive (or at least neutral) attitudes towards cultural diversity and otherness. These abilities enable learners to tolerate, respect and adapt to what is unfamiliar and new in terms of cultural elements, and as a result; this promotes their motivation and willingness to learn, and put into practice their cultural knowledge at a successful and appropriate level. The second point is that these elements form an interesting circuit that illustrates the different manifestations of ICC, where each element has an impact and is impacted by the other. Another prominent figure’s contribution to the field of intercultural communication is the one of Beneke (2000: 108) who claims that “ Intercultural communication in the wider sense of the word involves the use of significantly different linguistic codes contacts between people holding significantly different statements of values and models of the ([...]) intercultural competence is to a language extent the ability to cope with one’s own cultural background in interaction with others” (cited in Lazar 2001: 19). Therefore, intercultural communicative competence can be defined as the outcome of the combination of both linguistic and cultural awareness; it is the ability to communicate in an effective and appropriate manner, and to align oneself to the various interaction systems in foreign cultural contexts. The two words ‘effective’ and ‘appropriate’ are used and emphasized purposefully in this work, since a large number of definitions and concept’s contributions include them to picturise the type of communication ICC is targeting. Among these contributions, where the two words are used, Deardrof’s (2006) definition of ICC. He

refers to it as:

“The ability to develop the targeted knowledge, skills, attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions”

Inherited to above-mentioned statements, a number of key points are worth mentioning. ICC allows learners to understand different cultural affiliations, to be tolerant and respectful towards the dissimilarities between their own and other’s cultures, and to act effectively and appropriately when interacting and communicating in foreign cultural contexts. These points demonstrate the crucial role that ICC plays in FLT/L, as well as how learners benefit from its development. Following the same line of thoughts, Jandt (1995) summarizes the benefits of ICC in five points:

- 1- Improving verbal and nonverbal communication.
- 2- Becoming better in recognizing and understanding communication behavior in various contexts
- 3- Better adaptation to a new environment
- 4- Better understanding of one’s own culture
- 5- Learning about customs and habitual behaviors of members of other cultures

In order to deepen the definition of intercultural communicative competence and make the concept clearer, a prominent figure’s work needs to be mentioned; Byram’s. Byram is considered as the developer of ICC. He (2002: 07) defines it as involving a number of ‘Savoirs’. This latter, broadly refers to the knowledge of customs and practices of social groups in both native and foreign countries. He (Ibid) explains the Savoirs as follows:

- a. **Savoir comprendre**: which is *“the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one’s own”*
- b. **Savoir-apprendre/faire**: which is the *“ skill of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitude and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction”*
- c. **Savoir s’engager**: which is referred to as *“ critical cultural awareness/ political education: an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries”*

d. *Savoir etre*: which is described as “ curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own”

According to Byram (1997, 2003), ICC is composed of certain knowledge, skills and attitudes. Firstly, knowledge. It comes under two categories; knowledge of cultural features of social groups in one’s country and abroad, and knowledge of the processes by which individuals interact and communicate. Secondly, skills. They are divided into skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness/political education. Thirdly, attitudes. They refer to the fact of being open to the idea of eliminating prejudices about foreign cultures. These elements of ICC have a pivotal impact on how FL learners view cultural diversity and forge positively their responses towards it; as a result, they enter a process of normalization, tolerance and adaptation that leads to effective interaction and prevents from communication pitfalls. All the aforementioned information can be summarized in the following figure:

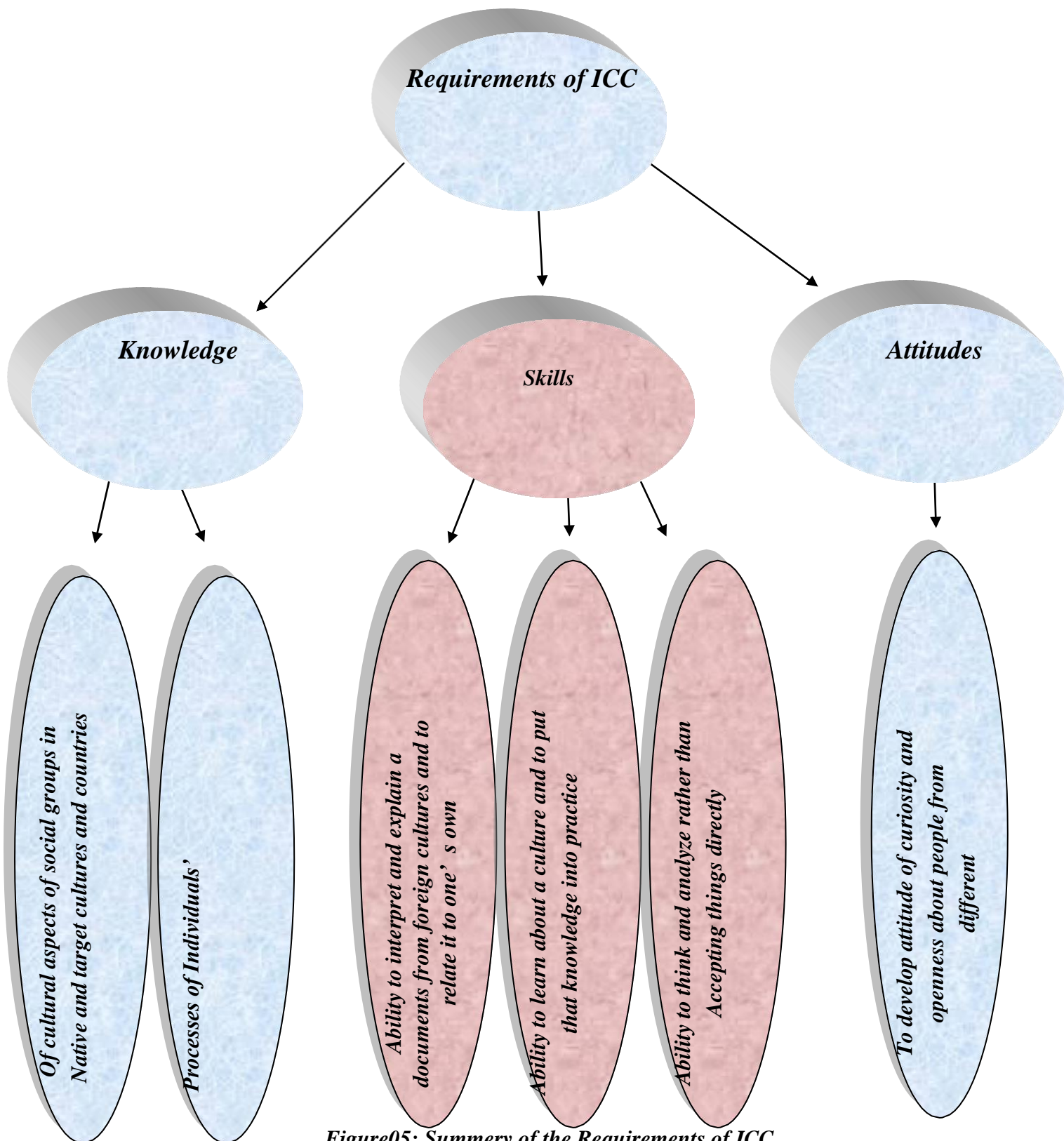


Figure05: Summery of the Requirements of ICC

The components stated by Byram are included in other proposed models of intercultural communicative competence. Among these models can be stated: Fantini's model (2000) and Liddicoat's model (2002). In the former are discussed five elements necessary for achieving intercultural competence; awareness, attitudes, knowledge, skills and language proficiency. In the second in which it is argued that acquiring intercultural competence requires a 'cyclic-pathway-process', i.e. the process of culture begins by taking notice of the input that transforms to an output due to experimentation and reflection to finally reach a culturally appropriate behaviour. These models present many similarities and concord at many levels with Byram's model

Therefore, FL learners should be introduced to the abovementioned notions of ICC, and teachers should help them to acquire them as well as to gain interest in the process of learning about cultural otherness and how to deal with it in various situations. Following the same line of thoughts, Byram (2002) concludes by stating that " Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching involves recognizing that the aims are: to give learners intercultural competence as well as linguistic competence; to prepare them for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; and to help them to see what such interaction is an enriching experience" (p.6). Accordingly, it can be said that the essence of ICC remains in the facts of understanding, making understood, persuading and influencing (UMPI) (Dadfar, 2001).

Coming to this point of the discussion, it is quite clear that, intercultural communicative competence put emphasis on the importance of cultural awareness in the process of communication. Its objectives and components cast light on the significance of including culture to EFL teaching/ learning.

Conclusion

Learning a foreign language means much more than learning about its linguistic aspects only, or to communicate with foreigners using only the target language knowledge. It also means being engaged in the cultural frameworks of that language. This leads to an increasing need for developing cultural awareness. The latter has been proven by several works to be holding an interesting position in several fields in terms of its significance, and most importantly in EFL. It became, nowadays, a chief concern of a huge number of works and it still continues to gather momentum. On this ground, EFL teachers and educators are focusing more and more on the incorporation of culture in classes in order to promote learners' cultural awareness which leads to ICC. In other words, the major concern is defining, selecting and using the adequate tools that enable the development of learners' necessary skills, in order for them to meet the desired objectives. To conclude, developing cultural awareness necessitates a combination of skills and knowledge, descriptive and interactional approaches and techniques. Therefore, efforts are funneled down to focus on the most effective ways of including culture to EFL instruction and promoting learners' cultural awareness.

Chapter Three

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Chapter Three

Developing Cultural Awareness among English as a Foreign Language Learners

Introduction

Coming to this point of the discussion, one can say that the equation of language teaching and culture teaching has been the heart of numerous studies. It is a key notion that still generating countless works in which the focal point is the promotion of learners' cultural awareness. "Teaching a new language is teaching a new culture" (Bailey, 1991), and consequently, "teachers of language are also teachers of culture" (Byram, 1989). It became "necessary to foster cultural awareness by teaching culture incorporated in the learners' consciousness of the hidden assumptions and premises underlying their belief and value systems" (Humphrey, 1997: 242). Therefore, a growing attentiveness has been owed to points such as; approaches, techniques, topic, and materials to use in order to develop learners' cultural consciousness and to meet the EFL classrooms objectives. The importance of cultural inclusion has become an interesting issue. Nostrand (1967) states that "teaching culture is not equivalent with the regular formal transmission of information regarding the people of the target community or country, even though this kind of knowledge is an ingredient through formal language curricula". The complexity of teaching culture is, also, depicted by Hinkel (1999) who pens that "it is probably simplistic to imply that culture can be examined, taught, and learned through exercises for reading newspaper headlines and helps wanted advertisements or that customs, cuisines, and courtesies delineate the extent of the impact of culture on one's linguistic and interactive behaviours, although they can serve as springboards to more in depth discussions". Therefore, associating language teaching/learning with a solid cultural background command has become a real challenge for teachers, and despite the increasing consciousness of the pivotal role this association plays in FLT, the way of embodying culture in class remains equivocal to a number of educators.

The central concern of this chapter is to discuss the above-stated fundamental points which role, when selected and used adequately, is promoting EFL learners' cultural awareness and making them reach the desired EFL teaching/learning objectives, shedding some light on teachers' role and the main difficulties they may encounter during the process.

3.1. Cultural Curriculum and Syllabus

Despite the fact that culture is seldomly stated in the study curricula, it remains existent in all its aspect and contributes to the EFL teaching/learning effectiveness, yet; in an implicit manner. Damen (1987) explains that by stating that culture is “often part of the hidden agenda, a pervasive but unrecognized dimension, coloring expectation, perceptions, reactions, teaching and learning strategies, and is, more often than not, a contributing factor in the success or failure of second or foreign language learning and acquisition”. That is, culture is regarded as one of the three component of the curriculum, nonetheless; “due to its uneven treatment in textbooks and to the lack of familiarity, among teachers, with the culture itself and with the techniques needed to teach it” it remains the weakest one (Lafayette: 1988: 47). A cultural curriculum, therefore, includes culture as an integral part and sheds equal light on it and the two other components; language and literature. This position of culture in the teaching curriculum is suggested by Kramsch (1993). He pens:

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 communication competence, challenging, their ability to make sense of the world around them

Politzer (1959: 123) supports Kramsh statement that culture should be integrated and taught “from day one”, he states that “if we teach the language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates , we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meanings”.

Therefore, Culture should not be considered as “an interesting sidelight that is included periodically to provide a change of pace from language study” (Chastain, 1988). Instead, it should be attributed a higher status in EFL syllabi in an organized and planned manner.

According to Stern (1992), who is considered as one of the few language theorists to acknowledge the significance of a cultural syllabus, this latter should incorporate three main categories. First, the cognitive category which refers to different kinds of knowledge; geography, the contributions of foreign cultures on worldwide civilization, and diversity of ways of life and the values and attitudes that guide members of a cultural community. Second,

The effective category which relates to students' curiosity and empathy towards foreign cultures. Finally, the behavioral category which is related to the ability of interpreting cultural behaviors, and adopting culturally appropriate one.

Therefore, a cultural syllabus is a combination of factual-oriented and process-oriented patterns that accords culture a pivotal position in the EFL process and that from the beginning of the instruction.

3.2. Content for Teaching Culture in English as Foreign Language Classes

The selection of the cultural content has always been a challenging issue. Deciding what to teach in order to promote cultural awareness and equip learners with the necessary knowledge and skills is not an easy task. In other words, it is not "... a mere listening of facts Or transference of a body of knowledge from the mind of the teacher to that of the learners; [instead] it is no doubt more than that" (Merrouche, 2006: 154). For this reason a large number of works have been conducted with the focus of defining the multiplicity of topics that teachers can use in order to include culture in their EFL classes.

One prominent figure is Stern (1992) who after discussing the three components of a cultural syllabus pursues by suggesting six broad topics that encompass major aspects of culture in order for teachers to include them to the EFL class. These topics are:

- 1- *Places*
- 2- *Individual persons and way of life*
- 3- *People and society in general*
- 4- *History*
- 5- *Institutions*
- 6- *Art, music, literature, and other major achievements*

To elaborate more, these topics cover the main aspects of cultural knowledge that aims at providing learners with the necessary cultural information, but also at emerging them into culturally relevant contexts when associated to a problem-solving approach. Each category enables learners to acquire a particular knowledge. The first topic gives an idea about geography perceptions of native speakers. The everyday life of these latter is explored in the second category. Through the third category an identification and classification of

cultural groups is made possible (in terms of age, regional characteristics, and professional, social and economic dissimilarities). The fourth category deals with providing learners with knowledge about all what is related to history; historical personalities, events, symbols, etc. The fifth category incorporates an understanding of government and educational systems, political parties, economic institutions, social welfare, and media. Finally, the sixth category of topics refers to knowledge about artists, musicians and authors.

Similarly, Hammerly (1982, in Sten, 1992) puts culture instruction under three categories:

- Information culture which refers to factual information about a specific culture
- Achievement culture which relates to artistic accomplishments
- Behavior culture which includes the behavioral patterns that governs a given cultural community, and which is, according to Hammer, the most important one.

Brooks (1960), unlike Hammerly and Stern, suggests sixty four culture-related topics, instead of categories, to include to EFL classes. These topics deal with “...the interchange and reciprocal effect of the social pattern and the individual upon each other...what one is ‘expected’ to think, believe, say, do, eat, wear, pay, endure, resent, honour, laugh at, fight for, and worship, in typical life situations” (Brooks, 1968) . Among the topic suggested by Brook can be stated: medicine, meals, sports, careers, and hobbies.

Byram & Morgan (1994) encompass most of the suggested-cultural-topics in order to present the cultural content in nine categories. These categories are stated as follows:

- ⇒ *Social identity and social groups:...including social class, regional identity, ethnic minority, professional identity...which illustrate the complexity of individuals’ social identities and of national society;*
- ⇒ *Social interaction: conventions of verbal and non-verbal behavior in social interaction at different levels of familiarity, as outsider and insider within social groups;*
- ⇒ *Belief and behaviour: routine and taken for granted actions within a social group...and the moral and religious beliefs which are embodied within them;*
- ⇒ *Socio-political institutions: institutions of the state-and the values and meanings they embody which characterize the state and its citizens...;*

- ⇒ *Socialization and the life-cycle: institutions of socialization-families, schools, employment, religion, military service- and the ceremonies which mark passage through stages of social life...;*
- ⇒ *National history: periods and events, historical and contemporary, which are significant in the constitution of the nation and its identity...;*
- ⇒ *National geography: geographical factors within the national boundaries which are significant in members' perceptions of their country;*
- ⇒ *Stereotypes and national identity: ...the origins of the notions-historical and contemporary- and comparisons among them, symbols of national identities and stereotypes and their meanings, e.g. famous monuments and people.*

Through observing the different categories one can notice that Byram & Morgan combine both Big C culture and small c culture aspects. That is, the categorization is a blend of both tangible, physical and intangible, abstract elements of culture.

To conclude, one can say that choosing the content to use for including culture into EFL classes is not a simple task; many factors need to be taken into account; from learners' needs to the classrooms profile to the teaching objectives. Culture teaching has always wended up in the question of "what to teach?", and heavy pressures have always been put on teachers shoulders. Accordingly, numerous works are devoted to serve the role of facilitating the culture inclusion process. Therefore, ranging from broad categories to specific topics, the above mentioned lists are not exhaustive and all of them serve the purpose of making it possible for teachers to develop learners' cultural awareness in adequate and effective ways.

3.3. Approaches to Teaching Culture in English as Foreign Language Classes

To begin, it is important to mention that the move from methods to approaches has been due to EFL teachers' beliefs that designer methods were not resulting in effective teaching, and they have become aware of the need for flexible and adaptable tasks and techniques that suit their objectives and are relevant to learners in EFL classes. Brown (2002:11) gives a clear definition of approach as being:

No just set of static principles 'set in stone'. It is, in fact, a dynamic composite of energies within a teacher that changes (or should change, if one is a growing teacher) with continued experience in learning and teaching

What can be noticed in Brouwn's statement is the focus he puts on the non-static nature of an approach as well as the role the teacher plays in translating this characteristic in the classroom. To put it differently, an approach is always modifiable on the basis of teachers' observations and experiences in language classrooms (Han, 2010). Teachers' sense and experience are the foundations for the application of an approach in the EFL classroom. Thus, taking into account the diverse individual needs and the ever changing requirements of EFL learners, as well as the numerous challenges teachers face in EFL classes, one can say that there are no universal criteria for the choice and use of an approach. Therefore, bearing in mind the objective of including culture into EFL classrooms, a number of approaches are suggested to serve it.

The first categorization is the one proposed by Risager (1998:243-252), in which he includes four approaches. Firstly, the foreign-culture approaches. It is an approach that is constructed on the concept of single culture which is the target one. It pays no attention to the native cultural elements, including no process of comparison between the two. This absence of comparison between cultures costs it multiple critics that resulted in the loss of dominance in 1980's. The primary aim of the foreign culture approach is the development of native-like communicative and cultural competence.

The second one is the intercultural approach. Unlike the foreign culture approach, it is based on the comparison between the native and target cultures. That is, it takes into account both cultures aiming at enabling learners to serve the role of mediators between the two to develop their comprehension of communicative and cultural competences. Nevertheless, Risager (1998: 246) describes this approach as "blind to actual multicultural character of almost all existing countries or states" suggesting the multicultural approach as a remedy to it.

The third approach is the multicultural approach. It is based on the idea that sub-cultures exist within cultures of every country. It puts emphasize on ethnic and linguistic otherness of cultures. Risager (1998) describes the multicultural approach as centred on the non-monolithicity of cultures and that learners should approach this latter with an anti-racism vision. Like the intercultural approach, it incorporates comparison between cultures and

develops learners' mediator's competence (intercultural and linguistic). This approach is growingly gaining interest and popularity for its effectiveness in EFL classes.

The fourth approach is the trans-cultural approach. The tenor behind this approach is that, by virtues of mass communication, globalization, technological advancements, and the use of English as a lingua franca all over the world, nowadays cultures are interwoven. It is based on the idea that the target language is an international one so it does not have to be associated to a particular culture.

To conclude, one can notice that, although different, the Risager's four approaches have the same aim, which is preparing learners for international communication.

Another categorization of culture inclusion approaches is the one of Galloway (1985), in which he suggests four approaches stated as follows:

1. The Frankenstein Approach: A taco from here, a flamenco from here, a gacho from here, a bullfight from there.
2. The 4-F Approach: Folkdances, Festivals, Fairs and Food.
3. The Tour Guide Approach: Monuments, rivers, cities, etc.
4. The By-the-way Approach: Sporadic lectures or bits of behavior selected indiscriminately to emphasize sharp differences.

Galloway's approaches shed some light on factual information that concerns the target culture only. Each approach focuses on one category of foreign culture aspects and does not present any information about the native one. Thus, there is no comparison process involved in these approaches.

In addition to these approaches some others that focus on cultural elements. First, the theme-based or thematic approach. It refers to teaching culture on the basis of certain themes. That is, it groups topics under main themes in order to present them such as patriotism, education and family. These themes are regarded as typical of a specific culture, and through them it is aimed to make learners understand better the ways and values of the target culture members. The theme-based approach is, however, viewed as failing to give learners a combined vision of the whole foreign culture; it is believed to provide them with segregated sight of it. Nostrand (1974, cited in Mehdaoui, 2013) supported the idea of this approach by explaining that a culture is better learnt and understood when it is presented thematically. Second, the task-oriented approach. It refers to an approach that is based on

learners' research. Learners, in this approach, are supposed to work in pairs or in small groups. They deal with various aspects of the target culture, then, they discuss and share them with their classmates in order to accentuate their level of understanding and construct a more complete idea about the foreign culture. Third, the topic- based approach. It is based on the inclusion of general topics concerning different issues of culture. It is an approach that provides learners with a holistic picture of the foreign culture, since it gives them an insight about cultural elements which is useful for developing their cultural awareness. Fourth, the problem- oriented approach. Like the task oriented-approach, it is based on learners' research. The problems selected for their work are defined by the teacher, and the more the subjects are precise the faster learners attain the desired objectives (Seelye, 1993: 47). Seelye states that:

Rather than be told to read a book on the general topic chosen, students can be taught to skim and to read carefully only limited sections that are germane to their specific area of interest. Otherwise, the student will fast become bogged down in the fantastic explosion of knowledge that threatens to engulf all scholars, especially those in science and social sciences.

That is to say, in the problem-oriented approach teachers plays the role of guides for, not only the definition of subjects of interest, but also for learners' bibliographic works. This role is of a great importance and help in view to the huge amount of information learners can access nowadays. Last, the skill-oriented-approach. It refers to an approach that aims at developing learners' necessary skills in order to deal with different parts of communication in foreign cultures/ communities. Therefore, it is believed to be suitable for learners living within the country of the target culture. Bolt (n.d., cited in Saluveer, 2004) argues that the skill- oriented approach put emphasize on awareness and skills as much as on content, on the present and future as much as on past, as well as on similarities in cultures as much as differences. He (Ibid.) explains this in the following points:

- *The raising and exploring of open questions rather than answering of the closed ones; what can be done at the end of a lesson is as important as what is known;*
- *The process of an activity is as important as the product;*
- *Cultural input is insufficient, cultural outcomes are essential;*
- *The learners' involvement is as important as the material the teacher provides;*

- *Investigatory attitudes to develop the skills of finding, evaluating, analyzing and finally*
- *Communicating aspects of culture;*
- *Teachers and learners working alongside one another to common goals;*
- *Language is central and foregrounded.*

The above-mentioned approaches are of great help in FLT classrooms. It can be noticed that the approaches can be divided into two main categories or two umbrella approaches. The first is the mono cultural approaches. These approaches put stress on the foreign culture ignoring learners' native one and their understanding of its elements. Thus, in these approaches there is no comparison process. The second category is the comparative approaches. These approaches focus on both native and foreign cultures and make a link between the two via a comparison process. Byram and Planet (2000) explain the comparative approaches' essence as being the fact of having two perspectives without an evaluation of which one is better than the other. To use their words:

So the comparative approach does involve evaluation but not in terms of comparison with something which is better, but in terms of incorporating what is all too familiar (P. 189)

Comparison, thus, makes learners discover both similarities and differences between their native and foreign cultures. It questions their "taken-for-granted nature" and widens their knowledge and level of tolerance.

Either by putting emphasis on one culture only (or mostly) or on the two, the categories agree to cast light on both cultures in the EFL class. In addition to that, both categories are introduced to serve the same purpose of promoting cultural awareness and to equip learners with the necessary elements to communicate effectively and appropriately in foreign contexts/communities.

Therefore, no matter what approach is used, it needs to be adapted to the EFL class, and teachers should put stress on "never lose[ing] insight of the individual" (Brook,1964, cited in Seelye, 1993: 135), and on the importance of making comparison processes of one's own and target cultures in order to boost cultural understanding and learning.

3.4. Techniques of Including Culture in English as Foreign Language Classes

Nowadays, a large number of techniques can be observed in regards to including culture into EFL teaching process. Teachers' role in selecting and using the appropriate technique for learners is not neglectable. In fact, teachers that are constantly observing and adapting them to learners' needs and situations' requirements have more chances to meet the desirable goals. Therefore, bearing in mind the multiple factors that should be taken into account for choosing adequate techniques, teachers might find it worthwhile to take into consideration Brown's checklist that serves the purpose. He (2000) suggests:

1. Does the technique recognise the value and belief systems that are presumed to be part of the culture(s) of students?
2. Does the technique refrain from any demeaning stereotypes of any culture, including the culture(s) of students?
3. Does the technique refrain from any possible devaluing of students' native language(s)?
4. Does the technique recognize varying willingness of students to participate openly due to factors of collectivism/individualism and power distance?
5. If the technique requires students to go beyond the comfort zone of uncertainty avoidance in their culture(s), does it do so emphatically and tactfully?
6. Is the technique sensitive to the perceived roles of males and females in the culture (s) of students?
7. Does the technique sufficiently connect specific language features (e.g., grammatical categories, lexicon, and discourse) to cultural ways of thinking feeling and acting?
8. Does the technique in some ways draw on the potentially rich background experiences of students, including their experiences in other cultures?

The classroom is the arena in which teachers use the necessary tools in order to achieve the EFL objectives. Considering the fact that this selection and inclusion process might be challenging, the present section is dedicated to the most common in-class techniques and activities that are used in order to develop EFL learners' cultural awareness.

3.4.1. Kinesthetic and Body Language

Communication is a combination of verbal and non-verbal signs. Non-verbal communication, although inextricably linked to all aspects of individual life, remains an unconscious cultural phenomenon. As explained in the previous chapter, the same non-verbal element may convey complete divergent meanings depending on the culture in which it is interpreted. Therefore, researchers are increasingly encouraging FL learners and teachers to gain insight on the concept of non-verbal communication and the effective ways of including body language as a key concept in cultural instruction. From an interpersonal relationship perspective, body language is considered as one of the most important portals that enables individuals to “stimulate” peoples’ interest in them (Kuhnke, 2012). For instance, a learner could use his/her body language in order to give a good impression and to seem confident when persuading others (Lewis, 2012). In addition to that, a good choice of one’s posture could boost his inner motivation and increase his confidence, even if he is feeling differently at this moment (Matsumoto and Hwang, 2013). In EFL classes, the inclusion of body language make learning more profound and interesting, and it provides learners with authenticity. Gestures, as being the most obvious form of body language, should not be ignored in the classroom. Gerald Green (1968) in his book “Gestures Inventory for Teaching Spanish” suggests that teachers use foreign culture gestures when using cultural content (such as dialogues’ presentation and role play activities). In order to teach body language to EFL learners in the classroom, one example is the use of on-screen activities in order to pick-up native speakers’ hand-gestures, postures, and facial expressions, in real-life interactions. This latter is a valuable source of information and learning in views of cultural knowledge.

3.4.2. Mini-dramas/ Mini skit

It refers to brief episodes that include some examples of misunderstanding. These episodes are written with aim of fostering sympathy for the character that does not belong to the given culture; the situation in which he is put by members of the native culture. The word ‘character’ is used here because learners are assigned to act out the parts of the scripts, and each part is followed by an open-ended question discussion. At the end, all scenes are justified and clarified for learners who are asked to reinterpret what they have seen on the basis of the given information. Seelye (1993, 17) stresses that “a non judgemental atmosphere” should be established by teachers during that stage of the technique. This technique is regarded as very useful in views of promoting emotional feelings that are related to real-life intercultural

situation, and it is believed to be more effective when scenarios include highly charged emotional topic.

3.4.3. Culture Capsule

This technique refers to the description of a selected cultural aspect of the foreign culture, and then discussion about the encountered dissimilarities between the given culture and learners' native one. The description can be presented orally by the teachers, or prepared by learners at home, and the whole capsule should not exceed ten minutes. This technique presents many advantages such as the fact that its "compactness and practical manageable quality" (Stern, 1992). As well as the fact that it involves learners become in the discussion and takes into account their native culture characteristics (Chastain, 1988).

3.4.4. Culture Cluster

This technique refers to a number of related culture capsules. That is, the content of the culture cluster is divided into different parts that are introduced in a number of succeeding lessons. In the last lesson, the whole content is presented as one single sequence. The culture cluster can be conducted by teachers via starting from "a slice of target life" (Seelye, 1993: 178) and then moving backward to select some segments of it to work with. This technique seduces by the fact that it provides learners with intellectual awareness of various cultures, however; unlike mini dramas, it does not promote emotional empathy.

3.4.5. Audio-motor Units

It refers to verbal instructions for physical actions such as eating with a knife and fork, buying cinema tickets, and ordering food at a restaurant. These actions are carried out by learners under the oral directions of the teacher, and the process is repeated several times. The objective of this technique is to make learners behave appropriately, and enable them to detect and make the necessary adjustments. The audio-motor units, therefore, provide both knowledge and practice of appropriate cultural behaviors in situations that EFL learners may face in natural foreign contexts.

3.4.6. Cultural Islands

It refers to the preparation of pictures, realias, maps, and posters by the teacher in order to use them from day one in the EFL class. Using these elements in short presentation for instance, leads to abstract associations and the development of mental images that help in the learning process and the cultural discovery and comprehension. Cultural Islands help learners emerge into the target culture by stimulating their visual memory and brain association process, as a result; they produce positive responses to what their brain became familiar with during the in-class instruction.

3.4.7. The Self-awareness Technique

This technique aims at developing learners' consciousness of beliefs that guide their attitudes, values, and behaviours. Teachers can observe and analyze the language and culture relationship in class by using, for example, problem-solving activities and self assessment questionnaires.

3.4.8. The Cultural Aside

It refers to an element of cultural information that teachers offer to learners when they find it in a given text. The cultural comments emerge without any plannification and usually do not require much time to be explained. This technique helps learners to mentally make associations between language and cultural content, nevertheless; the information provided is incomplete and unorganized.

3.4.9. The Micrologue

This technique is centered on cultural content, and uses listening as a vehicle. That is, teachers select a cultural text that can be read out in the classroom. Learners are expected to answer some questions, to provide an oral summary of the text, and then, to write it down as a dictation. This technique is useful in the sense that it does not demands a lot of time and the teachers are not expected to have a cultural expertise to use it.

3.4.10. The Slice-of-life Technique

It refers to the presentation of small components of the foreign culture to learners at the beginning of each session. It aims at arising learners' level of interest as well as catching their attention in class. This technique is not time consuming; it does not take much of the

precious class time. As put by Chastain (1988) in the slice-of- life technique “the point is made with a minimum of comments and maximum of dispatch”

3.4.11. Culture Assimilator

This technique refers to description of small incidents that may occur in cross-cultural interactions and which can create misunderstanding situations from the part of learners. Once being presented with the situation, learners are provided with four possible interpretations and they are expected to choose the appropriate one for them (putting themselves in the native-speaker position). As a result, learners try to approach and explain cultural differences with a new vision that put aside conventional stereotypes. The culture assimilators are believed to be funny (Seelye, 1993: 163), and that they enhance learners’ sense of tolerance towards culture otherness and diversity (Chastain, 1988)

3.4.12. The Cultoon

It refers to a cartoon strip which is usually made up of four pictures including some misunderstanding situations, and accompanied with brief descriptions about its content. The description is also given verbally by the teacher or the students who reads it. Students, then, are asked about their opinion in terms of appropriateness; that is, whether they think the cultoon characters’ reactions and attitudes are appropriate or not, trying to come to the correct interpretations together. This technique provides learners with an understanding of some cultural facts, however, it does not promote their sense of empathy and do not help in developing real emotions’ understanding.

3.4.13. The Quiz

This technique can be used for both giving new information and for testing the previously provided one. Its aim is to engage learners in the process and increase their level of curiosity towards discovering and learning cultural materials. For this reason, the quiz is said to be a high-interest technique in which the fact of giving the right answers is put on a lower level than the fact of being motivated to find them. In other words, no matter whether students give the right answers or not, since they can be provided with by teachers via videos, listening or reading, the primary aim in this technique is to make them involved and interested.

To sum it all up, there exist a large number of culture inclusion techniques that can be used for promoting learners' cultural awareness in the EFL classroom. Whether focusing on factual information, or on learners' emotional sensitivity, the major objectives of these techniques can be summarized in the following points:

- Learning new cultural facts as well as the rules that guide peoples' attitudes and beliefs.
- Eliminating, or at least diminishing, conventional stereotypes and helping in the acquisition of a new and tolerant vision towards cultural otherness
- Stimulating learners' mental association process and boosting their visual, auditory, and kinesthetic memories
- Helping learners to emerge into the target cultures
- Raising learners' level of interest and motivation towards cultural diversity
- Promoting learners' intercultural awareness and understanding
- Developing emotional feelings that relate to real-life intercultural situations.

Through observing these advantages, one can say that in order for learners to benefit from the above-mentioned techniques, teachers play an undeniable and crucial role in the classroom. They choose the appropriate techniques, adapt them to learners' profiles, control and ensure their good proceeding in the classroom, test and observe their level of effectiveness and, finally, readapt them according to the results and findings. On this ground, there is no technique which is adequate and beneficial for all teachers, suits all learners' needs, and meets all classrooms' objectives, and the list can never be exhaustive due to these constantly-changing elements. Instead, teachers serve the roles of formers, observers, and guide that aim at developing learners' cultural awareness and equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills for meeting EFL communicative objectives within and outside the classrooms

3.5. Issues Teachers Encounter While Teaching Culture in English as Foreign Language Classes

Through the process of incorporating culture in EFL classrooms, a number of issues may face teachers and which may hinder the teaching/ learning process. This section explores the most common issues encountered by teachers while exposing students to the foreign culture, as well as a number of practical guidelines to overcome them.

According to Gonen & Sercan (2012), the issues can be summarized in five points that can be stated as follows:

- The first issue is the over crowdedness of the teaching curriculum. Learners need a certain amount of time in order to learn the target culture. For this reason, teachers believe that learners should begin by mastering grammar and vocabulary of the language before being exposed to the cultural knowledge related to it. However, this may constitute an obstacle that hinders students' learning.
- The second issue is teachers' fear of not having the required amount of cultural knowledge that enables them to provide learners with foreign cultural knowledge. This may lead teachers to expose only partial factual information and knowledge about the target culture due to their insufficient one.
- The third issue is students' negative attitudes. This refers to learners refusing the values related to the target culture when facing situations and cultural phenomena that are unfamiliar to them. In other words, learners' negative responses to cultural otherness are due to the fact that they try to interpret the foreign cultural elements within their own framework of native one. Therefore, they end by putting barriers between native and target cultures which is considered by teachers as a learning brake.
- The fourth issue is untrained teachers. Teachers may not have been trained in necessary skills for teaching culture, which make it difficult for them to select and use the adequate approaches and strategies that serve for the creation and presentation of cultural content. Therefore, an effective cultural syllabus requires trained teachers.
- The last issue is the inability of teachers to evaluate learners' cross cultural competence and changes in their attitudes due to culture teaching

In addition to that, other issues that can be faced by teachers in the classrooms during culture inclusion are discussed. Among these:

- *The lack of the suitable materials to indulge the real cultural information appropriately,*
- *Teachers limited competencies and cultural experiences,*
- *The insufficient knowledge of that particular culture,*
- *The limited time and restricted curriculum*
- *Finally, one of the impediments of culture practice in ELT is the identity problem and the fear of controversy over teaching values and attitudes which have been globally recognized as hindrances to culture teaching in some communities (Arries, et al 1994)*

As it can be observed, the above-mentioned issues turn around the same content and focus on almost the same points. They can be abridged into four main categories that can be illustrated as follows:

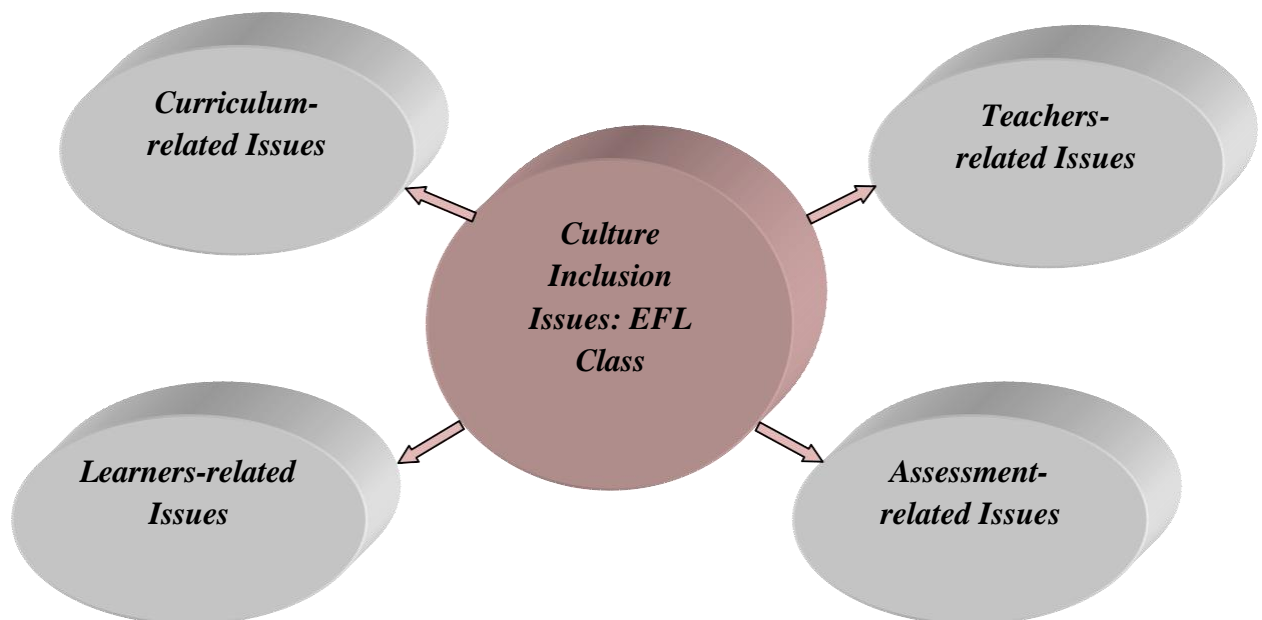


Figure06: Main categories of Culture Inclusion Issues

These four categories summarize the main areas that may constitute a source of hindrance for teachers on the ground of cultural inclusion into the EFL classroom. Each category encompasses a number of obstacles that teachers face (the main ones explained above). Therefore, a number of efforts are made by specialists in order to develop some guidelines to help teachers deal with them.

According to Brown (2007a) four practical guidelines are to be taken into account:

- 1) A student's identity is usually a deeply seated bundle of emotions, so teachers should practice empathy as they relate to their students in cultural matters: behavior patterns, and expectations; expected relationship to authority, family, and peers; ambiguity, tolerance, and openness to new ideas and ways of thinking; students' attitudes towards their own and the second language culture; their view of individualism versus collectivism; linguistic conventions of politeness, formality, and other sociopragmatic factors.
- 2) Teachers should recognize the cultural connotations and nuances of English and first language of their students. Teachers should capitalize those in their teaching.
- 3) Teachers should use the classroom as an opportunity to educate their students about other cultures and help them to see that no one culture is better than another. Teachers should also practice in words and deed their respect for their students' deeply ingrained emotions that stem from the students' cultural schemata.
- 4) When cultural differences emerge, teachers should help their students to appreciate and celebrate diversity. Especially in English as a second language context where students in the same class may represent many different cultures, teachers should try to make their classroom a model of openness, tolerance and respect.

In addition, for the purpose of overcoming issues that teachers encounter in EFL classrooms, Wylie (1961) argues that despite the fact of providing learners with factual information about the target culture is of great importance, it is not sufficient on its own. Values and attitudes related to these facts are of greater significance in view of cultural understanding. Peterson and Coltrane (2003) explain that the foreign information should be presented in a way that learners do not relate it to a value or judgment while comparing it with their own. Also, they point out how important it is for teachers to reflect on cultural features in an explicit manner while presenting them to learners in the classroom.

In regards to the two issues of curriculum over crowdedness and teachers' limited knowledge about foreign culture, Salem (n.d.) suggests two solutions. For the first one, she

proposes a solution of teaching culture and language in an integrative fashion instead of a serial one, and that from start. Concerning these issues, she proposes that teachers need to learn and discover foreign cultures along with their students, as well as to help learners in the development of the necessary skills to deal with the foreign cultural aspects.

Moreover, Krasner (1999) notes that focusing only on linguistic competence does not result in competent learners in the language studied, and that learners should be provided with an association of language use and culturally appropriate behavior for the aim of making communication successful. Therefore, in order to avoid (or at least lessen) issues of learners' negative attitudes, teachers need to make them regularly revise and practice their cultural patterns, which may boost their level of curiosity and motivation.

Concerning the issue of learners' cross-cultural competence, a four-stage scheme is suggested by Hanveys (1979) so that it can serve as a guideline for teachers in the process of including culture. This scheme can be summarized in the following table:

<i>Level</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Level one</i>	<i>At this level, learners' knowledge about the target culture is mainly based on stereotypes. They consider members of the Foreign culture as rude and ignorant.</i>
<i>Level two</i>	<i>At this stage, learners begin a process of comparison and contrast between native and foreign culture in order to widen their knowledge about it and its members' behavior which they associate to irrationality.</i>
<i>Level three</i>	<i>At this level, learners start to accept the idea of cultural diversity and otherness, and begin to perceive and interpret these dissimilarities on the basis of the target cultures' frame of reference.</i>
<i>Level four</i>	<i>At this stage, learners sense of empathy towards the target culture is achieved, and they acquire an inside-vision about the rules that guides its members beliefs and behaviors.</i>

Table07: Harvey's Scheme of Cross-Cultural Competence Assessment (1979)

With regard to the issue of measuring learners' attitudes, a number of techniques can be used by teachers. These techniques can be summarized as follows:

<i>Techniques</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Social Distance Scales</i>	<p><i>These scales enable measurement the degrees with which people disassociate themselves from members of foreign cultures. For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To be close with neighbors,</i> • <i>Study with a group of classmates,</i> • <i>Have a close friend, etc.</i>
<i>Semantic Differential Scales</i>	<p><i>These scales have a form of bipolar line where at the two extremities two contradictory adjectives, it can be illustrated as follows:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Good ——— ——— Bad 321 0 123 </p> <p><i>These scales aim at judging peoples from the given culture according to the numbers on the trait.</i></p>
<i>Statements</i>	<p><i>These scales refer to the fact of providing a list of statements in front to which learners can put a check when agreeing with it.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of the statements learners might be presented with are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quick to understand</i> • <i>Envious of others.</i>
<i>Self Esteem Change</i>	<p><i>These scales aim at measuring changes in learners' self esteem For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To feel satisfied with one's self</i> • <i>To feel happy at home and at work</i>

Table08: Techniques of Measuring Changes in Learners' Attitudes

The application of these techniques as well as Hanvey's scheme enables teachers to analyse how culture inclusion impacts their learners' self esteem and attitudes. The knowledge resulted leads to making the process of culture instruction and learning more précised, controlled and effective.

Moreover, it is believed that on the ground of focusing on learners' needs and providing meaningful communicative interactions' opportunities, teachers and educators should examine during the whole training process their commitment to the five hidden assumptions for teaching English as a foreign language. These assumptions are stated and clarified by Damen (1987), and summarized in the following table:

<i>We assume that...</i>	<i>Which means that...</i>
1.Nothing human is off limits nor to be arbitrarily ignored	1.Culturalrelativityisthegoldenrule for those who would communicate Inter culturally
3. Culture or cultural patterns are learned or taught. Such learning is Additive rather than replacive.	2.Learning a new culture is part and parcel of learning a new language, But it is not a similar process.
3. Culture learning and language learning are inextricably linked, so that the question is not whether to teach culture but whose culture to teach.	3. There are many ways to approach cultural instruction and learning. No approach will serve all teachers and all students in all contexts. Choices must be made.
4.Cultural patterns of a given culture are as part to the whole; they exhibit a cultural rationality within that context.	4. Cultural patterns reflect a general consistency at any given time, although individual manifestations vary.
5. Ethnocentrism is not necessarily a dirty word.	6. Man is a culture bearing animal. Loss Of identity should not be a goal of cultural instruction.

Table09: The Five Hidden Assumptions of Teaching EFL for Reaching Communicative Competence

Therefore, the abovementioned assumptions are guidelines that enable EFL teachers to verify before, during, and after instructions whether they are on the right path towards developing learners cultural awareness and competence as well as achieving the communicative goals in the EFL classroom.

In a nutshell, including culture into the EFL classes seem to be challenging for teachers as for learners. It needs preparation and requires a fact-and- process approach where a combination of factual information and necessary tools is made in order to include culture in an effective manner. Taking into account the ever-changing atmosphere of the EFL classroom teachers are facing various and constantly changing issues as well. For this reason, a large number of works are conducted for the purpose of guiding them in this pitfall parcours.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the culture inclusion issue is occupying an interesting position in the field of EFL, and is generating a number of questioning and research works. The attentiveness that has been owed to this issue resulted in the investigation of cultural contents and the introduction of a number of culture-related teaching approaches and techniques that can be used in the EFL classroom for the purpose of developing learners' cultural awareness. These techniques and approaches aim at equipping learners with the necessary knowledge and skills, i.e. they provide them with factual information about cultures and the guiding rules of peoples' beliefs and attitudes, and develop their emotional sensitivity and level of interest and motivation towards cultural otherness. However, in regard to the ever-changing atmosphere of classrooms and differences in learners' profiles and learning styles, the process is proved to be complex and challenging. Teachers, thus, play an important role in assuring a good proceeding and in producing successful results. In fact, teachers are expected to select and use the adequate content and tools for including culture into the EFL classrooms, and that on the basis of the teaching goals, classrooms' requirements and learners' profiles and needs. For this reason, they constantly need to be attentive to these elements in the decision and application of what to present and in what manner so that to deal effectively with the complexity of the process. This complex nature of the culture inclusion process is translated in a number of issues that teachers encounter before, during and after instruction. The issues turn around four main categories: teaching curriculum, teachers' profile and experience, learners' motivation and attitudes, and learners' assessment. As a result, a number of research works are dedicated to help teachers overcome these obstacles and to better the quality and outcomes of the EFL teaching/learning process.

Chapter Four
Research Methodology Description

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Chapter Four

Research Methodology Description

Introduction

For the purpose of achieving the present study, careful considerations were given to its methodology. The way by which it was conducted is given due importance in the present study by means of detailed descriptions of various aspects. First, the research approaches used for investigation are described. Second, a description of the research instruments is provided. It includes a small part about the languages used in it, and a description of the tools used in terms of format and content and reasons that governs the two. Third, the step of study piloting as well as its outcome are presented and explained. Fourth, the population and the sample of the research work are identified and described. Fifth, the data collection procedure is presented including the different dates and phases that serve for its conduction. Before being rounded off, the present chapter provides an explanation of the quality of the research instrument in terms of its reliability, validity, and generalisability.

4.1. Research Approach

In regards to educational research, investigating both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in the same study is regarded as being of a great importance. It has a number of advantages such as allowing the researcher to analyse an issue from different angles and to deepen the study problem's comprehension and analysis. In addition to that, it facilitates the process of drawing a conclusion and adds more clarity and validity to the work. According to McMillan (2004) research studies that include both qualitative and quantitative approaches in one investigation are referred to as 'mixed methods'. Therefore, for the mentioned reasons as well as in concordance with the nature of the study, the mixed methods approach was employed by the researcher in order to investigate the issues dealt with. To explain, elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in the present study; the qualitative approach relates to the collected data from the questionnaire and the quantitative approach relates to the data collected from the questionnaire and the test included to it.

4.2. Research Instruments

In the present study, the data collection was conducted by means of a questionnaire and a brief test. The latter is included to the questionnaire as a part of it, and the two form one instrument of collecting information. That is, both were conjointedly presented to the participants and were analysed separately; yet, as parts of a whole. Details about the format and content of the two are provided in the following sections.

4.2.1. Language Used

As explained previously, the data tool refers to a questionnaire administered to EFL students of the Universities of North Algeria, and which encompasses a brief test in order to give the investigation more depth and validity. In regards to the elements of the questionnaire, they are presented in the English language, since it is the language of the study and one of the major concerns dealt with in the research. In addition, the aim of using English is to preserve meaning and avoid misinterpretations that result from external variables which may decrease the accuracy of the results. That is, learners' degree of comprehension of the concepts maybe hindered by their mistranslations. Nevertheless, in the last part of the test, learners are asked

to choose between French or Arabic to give equivalents of the given statements. The focus, here, is to evaluate their level of comprehension and to test their degree of cultural awareness.

4.2.2. Description of the Research Tools

Since the research tool contains two parts; a questionnaire and a test, this section provides a detailed description which deals with the two separately.

4.2.3. The Questionnaire– Part One-

The questionnaire was the principle source to gather an overview about EFL students' degree of knowledge about cultural awareness and their perceptions toward its importance in the EFL teaching/ learning process. On this ground, the questionnaire is composed of thirteen (13) questions, excluding the test incorporated in it, from different types in order for the researcher to get the necessary information from the participants. The different components of the questionnaire are organized and presented as follows:

- 4.2.3.1. **Item One:** It aims at identifying the most important thing in studying a FL for the participants. The latter are given the opportunity to choose from five different points with a possibility to elaborate further.
- 4.2.3.2. **Item Two:** As a continuum of the first item, it gives an insight about the element which is the least focused on at the university courses according to the informants.
- 4.2.3.3. **Item Three:** It seeks at investigating the participants knowledge about the concept of 'cultural awareness'; whether they are familiar with or not. They have the opportunity to express themselves freely.
- 4.2.3.4. **Item Four:** In order to push forward the investigation of the previous item, participants are presented with a table which includes fifteen (15) elements, and asked to identify those which, according to them, are considered as part of culture. The identification is made via putting a cross under the selected answer.
- 4.2.3.5. **Item Five:** It inquires learners to determine the degree at which they consider themselves aware of the foreign culture. To do so, participants are asked to circle one of the four presented choices: Yes, completely/ Somehow/ Not really/ No.
- 4.2.3.6. **Item Six:** It aims at determining whether participants face problems while communicating in the target language. If the answer is positive, they are asked to identify the main source of communication issues by circling an answer from the five

presented options. In this part the line is drawn between communication in natural contexts and communication in academic contexts.

- 4.2.3.7. **Item Seven:** Presented in form of a table, it includes eight (8) statements, and participants are asked to express to what extent they agree or disagree with them. The Eight statements investigate participant's degree of knowledge about cultural awareness in EFL, as well as it determines the stages at which they are the process of its acquisition. The evaluation is based on the scales and categorizations discussed in the second chapter.
- 4.2.3.8. **Item Eight:** Taking into account the fact that English is an international language, this item deals with participants' view and knowledge about the dissimilarities that exist between different cultural communities. It is presented in form of a table which encompasses five (5) characteristics that are associated to one of the presented countries; UK, US, Japan and Germany. In addition, after ticking the appropriate answers, they are asked to identify the element(s) that concord with their native cultural aspects.
- 4.2.3.9. **Item Nine:** It is a yes-or-no question which seeks at knowing whether participants think that more culture-related courses need to be introduced at the university. The fact of putting this question at this position informs about whether participants found the previous tasks difficult or not, the thing that constitutes an unconscious source of information about their knowledge.

Before carrying on with the questions, the latter are interrupted by a quick test aiming at testing participants' cultural awareness. The test incorporates three tasks that can be described as follows.

4.2.4. The Test

- **Task One:** The participants are asked to explain, in their own words, five different expressions. The expressions are culture-related English idioms that seldom require a certain amount of knowledge about the target culture in order to get the intended meaning. Explaining them seeks at providing insight about whether participants approach them from their native culture perceptions or, on the contrary, have the necessary knowledge to deal with them.

- **Task Two:** It refers to three brief scenarios that EFL learners may encounter in real life. The first scenario includes a cultural situation that seeking to see whether participants consider it as appropriate or not. The second scenario includes a culture-related joke aiming to determine whether participants get the intended meaning and detect any sense of humour or not. The last scenario presents a culture-related topic discussion in order for participants to judge its feasibility in terms of appropriateness. Each scenario is followed by questions with the objective of evaluating the degree of participants' comprehension of the given situation, as well as the perception they have about it and the potential reactions and interpretation they may make when put in the same situation. This task is a rich source of information because it deals with multiple aspects related to cultural awareness; knowledge, reactions and interpretations.
- **Task Three:** It includes five (5) expressions that participants are asked to explain their meaning in another language. (either Arabic, their native language, or French, their second language). This is meant to evaluate participants' cultural awareness via observing how they interpret culture-related expressions and approach them from another language's vision angle. When the test is achieved, the questionnaire continues with four (4) additional questions.

4.2.5. The Questionnaire – Part Two-

- 4.2.5.1. **Item Ten:** It informs about whether participants found the tasks difficult or not. Another hint of their cultural mastery.
- 4.2.5.2. **Item Eleven:** It aims at knowing whether participants consider themselves aware of the native and target cultures element and differences between them. This question is intentionally put here in order to get an insight of participants' feeling about their cultural awareness, and to be able of contrasting it with item five which discusses almost the same point.
- 4.2.5.3. **Item Twelve:** It Inquires participants to give their opinion, concerning whether they think they are getting sufficient and efficient cultural instruction at the university courses or they think that culture need to be included or more emphasized on.

4.2.5.4. **Item Thirteen:** It is an open-space-suggestion question. Participants are given the opportunity to add comments, suggestions and to conclude by expressing their ideas and opinions.

This structure of the data collection tool aims at facilitating the process of administration and increase the study's validity and relevance. That is, incorporating the test in the questionnaire aims at saving time while providing participants with it, especially knowing the difficulties and absences resulted from the pandemic –Covid-19-. In addition to that, it enables the researcher to observe and evaluate the informants' answers through contrasting answers before and after the test. For instance, asking participants whether they consider themselves aware of the native and target cultures before the test, testing their knowledge, and then asking the same question may constitute a source of information about what participants think they master and what they really do, which helps in the decortications of the results and gives more depth to the present investigation. This idea may be summarized as follows:

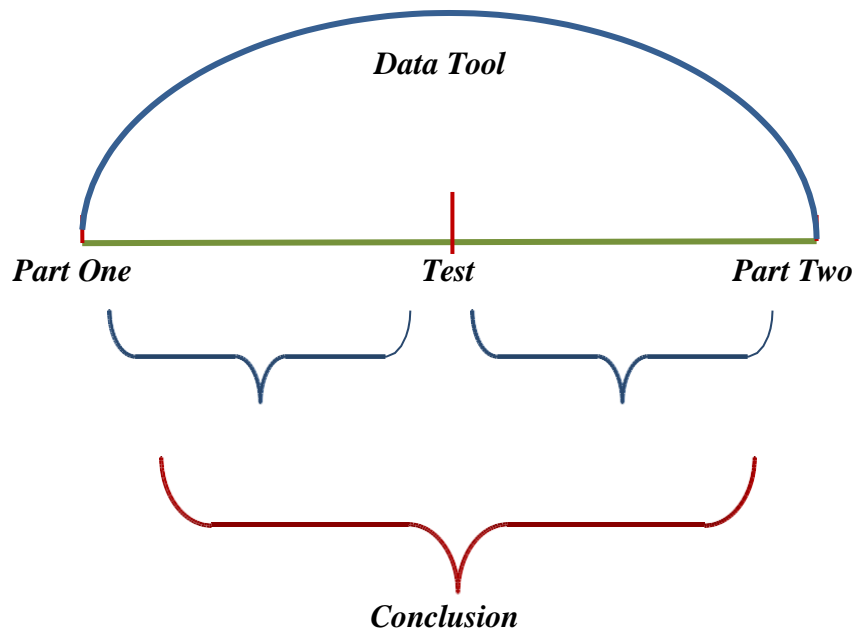


Figure07: Summary of the Data Collection Instrument Presentation

4.3. Piloting the Research Instruments

The pilot study aims at eliminating confusion in terminology, identifying aimless redundancy of questions, misunderstanding and evaluating data tools' validity. The present research instrument was piloted before being used for the research study. As a result, a number of suggestions were made in order for the researcher to refine the tools in terms of format organization and clarity of wordings.

The piloting was done on November 2021 with a group of 10 participants on the social network whatsapp. The informants were from the five universities selected for the larger study; thus, two (02) EFL students from each university (of Telemcen, Mostaganem, Blida2, Constantine1, and Annaba).

In regards to the questionnaire, the original version included sixteen (16) items. These latter were reduced to thirteen 13 after the pilot study was conducted. In addition, some questions were reformulated and simplified in terms of choice of terminology. Moreover, five (05) teachers were asked to give suggestions and to comment on the format and content of the instruments. Their feedback was taken into account in order to further ameliorate the tools and refine the work.

Concerning the test included, the number of tasks was reduced from five (05) to three (03) in order to collect more precise information and to gain time during the study. Some questions were also reorganized to ensure coherence and validity to the study.

Therefore, one can say that before embarking upon the study, the researcher made sure to consider both types of piloting; the first being to deal with the data tool's format, and the second being to deal with the content gained from it (Cohen et al., 2007). As a result, the adequate modifications were made to the study tool making it shorter, and adding more precision and validity to it.

4.4. Population and Sampling

This research is carried out in five universities that are located in different regions of North Algeria. Geographically speaking, north Algeria is divided into three (03) parts; West, Centre, and East. The selected universities are assumed to cover the three regions

since they are horizontally situated on a line that extends from northwest, passing through the centre, to the northeast of Algeria. Thus, they are believed to be representative of the parent population. The hosting cities of the five universities are: Telemcen (North-western corner of Algeria), Mostaghanem (North-western Algeria), Blida (Northern Centre of Algeria), Constantine (the capital of Eastern Algeria), and Annaba (North-eastern corner of Algeria). The following figure illustrates the location of the cities:

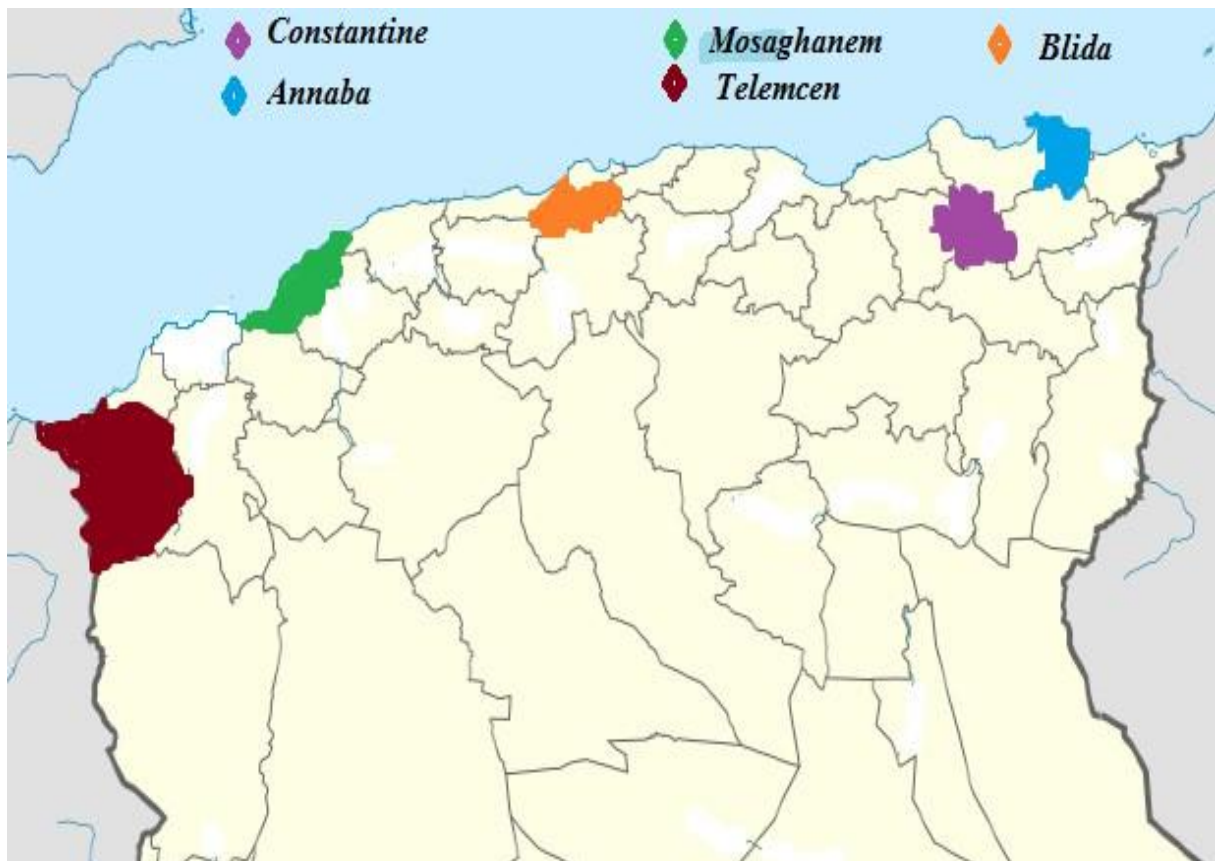


Figure08: Location of the Five Cities in which the Study is conducted

The targeted population in this study is that of master 1 & 2 EFL students at five universities of North Algeria.

The reasons behind choosing to work with master 1 & 2 students can be summarized in three points. First, years of studying English as a foreign language (between three to four years) makes them in a better position to contribute to the work, and similarly, it is beneficial for them in the sense that it enables them to detect what they need to focus on and refine before obtaining their master degree and face real life communication challenges. Second, compared to students of lower levels, master students' experience of using English for communication in different contexts constitutes a solid ground for ensuring clarity, reliability of the study and adding more depth to its results. Finally, for the same reasons stated in the two previous points, it is easier to work with them in terms of economy of time and efforts. Therefore, the choice of the population is purposeful and serves the objective of facilitating the collection and analysis processes as well as of bettering the quality and validity of the results.

In regards to the sample of the study, it includes two hundred and fifty (250) master students from the five selected universities, and is divided into equal-sized groups. Each one of these latter is from one university and is made of fifty (50) randomly selected students. Taking into account the fact that the parent population is made of 1250 students (including the five universities), the sample applies to the rule of one-fifth quorum, which assures more validity of the study results.

4.5. The Process of Data Collection

In the process of data collection, a number of considerations were taken into account regarding the exceptional situation the entire world is passing through due to the pandemic – COVID19-. The latter lead to a number of modifications at the level of study programs, division of groups, and a decrease in the number of attendees. Therefore, in order to handle the situation by optimising the use of time and efforts as well as increasing the control and validity of the process, the researcher opted for technological solutions. That is, the whole process was conducted electronically; form, administrations, and collection, between December 25, 2021 and January 27, 2022. The overall process was facilitated by personal contacts, colleagues, as well as via social media research groups which the researcher is part of.

The data collection tools were sent to the participants via e-mail and social media. Once answered and completed, the informants sent them back to the researcher, who made sure to be available during the whole period of the process in order to avoid confusions and misunderstandings of questions, instructions and tasks to be completed. The whole process was done anonymously, the only guiding information were a reference number on the questionnaire and test as well as the university to which the participant belongs. As a last step, once all batches completed and received, they were printed, organized and prepared for the analysis phase.

All responses from the five universities were received on February 03, 2022. Out of the two hundred and fifty questionnaires and tests, a total number of two hundred and twelve were collected; that is, a response rate of 84.40%. This latter is decorticated as follows:

University	Number of Responses	%
Of Telemcen	41	82%
Of Mostaghanem	40	80%
Of Blida2	39	78%
Of Constantine1	49	98%
Of Annaba	42	84%
	Total Responses	211
	Total Rate	84.40%

Table10: Total Responses of the Participants from the Five Universities

4.6. Quality of the Data Collection Tool

Firstly, the study instrument is designed in a manner that ensures that questions and statements are clear and include simple and comprehensible terminology so that to avoid misunderstandings and misleading interpretations. Moreover, a combination of closed and open-ended questions was used. Through the former, informants give direct and precise answers in relations to the study subject, and through the latter they are given the opportunity to express themselves and provide additional information (their experiences, ideas, opinions, suggestions, etc.) that enrich the study. By applying these strategies, the researcher made sure to add precision and consistency to the work. In other words, the reliability of the present study is guaranteed.

Secondly, the research questions as well as the aims of the study were both carefully viewed and taken into account while studying the participants' profiles and backgrounds, in order to make sure that the items included to the research instruments suits them and are in concordance with all elements. To put it differently, these considerations ensure research content validity, i.e. the extent to which the data collection tool measures what it is expected to measure.

Lastly, as explained previously, the researcher selected a group of students that is a representative sample; the EFL master students from the five universities represent the EFL master students of the rest of the population. The universities selected are located in North western, Centre North, and East western Algeria, and the results that apply to them are applicable to EFL master students of other universities that are situated in the same geographical line. And this may also be applicable to the rest of Algeria. The point dealt with here is the fact of drawing.

Conclusion

This chapter included a detailed description of the research methodology. At first, it discussed the research approach. The data were collected via a questionnaire and a test which the chapter, also, described including the language used, as well as the piloting phase. Then, it provided a description of the population and the extracted sample worked with for the sake of gathering data. After that, it provided details about the process of data collection. At last, the chapter is concluded with a discussion of the research tool's quality in terms of reliability, validity, and generalisibility. On that account, the following two chapters will deal with a detailed report of the study findings and a discussion of these latter respectively.

Chapter Five

Data Presentation and Analysis

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Chapter Five

Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

The present study investigated the issue of the promotion of EFL learners' cultural awareness at five Universities located in different regions of North Algeria. On this basis, a questionnaire was used as a data collection tool which is divided into three parts. The second part was presented by virtue of a brief test. In the previous chapter a description of the research methodology was presented; research approach, research instruments, sampling, and data collection procedure. The present chapter is devoted to the interpretation of the obtained results; it provides a detailed description and analysis of the findings of each element of the research tool. The chapter includes a summary of study findings along with a revision of the research questions. It, also, discusses the contributions and implications of the study. Furthermore, the chapter stresses out the possible limitations of the study. Following this, the chapter starts by depicting the participants' characteristics; level, speciality, and the university they belong to, then, it provides an analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data of each part of the research tool.

5.1. Report of the Questionnaire's Results

In the present section, the overall results obtained from the selected sample are considered and scrutinized in details. For the sake of analysing the findings, summary tables are frequently used in order to show the quantitative data patterns. In addition, a number of pie charts are included to encapsulate the data clearly. Concerning histograms, they are utilized for one question only. The quantitative data is also accompanied with qualitative one obtained from the test as well as the open items of the questionnaire. At the enclosure of the section, a contrastive analysis is made between the participants' answers before and after the test, in order to add relevance and accuracy to the results.

As explained previously, the sample of the present study includes two-hundred-fifty (250) EFL master 1 &2 students from five selected universities. That is, five equal-sized groups where each group is from a university and encompasses fifty (50) students. The return rate of the questionnaire was 96.4%; i.e. 241 completed questionnaires.

5.1.1. Section One: Background Information

This section is divided into two parts. The first part, entitled ‘You are’, aims at collecting information about the sample being worked with. It includes five questions that seek information about the participants’ age, gender, level, speciality, and the university they are studying at. The second part, entitled ‘According to you’, includes nine questions of different types and aims at collecting data in regards to students’ degree of knowledge and viewpoints about the subjects being studied.

First, the first question deals with students’ level (either master one or master two). The results indicated that a rate of 63.07% of the participants was Master One students, and 36.93% of them were Master Two students. That is the informants have studied, at least, three years at the university, which makes them a relevant sample for collecting data.

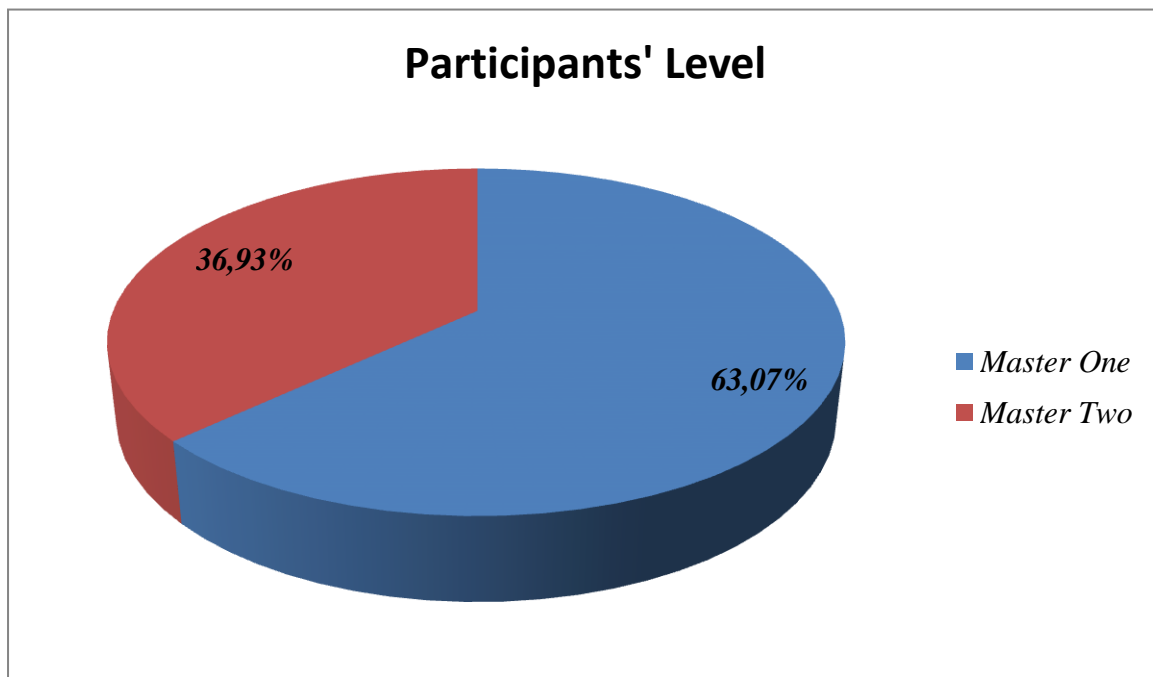


Figure09:ResultsofParticipants’Level-M1&M2-

Then, the second question relates to the study option of the participants. As explained previously, the sample consists of five groups selected from different universities. Each group includes fifty (50) participants. For the sake of providing detailed and organized information, the results were analysed and described separately. Therefore, the findings are summarized in the following tables:

<i>Speciality</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Didactics</i>	20	42.55%
<i>Language Studies</i>	17	36.17%
<i>Literature & Civilization</i>	10	21.28%

Table12: Participants' Specialties at the University of Abou Bakr Belkaid-Telemcen

From the results shown in this table, one can notice that the majority of respondents at the University of Abou Bakr Belkaid- Telemcen were didactics students, followed by 'language studies' and then 'Literature & civilization'. In addition, out of fifty (50) randomly-selected students, 47 one completed the questionnaire. That is, the questionnaire had a response rate of 94% at the University of Telemcen.

<i>Speciality</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Didactics & Applied Linguistics</i>	26	54.17%
<i>Language & Communication</i>	22	45.83%

Table13: The Participants' Study Options at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis- Mostaganem

From this table, one can notice that the highest rate at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis-Mostaganem is held by the 'Didactics & Applied Linguistics' speciality, and then comes 'Language & Communication'. It indicates that a rate of 96% of the participants completed the questionnaire; i.e. 48 students out of 50.

<i>Speciality</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Didactics</i>	31	67.39%
<i>Literature & Civilization</i>	15	32.61%

Table14: Participants' Specialities at the University of Lounici Ali-Blida2

The table above shows that the majority of the participants at the University of Lounici Ali-Blida2 were 'Didactics' students. Moreover, 46 students out of 50 completed the questionnaire. That is, a response rate of 92%.

<i>Speciality</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Linguistics and applied Languages</i>	27	54%
<i>Foreign language didactics</i>	12	24%
<i>Literature & Civilization</i>	11	22%

Table15: Participants' Specialities at the University of Frères Mentouri - Constantine1

This table demonstrates that the response rate is 100% at the University of Frères Mentouri-Constantine1 (50 out of 50 students' questionnaires), with a majority observed in the 'Linguistics & Applied Languages' speciality, followed by 'Foreign Language Didactics

and, last, 'Literature & Civilization'.

<i>Speciality</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Language Sciences</i>	25	50%
<i>Literature & Civilization</i>	25	50%

Table 16: Participants' Specialities at the University of Badji Mokhtar-Annaba

From the quantitative data reported above, it is noticeable that the response rate is 100%; fifty (50) informants completed the questionnaire. In addition, there was an equilibrium response rate between 'Language Sciences' and 'Literature & Civilization' specialities.

Last, the third question of the first section- part one- concerns the University to which participants belong. As explained in the previous chapter, five universities were selected as the population of the study, and from these universities was selected a sample of 250 participants divided into five equal-sized groups; i.e. each group contained fifty (50) participants. Nevertheless, from the previous question, one can notice that the response rate was inferior to 100% (less than 250 questionnaires were completed). The following figures demonstrate the number of respondents at each university, except for the universities of Constantine 1 and Annaba where the response rate was of 100%:

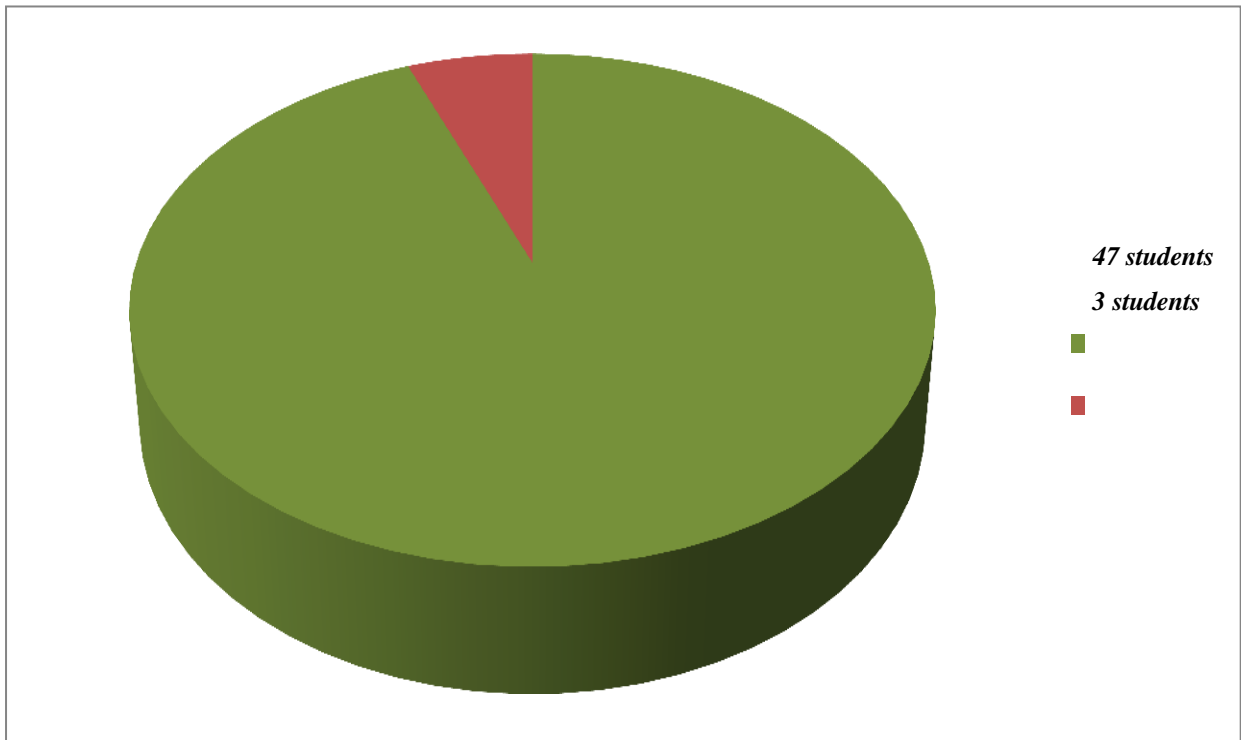


Figure10: Response rate at the University of Telemcen

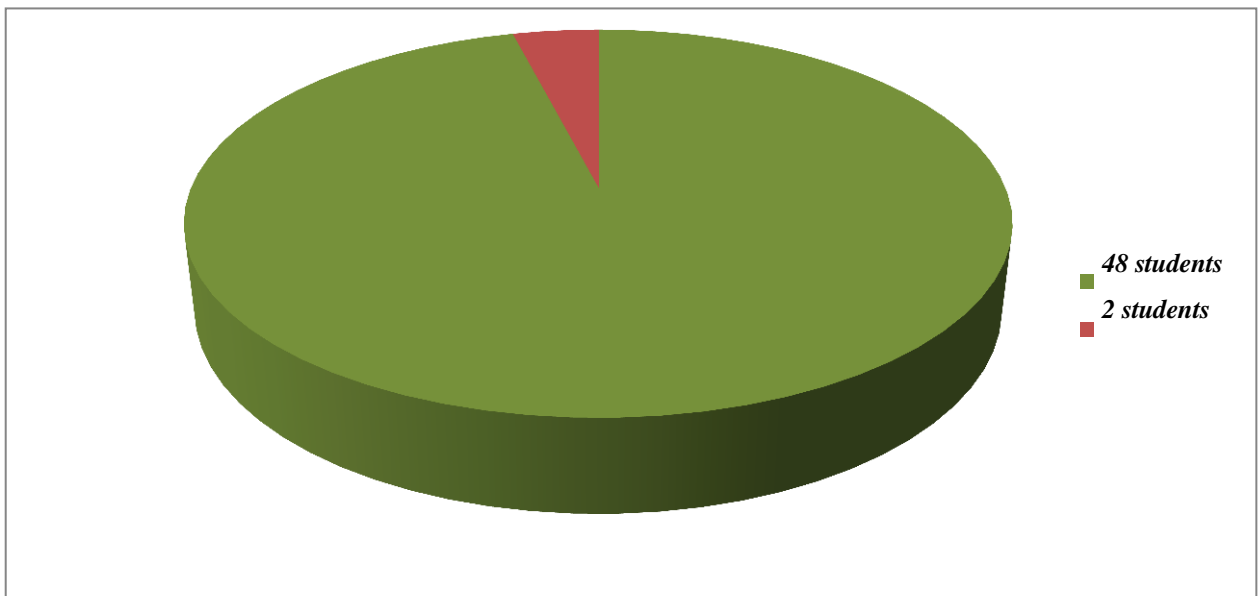


Figure11: Response Rate at the University of Mostaganem

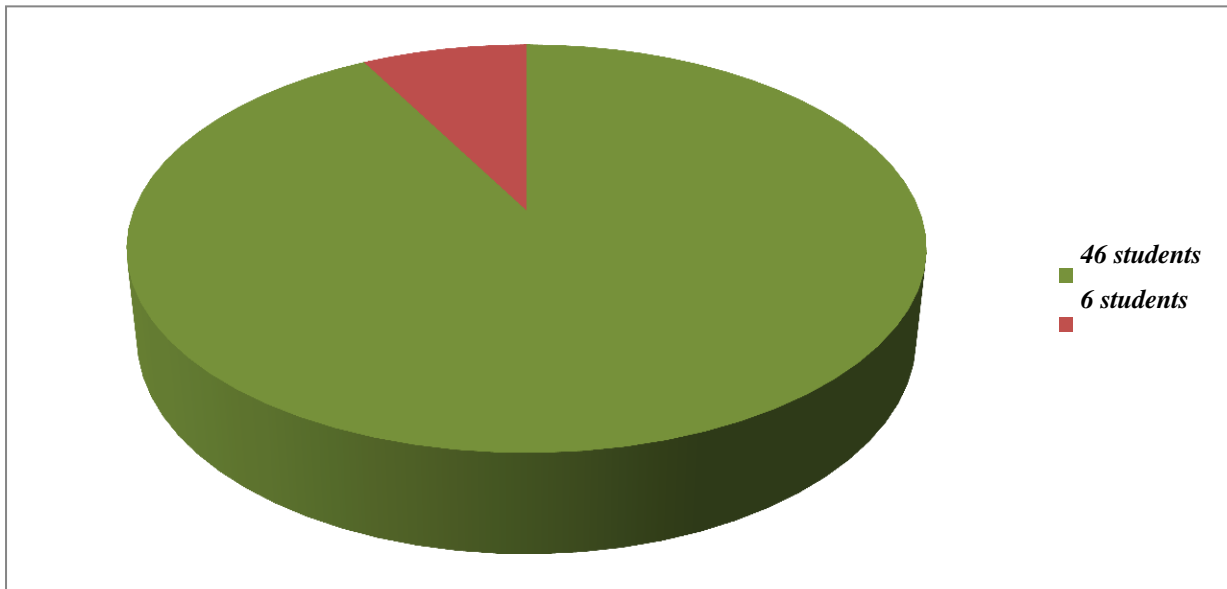


Figure12: Response Rate at the University of Blida

The aforementioned background information provided basic data about the participants, and enabled a clear depiction of the sample being worked with. Data about the participants' universities, levels and specialities was used in order to add precision to the study and to maximize its potential to be an added value to future research studies.

The second part of the first section begins with a question that seeks information about students' perceptions towards the most important elements in learning English. Findings were summarized in the following table:

<i>N°</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency of Occurrence</i>
<i>01</i>	<i>Knowing the target language (grammar and vocabulary)</i>	<i>116</i>
<i>02</i>	<i>Using language to communicate in common contexts</i>	<i>93</i>
<i>03</i>	<i>Knowing the culture of the target language (literature and civilization)</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>04</i>	<i>Mastering native-like pronunciation</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>05</i>	<i>All of the above mentioned</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>06</i>	<i>If another answer (please explain)</i>	<i>//</i>

Table17: Number of occurrences of statements – item one-

According to the students of the five selected universities of North Algeria who responded to the questionnaire, it is obvious, as it is demonstrated from the table above, that the most important thing in learning English is to master its grammar and vocabulary with a frequency of occurrence of 116 times, then come, the use of language for communication in common contexts with a frequency of 93 times, knowledge of the target culture occurred 76 times(which is considered as the least selected option), native- like pronunciation appeared 98 times, and the fifth statement ‘all the above’ showed a frequency of appearance of 48 times. However, the findings revealed that our sample did not select the last option which constituted an opportunity to add information that is not mentioned.

Then, the second question is related to the first one. Students are asked to select from the options of the first question the aspects that are the least dealt with, and the most dealt with at the University. Findings obtained from this item gave us a classification of the aspects that provides insight about how language learning is approached at the universities and what position culture occupies in it. After analyzing the participants’ responses, it was apparent that responses were centered on the four first options that can be stated as follows:

- Option One: Knowing Grammar and vocabulary
- Option Two: Being able to communicate in common (native) contexts
- Option Three: Knowing the culture of the target language (literature & civilization)
- Option Four: Having a native-like pronunciation

All participants agreed on the same classification; the option of ‘grammar and vocabulary’ was put as a top priority in EFL teaching and learning with a number of 148 answers, followed by the ability to ‘communicate in native contexts’ with a number of 42 answers, then developing ‘native-like’ pronunciation with a number of 37 answers, and finally knowledge about ‘the culture of the target language’ with a number of 14 answers. The following chart summarizes the main findings regarding each university:

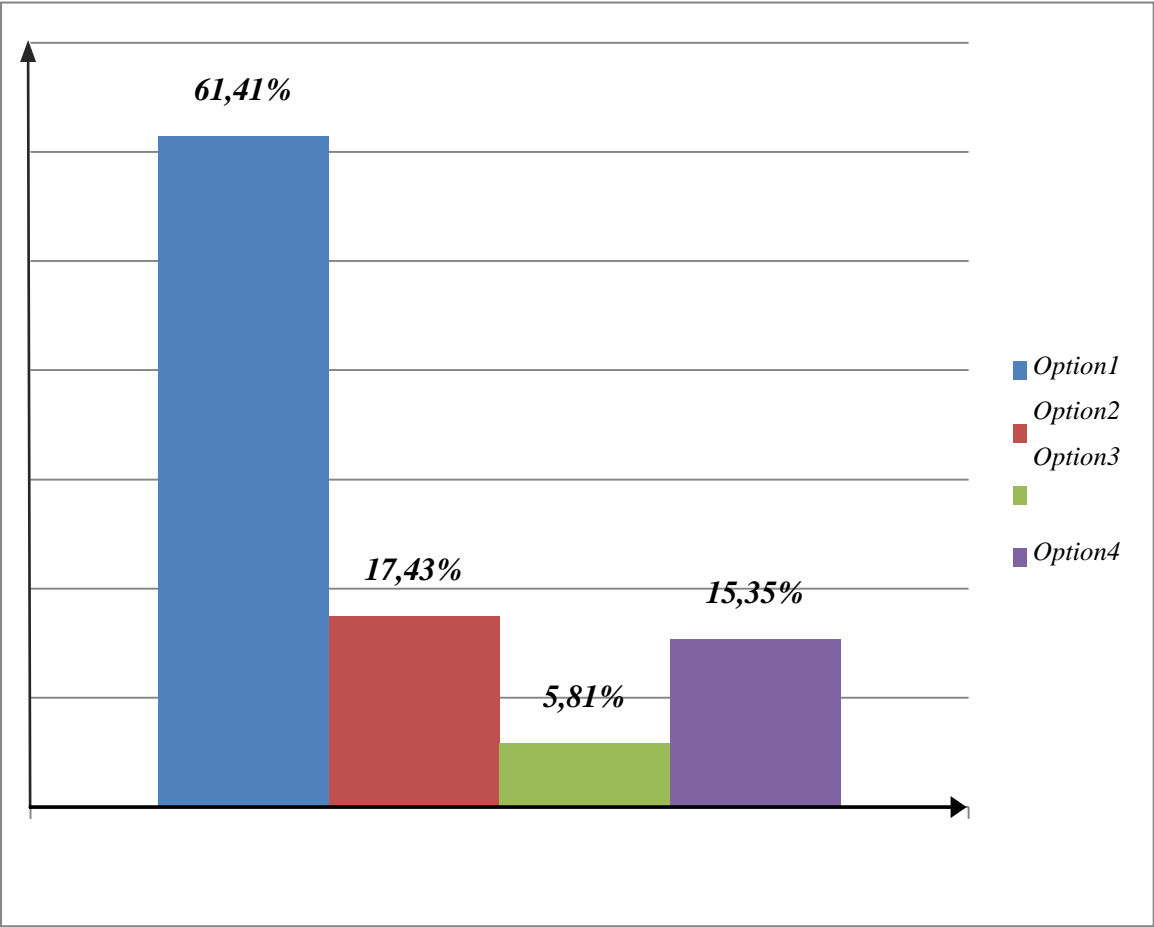


Figure13: Number of Occurrence of the Four Options-Item Two

Therefore, one can sum it up by saying that, from the participants' answers, in all selected universities grammar and vocabulary are the most focused on aspects of EFL teaching and learning, and the cultural aspect of language is the least emphasized.

Findings obtained from item three gave an idea about the students' degree of knowledge of the concept of 'cultural awareness'. They were given the opportunity to express themselves freely, and provide what, in their opinion, cultural awareness refers to. The provided answers can be displayed in the table below:

Definitions	Frequency of Occurrence
Being aware of the existence of other Cultures	42
Knowing the synonyms of words and Expressions in other countries	6
Using materials that include the cultures of Others in order to learn the foreign language	9
Having a body language and cloths as people Who live in the foreign country	3
Comparing cultures and understanding them	15
Learning culture and language at the same Time	6
Including culture in language learning	5
Knowing the culture of our country	11
Being aware of all aspects of culture	19
Being flexible in regards to cultures and Trying to learn them	12
Acting as foreigners	31
Knowing the culture and express the knowledge through communication (gestures, postures...)	8
Being aware of the differences between Cultures (native and target)	17
Modifying our life so that we can be like Foreigners	9
Not judging people according to their Cultures	2
Behaving appropriately with people who do Not share the same culture	14
Acting and speaking as English people	3
Knowing the differences between cultures And adapt to them	11
Knowing the culture of the country in which English is the mother tongue	8
Being aware of the differences between Native and foreign cultures and accepting them	7
No answer	5

Table18: The Participants' Definitions of Cultural Awareness

The quantitative data reported above illustrates that the highest number of the participants (17.43%) considered cultural awareness as knowledge of the existence of cultures other than their own. 12.86% regarded cultural awareness as foreigner-like behaviors. 7.88% of the participants view cultural awareness as knowledge of the aspects of culture. 7.05% as knowledge of the differences that exist between native and foreign cultures. 6.22% as the comparison and understanding of cultures. 5.81% as appropriate behavior with people who do not have the same culture. 4.98% as flexibility in regards to cultures and learning them. 4.56% knowing the differences between cultures adapting to them. Then, equilibrium of rates between the participants who consider cultural awareness as the use of materials that include cultural features and the participants who consider it as the adoption of a native-like life; 3.73% similarly. 3.32% as equilibrium of rates between the participants who defined cultural awareness as knowledge of the culture of the country in which English is a mother tongue and those who regarded it as the application of the cultural knowledge on their communication. 2.90% of participants defined cultural awareness as knowledge of the differences that exist between cultures and their acceptance. The participants who defined cultural awareness as knowing the synonyms of words and expressions in the target country, and those who defined it as the learning of culture and language side by side, had a response rate of 2.49% respectively. 2.07% of the participants defined it as the inclusion of culture in language learning. 1.24% considered cultural awareness as behaving and speaking as English people. Similarly, the same rate of participants considered it as having the same cloths and body language than people who live in the foreign country. Then, 0.83% of the students defined cultural awareness as holding a nonjudgmental opinion about people from other cultural communities. Finally, 2.07 of the participants did not provide any answer.

The fourth item investigated what aspects students consider to be part of culture. The results demonstrated the following numbers:

<i>Words</i>	<i>Frequency of occurrence</i>	<i>%</i>
Cloths	236	97.93%
Food	227	94.19%
Behaviours	111	46.06%
Ideas	79	32.78%
Language	99	41.08%
Gestures	164	68.05%
Beliefs	205	85.62%
Religion	119	49.38%
Arts	101	41.91%
Music	184	76.35%
Literature	201	83.40%
Civilization	200	82.99%
Rituals	233	96.68%
Attitudes	168	69.71%
Interpretations	99	41.08%

Table19: Students' perceptions towards items that are part of culture

According to the table above, students' opinions in regards to elements of culture diverged; some of them gave importance to tangible ones and others gave importance to abstract ones. The elements that showed the highest rates are: Cloths, food, beliefs, literature, civilization, and rituals. Whereas the elements that showed the lowest rates are: interpretations, language, and ideas. Therefore, this demonstrates that the majority of students do not consider language, ideas, and interpretations as part of culture, or as being linked to it.

The fifth item was intended to collect information about whether students consider themselves as aware of the native and target cultures. The data is detailed in the following table:

<i>Alternatives</i>	<i>Native culture</i>		<i>Foreign culture</i>	
	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Yes, completely</i>	166	68.88%	127	52.70%
<i>Somehow</i>	56	23.24%	75	31.12%
<i>Not really</i>	17	7.05%	17	7.05%
<i>No</i>	2	0.83%	22	9.13%

Table20: Students' perceptions on whether they are aware about native and target cultures

In regards to the native culture, the table shows that the majority of EFL students consider themselves as completely aware of the native culture with a rate of 68.88% (166 students). 23.24% of the participants consider themselves as having a certain amount of knowledge (56 students), 7.05% of the participants regard themselves as not really having an awareness about the native culture (17 students), and only 0.83% of the participants consider themselves as having no awareness about the native culture (2 students). Concerning the

target culture, the majority of the informants consider themselves as completely aware of the foreign culture with a response rate of 52.70% (127 students), 31.12% of the participants think that they have a certain awareness about the foreign culture (75students),7.05% of the participants consider themselves as being not really aware about the foreign culture, and 9.13% of the participants consider that they have no awareness about the target culture.

The sixth item aimed at collecting information about whether students face problems while communicating in English. The collected data demonstrated that the majority of them responded by ‘yes’; that is, they encounter a number of problems in contexts where the English language is used.

<i>Answers</i>	<i>‘Yes’</i>	<i>‘No’</i>
<i>N°</i>	199	42
<i>%</i>	82.57%	17.43%

Table21: Students who face Difficulties while Using English

The item continues by asking participants to determine what type of problems that they usually face in both in-class and out-class settings. The collected data revealed the following:

First, in natural settings, 117 students have difficulties to determine what is culturally appropriate or not, 74 of them consider the lack of vocabulary as the main problem they face during communication, 31 students have issues of confidence, 12 students claim that mispronunciation hinders their communication, and 7 informants selected option ‘e’, which means that they consider that they have a blend of communication obstacles.

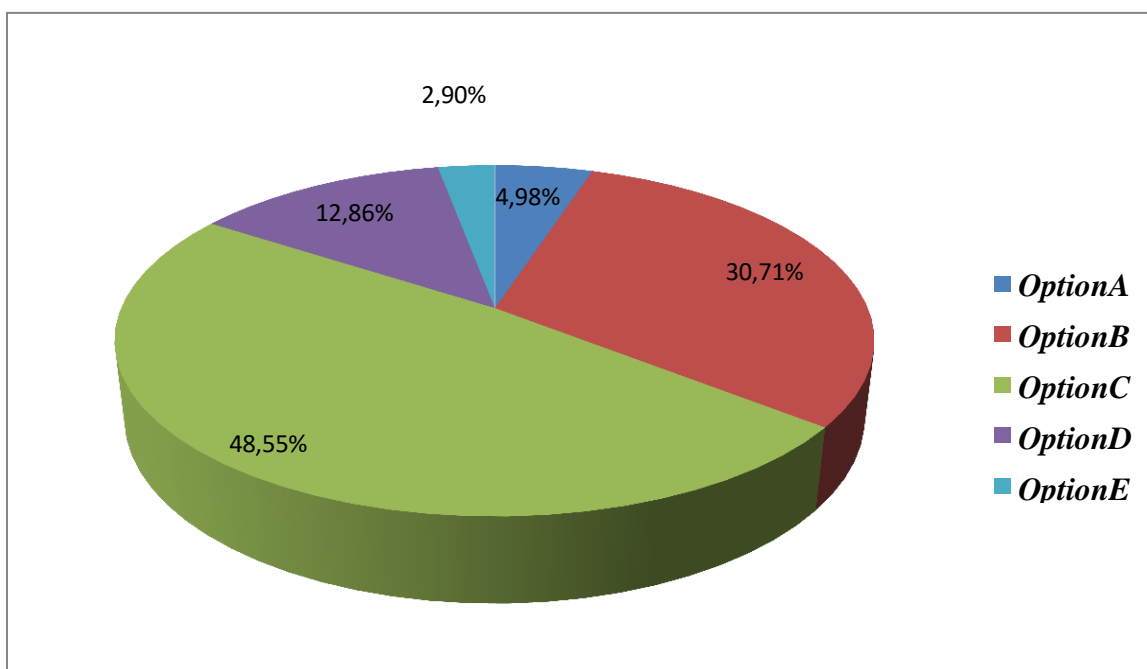


Figure14: Communication Issues Students' Encounter in Natural Settings

The informants who have selected option 'e' were given the opportunity to add information about their answers, and the obtained results were reported by the researcher:

- I often face situations where I do not find my foreigner friends' jokes funny
- When I communicate in English in natural contexts, I am unable to find the right words that describe my feelings and my ideas, so, my confidence is affected significantly
- I face many problems of communication: I do not feel comfortable, it takes me a lot of time to find words, and sometimes my friends that are not Algerian do not understand what I intend to say.
- I constantly try to translate things in my head in order to say them in English; I try to find French and Arabic words' equivalents, and this makes me look not fluent and hesitant. In addition, I frequently pronounce words with a French accent
- Pronunciation and Vocabulary are the main problems I have. Some words are difficult for me to pronounce so I try to use simple words which makes my level appear very basic. Therefore, I feel frustrated and try not to use English a lot

After scrutinizing the students' responses, they revealed that despite the fact that they were unable to put it under an option, they all relate to the presented ones; lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, mispronunciation and most importantly, no (or little) knowledge and consideration for the cultural features.

Second, in academic settings, 98 participants consider that mispronunciation is the main issue of communication they have, 77 students claim that the problem they encounter in communication is cultural appropriateness, 35 students opted for option 'd' which is lack of confidence, and 31 students consider lack of vocabulary as the main communication issue they have.

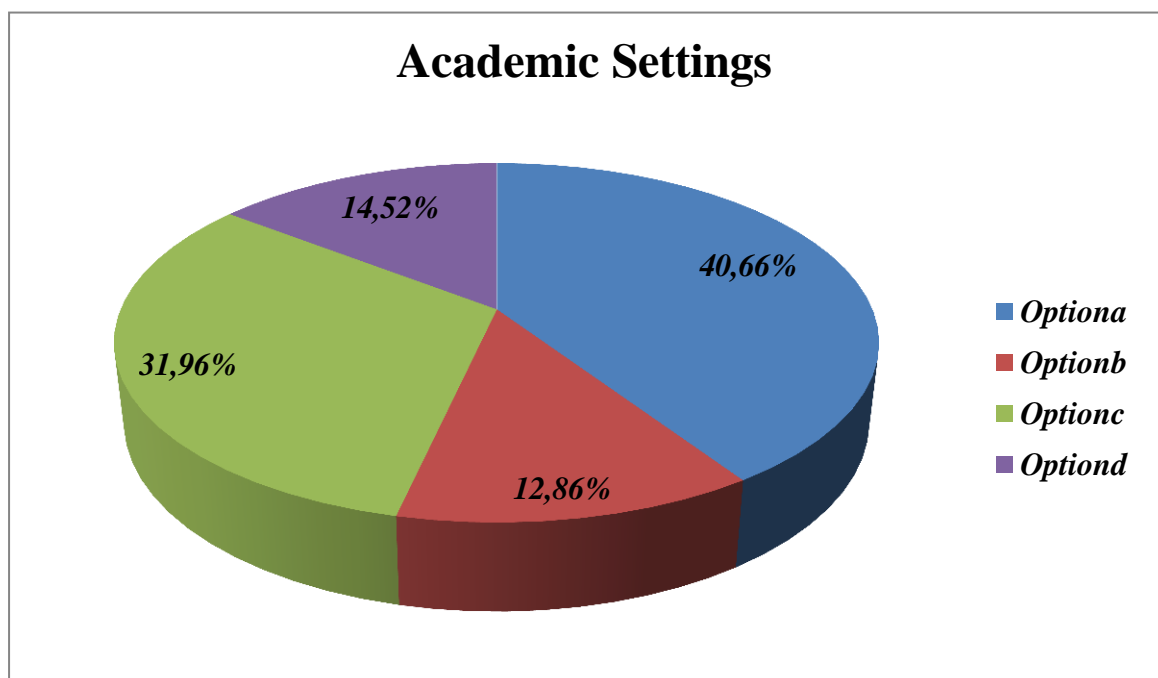


Figure 15: Communication Issues Students Encounter in Academic Settings

What can be noticed from the two figures is that the scales tipped for option 'a'. In academic settings, the majority of participants shared the same views and opted for option "mispronunciation", unlike in natural settings where they opted for 'c' "cultural appropriateness". Accordingly, it can be noticed that issues that students face while communicating in natural settings are not the same as the ones they face in academic settings. The results showed that students' focus is put differently; on vocabulary and cultural

appropriateness in natural settings, and on pronunciation and self-confidence in academic settings. The following table is a brief summary of the differences observed:

<i>Option</i>	<i>Natural Settings %</i>	<i>Academic Settings %</i>
<i>a. Mispronunciation</i>	4.98%	40.66%
<i>b. Lack of vocabulary</i>	30.71%	12.86%
<i>d. Difficulties to know what is culturally appropriate or not</i>	48.55%	31.96%
<i>d. Lack of confidence</i>	12.86%	14.52%
<i>e. Some or all of the Above</i>	2.90%	0%

Table22: Comparison of Communication Issues in Natural & Academic Settings

The information collected from the seventh item demonstrated the degree of students' agreement with a number of statements. The results can be summarized in the following table:

<i>Statements</i>	A Strongly agree		B Agree		C Neutral		D Disagree		E Strongly disagree	
	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>
I can learn English without Learning its culture	97	40.25	61	25.31	1	0.41	42	17.43	40	16.60
while communicating, I refer only to my culture and do not take into consideration the target one	21	8.71	99	41.09	1	0.41	102	42.32	18	7.47
Learning about other cultures cause the loss of my own one	80	33.20	72	29.88	0	0.00	54	22.41	35	14.52
I have to learn the English language along with the foreign Culture	41	17.01	43	17.84	10	4.15	98	40.66	49	20.33
I am ready to adapt to peoples' different cultures	12	4.98	21	8.71	14	5.81	107	44.40	87	36.10
Ignoring others' cultures may Cause misunderstanding and embarrassing situations	87	36.10	25	10.37	8	3.32	89	36.93	32	13.29
My culture should be imposed to my interlocutors in order to Preserve it	99	41.09	56	23.24	10	4.15	41	17.01	35	14.52
I accept differences between cultures and am eager to know Them	105	43.57	13	5.39	10	4.15	32	13.29	81	33.61
Focusing on all aspects of the Foreign culture slow down my language learning process	100	41.49	57	23.65	2	0.83	61	25.31	21	8.71

Table23: Degree of Agreement or Disagreement of Students

From the table, we can observe the following points:

- The first statement shows that the majority of participants agreed on the fact that one can learn a language without learning the culture of that language. That is, for 65.56% of EFL students culture learning and language learning are not considered as necessarily connected.
- The second statement demonstrates that there is an equilibrium rate between students who claim that they refer only to the native culture while communicating, and students who claim that they do take into consideration the target culture while communicating. That is, 50% of EFL students ignore the foreign culture in cross-cultural communication.
- The third statement demonstrates that 63.08% of the participants consider culture learning as having a negative impact on them; for them, it causes loss of cultural identity.
- The fourth statement reveals that the majority of students think that there is no necessity to learn culture and language alongside. The response rate shows 60.99% of participants who agreed with this statement.
- The fifth statement shows that 80.50% of the participants are not ready to adapt to foreign cultures while communicating. This shows a lack of flexibility and a form of rejection to cultural otherness.
- Data collected from the sixth statement demonstrate that 49.78% of informants agreed with the statement that ignoring others' cultures may cause misunderstandings and embarrassing situations, whereas 50.22% did not agree with that statement.
- The seventh statement demonstrates that 64.33% of the participants think that their culture should be imposed to others as a mean to preserve it.
- Statement number eight shows that 48.96% of the informants claim that they accept cultural diversity and that they are eager to learn about it, while 51.04% did not show agreement with that statement.
- The last statement reveals that 65.14% of students regard culture learning as having a negative impact; according to the participants, it slows down the learning process.

In regards to the eighth item, the collected data provided information about students' degree of knowledge about certain aspects of foreign cultures. In order to analyse the results,

a correction scale was established; each statement rate of correct answers is calculated. After that, the overall percentage is determined in order to measure the students' degree of cultural awareness. The frequency of occurrence of options and percentages are detailed in the following table:

Statements		1	2	3	4	5
Options	UK	97	71	24	102	64
	Japan	91	51	94	36	100
	Germany	27	33	56	71	41
	US	26	86	67	35	23
Rate of correct Answers		11.20%	21.16%	27.80%	42.32%	26.56%

Table24: Participants' Attributions of Cultural Etiquettes

Concerning the first statement, the majority of participants agreed on the option 'UK'; thus, in the UK, punctuality is not a big matter since people are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes after the stated time. However, in Germany punctuality is something that people pay a lot of attention to. In the second statement, the majority of participants agreed on option 'US'; but, in the United States, asking people about their age is considered as rude and inappropriate. In Japan, however, it is something completely normal, since people ask for this information in order to adapt their language and vocabulary they use to the age range of their interlocutors. In the third statement, high percentages of participants opted for option 'Japan'; but, in Japan maintaining eye contact with someone is seen as a challenge to authority and as disrespectful. In the United States, however, people who fail to maintain eye contact with their interlocutors are regarded as uninterested and disrespectful. In the fourth statement, the majority of participants answered 'UK', which is a correct answer. In the United Kingdom money is a taboo subject, and asking how things cost is considered as extremely inappropriate. The last statement revealed that the majority of participant answered 'Japan'; however, despite the fact that the Japanese are known to use a lot politeness expressions, the United Kingdom is where the apologies are used the most; it is a part of their everyday speech. To sum it up, the students' degree of knowledge about the stated cultural features is determined at 25.81%. That is, slightly more than the quarter of the sample was able to provide correct answers and determine to which culture the statements are associated with.

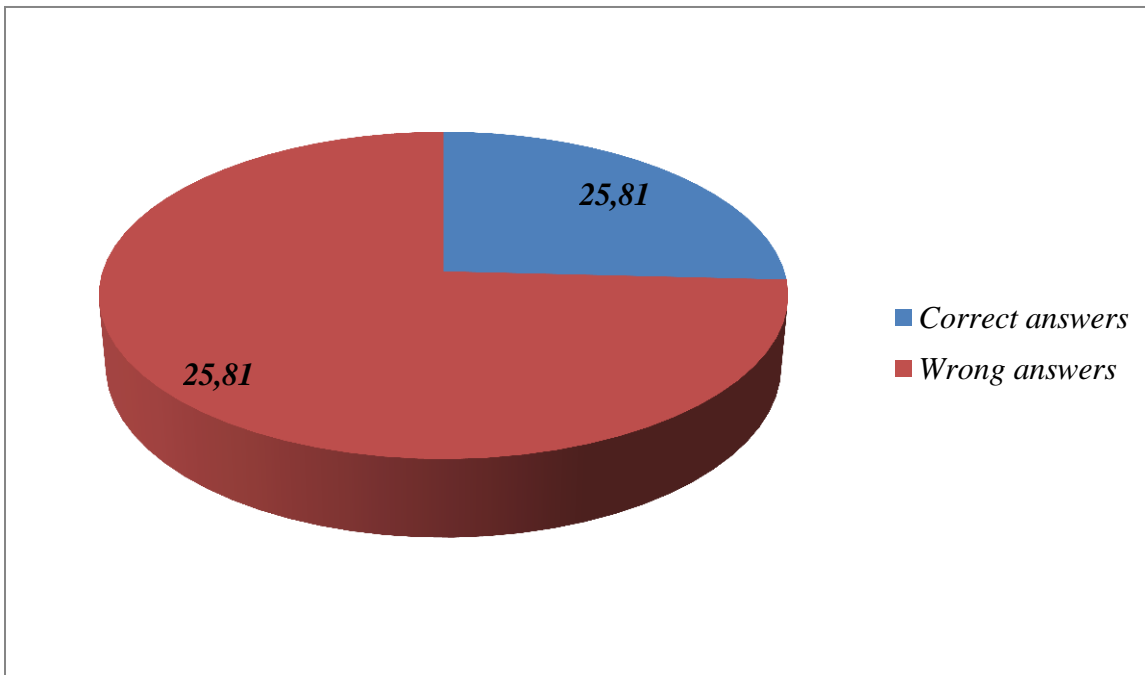


Figure16:Rate of Students' Knowledge about Foreign Cultural Features

Then, students were asked to determine from stated features the one(s) that can be observed in their native culture. The response rate of this question was 36.10%; that is, only 87 participants answered it. Some of the participants selected more than one answer, and the results showed the following:

Statement	Number of Occurrences
<i>Punctuality is put at a high priority; showing up late is considered to be very rude</i>	00
<i>It is very common, and not considered rude when you ask peoples' age when you meet them for the first time</i>	75
<i>Failing to make eye contact when someone Is addressing you is considered to be offensive for your interlocutor</i>	24
<i>Discussing money and how much things cost is a strictly taboo thing and seen as Inappropriate</i>	00
<i>Apologising for everything at any moment; It is a part of peoples' everyday speech</i>	00

Table25:Students'comparisonofculturalfeatureswithnativeculture

The results demonstrate that 63.90% of participants did not answer the question, either due to inability to determine whether the statements are part of their culture or not, or due to the fact that they think that none of them is part of it. Concerning the participants who provided answers, their responses were focused on two of the five options. First, they think

that in their native culture it is acceptable to ask people about their age when they meet them for the first time, and second, failing at maintaining eye contact with interlocutors is unacceptable. Nevertheless, participants considered punctuality, apologies, and money discussions as unrelated to their native culture.

The ninth item provided information about students' views on the need for introducing courses that include the cultural aspects of the English language. The collected data showed that the majority of students; 189 participants, responded positively.

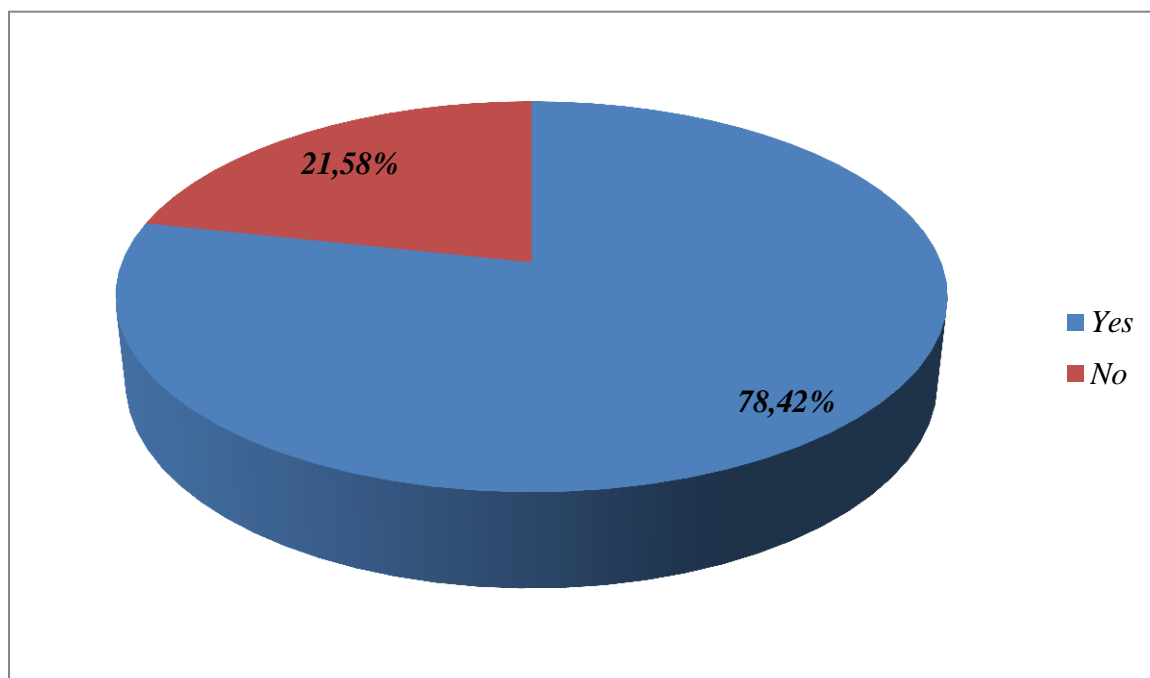


Figure17: Students' Opinion on including Courses about Cultural Aspects of the English language

5.1.2. Section Two: Quick Test

The test includes three tasks to complete. The tasks seek information about the students' degree of cultural awareness. Each task was analysed separately, and at the end, the average is calculated in order to give a clear and precise evaluation.

The first task includes five cultural expressions to be explained by the participants. In order to analyse the informants' answers, the task was submitted to a correction scale, and each expression that has 50% and above of correct answers is equivalent to two points. It is worth mentioning, that what are considered as wrong answers are the explanations that deal

with the words not with their intended meanings. The obtained results are summarized in the following table:

Expressions	Correct Answers		Wrong Answers		Score
He has his head in the clouds	221	91.70%	20	8.30%	04/10 40%
It is on its last Legs	102	42.32%	139	57.68%	
They always Have to put their two cents in	114	47.30%	127	52.70%	
Every cloud has A silver lining	99	41.08%	142	58.92%	
Of course he did, like father Like son!	237	98.34%	4	1.66%	

Table26: Participants' Understanding of Cultural Expressions

From the table above, one can infer that the cultural expressions that demonstrate the highest rates of correct answers are the first and fifth expressions with rates of 91.70% and 98.34% respectively. The possible explanation would be the fact that the two expressions are believed to be existent and frequently used in the participants' native culture; that is, the participants' familiarity with the cultural expressions makes it easier for them to interpret and to explain with their own words. Concerning the second, third, and fourth expressions, they showed a rate that is inferior to 50% (42.32%, 47.30%, and 41.08%). This displayed data evidence that two points were scored for each of the two answers that have a rate superior to 50%. Therefore, the overall mark of the task was 4/10; a rate of 40%.

In the second task, participants were expected to examine three cultural situations that may present some obstacles in real-life cultural contexts, and to answer a number of related questions. As explained previously, this task seeks information about how students approach certain cultural situations as well as their degree of tolerance towards them.

In regards to the first stated situation, it presents a person who arrives late to a dinner to which he was invited; 20 minutes after the stated time. The results revealed that 100% of students have detected a sign of inappropriateness. Participants explained that the inappropriateness remains in the fact of arriving 20 minutes late. This clearly shows that 241 students are unaware or did not take into consideration the cultural aspects of the foreign culture. To put it differently, students approaches the situation from their own cultural

perception and omitted the fact that in British culture arriving 20 minutes late is the normal thing to do.

The second situation presents a person who makes a joke about an event that happened to one of his friends. The answers showed that 83.40% of the participants considered the person as rude; for smiling and being unemotional, and only 16.60% found that the person's statement was funny. This demonstrates that the majority of students did not understand the cultural joke inherited in the stated situation. This unfamiliarity with the British type of humour constituted a serious handicap for participants' understanding, and hindered their reception and interpretation of the cultural feature.

The third situation presents a person who asks how much things cost and the place from where the owner bought them. The results demonstrated that a high percentage of participants opted for the option 'rude'; that is, they considered the person's question as inappropriate and that for several reasons. The researcher tried to state the three frequently-stated explanations that govern the participants' choice:

- The person was more interested in the decoration than by his interlocutor: 61 answers
- The person was not maintaining eye contact with his interlocutor: 100 answers
- The person asked about money and how much things cost: 39 answers

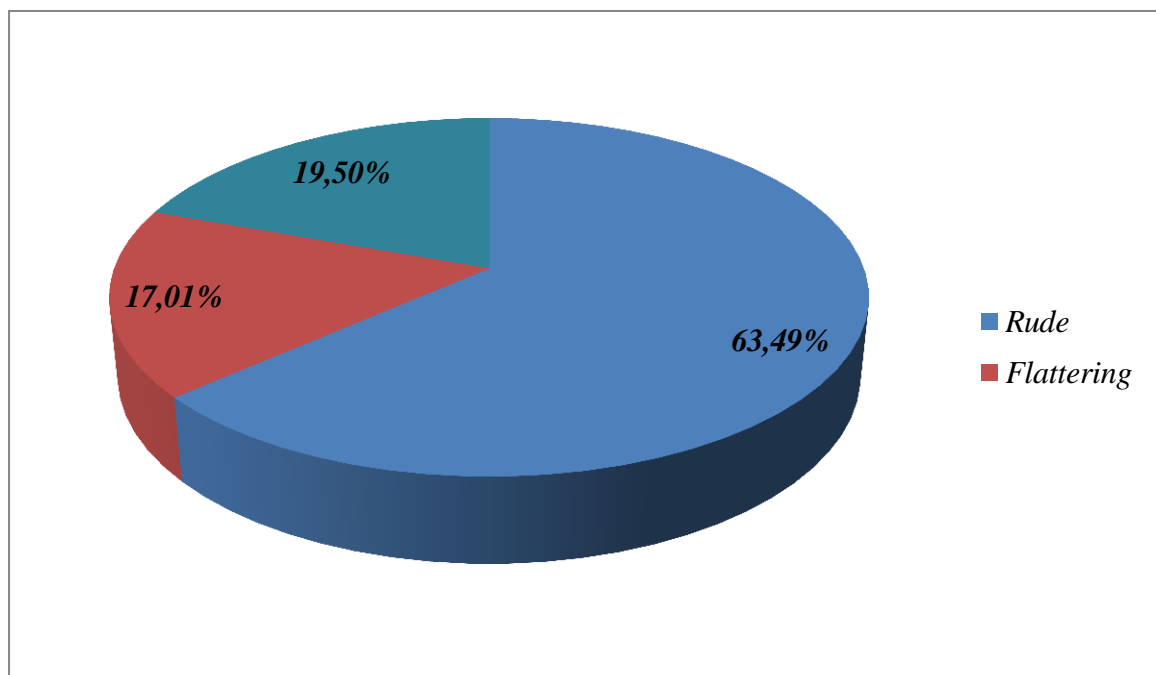


Figure18: Students' Perceptions on Cultural Situation -3-

The figure above summarizes the collected data. What can be noticed is that the pie chart is divided into three compartments rather than two “rude” and “flattering”. The reason behind the inclusion of an additional part is that, in this case, despite the fact that 200 students provided a correct answer, only 39 of them understood it and related it to the right explanation. That is, the rate of correct answers is diminished to 19.50%.

Therefore, the obtained information about the students’ degree of cultural awareness can be observed through the following figures:

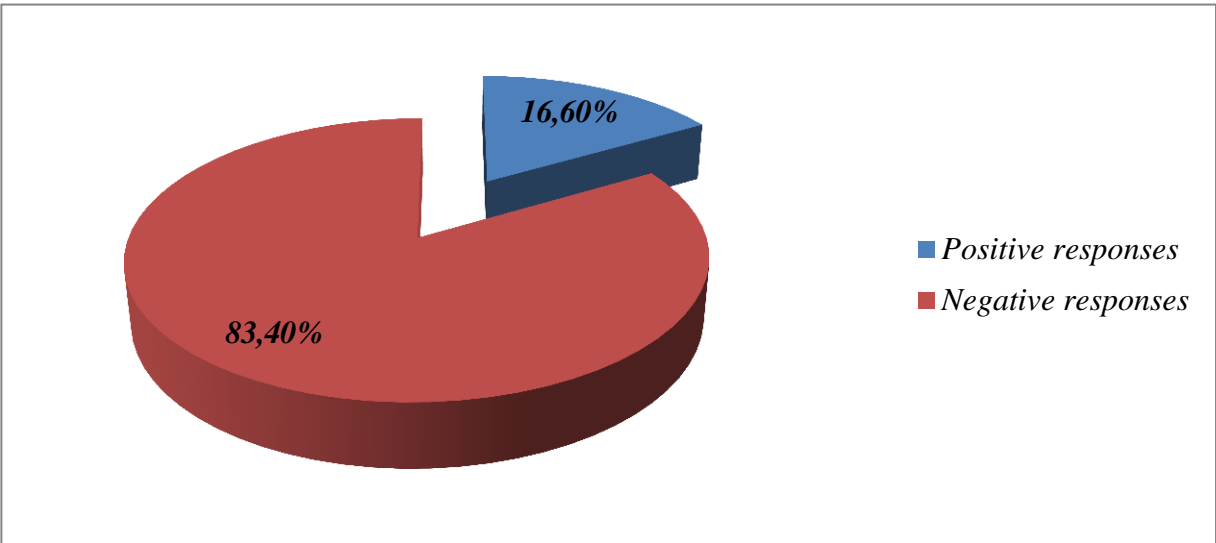


Figure19: Students’ Positive and Negative Responses- Situation Two-

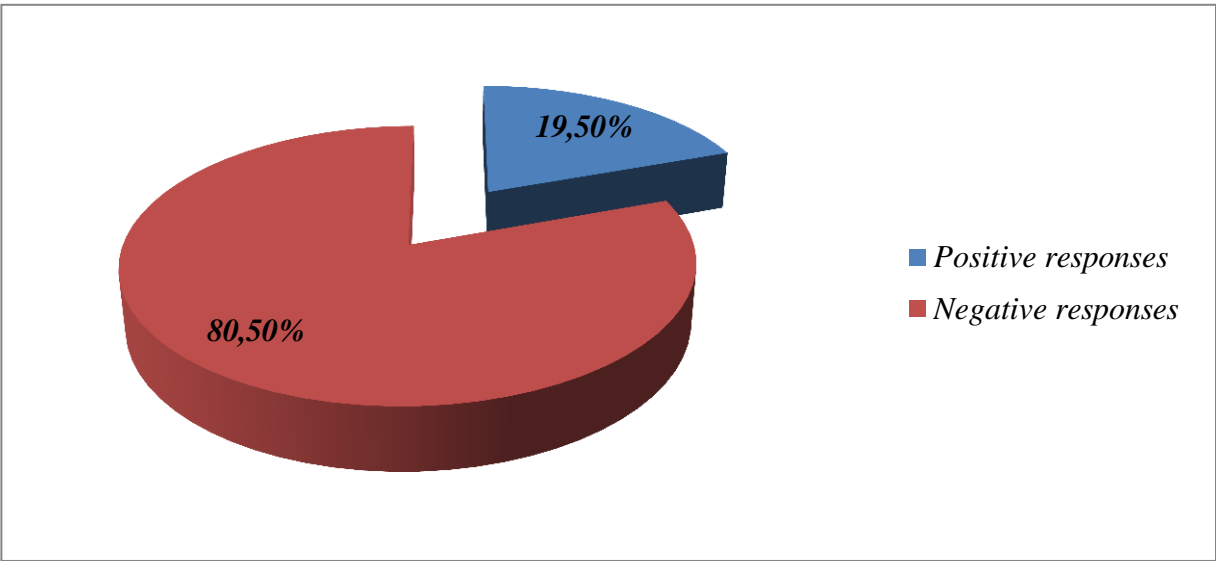


Figure20: Students Positive and Negative Responses- Situation Three-

From these figures, one can say that 87.97% of the participants were unable to deal

with the cultural situations as multicultural individuals, and tried to interpret things from their own cultural perspectives without taking into account the foreign ones.

The last task requires from the participants to translate five cultural expressions into either Arabic or French. The task seeks to analyse whether the students are aware of the cultural expressions and how they proceed in their interpretation. The reason behind making the participants chose between two languages, Arabic or French, is to make them use the language they feel the most comfortable using. By doing so, the researcher enhances the possibilities of gathering more precise data; students had more chances to use the words that describe the best the meaning they want to express. The participants who provided correct answers represent a rate of 47.38%. The distribution of the answers was summarized in the following table:

Statements	Correct answers		Incorrect/no answers	
	N°	%	N°	%
Speakofthedevil	92	38.17%	149	61.83%
Onceina blue time	144	59.75%	97	40.25%
Seeeyetoeeye	100	41.49%	141	58.51%
Tocut corners	79	32.78%	162	67.22%
Youcan'tjudgeabook fromits cover	156	64.73%	85	35.27%
Total%		47.38%		52.62%

Table27: Summary Table regarding the Participants' Answers

The results showed that the majority of the participants (52.62%) were unable to providecorrectanswersforseveralreasons.Someoftheobservedreasonscanbestatedas follows:

- Theparticipantstranslatedtheculturalexpressionsword-by-wordwithoutany reference to the meaning they carry.
- Theparticipants'interpretedtheexpressionsaccordingtotheirnativecultureperceptions.
- The participants left a blank or wrote expressions such as 'I don't know', 'no idea', or 'not really sure'.

The table above demonstrates that the cultural expressions that showed a majority of correct answers are “you can't judge a book from its cover” and “once in a blue moon”. The first one is an expression that is used in the participants' native culture; students are familiar

with it and use it constantly in their everyday speech. The second one is an expression that the participants are also familiar with, and, after asking some questions on social media, it appeared that EFL teachers use it frequently in the classroom. On the other hand, the expressions that showed a minority of incorrect answers are “to cut corners”, “speak of the devil” and ‘see eye to eye’.

As explained at the beginning of the present section, each task is evaluated separately and then the overall average of the participants’ degree of cultural awareness is measured. Accordingly, the obtained results revealed that 33.14% of the participants have succeeded the test; they are considered as having a certain degree of cultural awareness. Details of the evaluation are explained in the following table:

<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Rate of correct answers</i>
<i>01</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>02</i>	<i>12.03%</i>
<i>03</i>	<i>47.38%</i>
<i>Average</i>	<i>33.14%</i>

Table28: Average of the Participants’ Correct Answers regarding the Test

5.1.3. Section Three: Check-out Information

This section includes the four last questions of the questionnaire. As the title of the section indicates, each item serves the role of an assessment of whether, after dealing with the previous questions and tasks, the participants still have the same perceptions about their level of cultural awareness. The participants are given the opportunity to determine whether there is a concordance between what they think their level is, and what their level really is. In other words, it is a form of verification that aims at adding relevance and accuracy to the results. The response rate of this section was 96.40% (241 participants).

The first item of this section sought information about whether the participants found the tasks of the test difficult to complete. The responses demonstrated that the majority of the participants (144 participants) faced a number of difficulties while completing the tasks. These difficulties were mentioned in the explanation section of the same item.

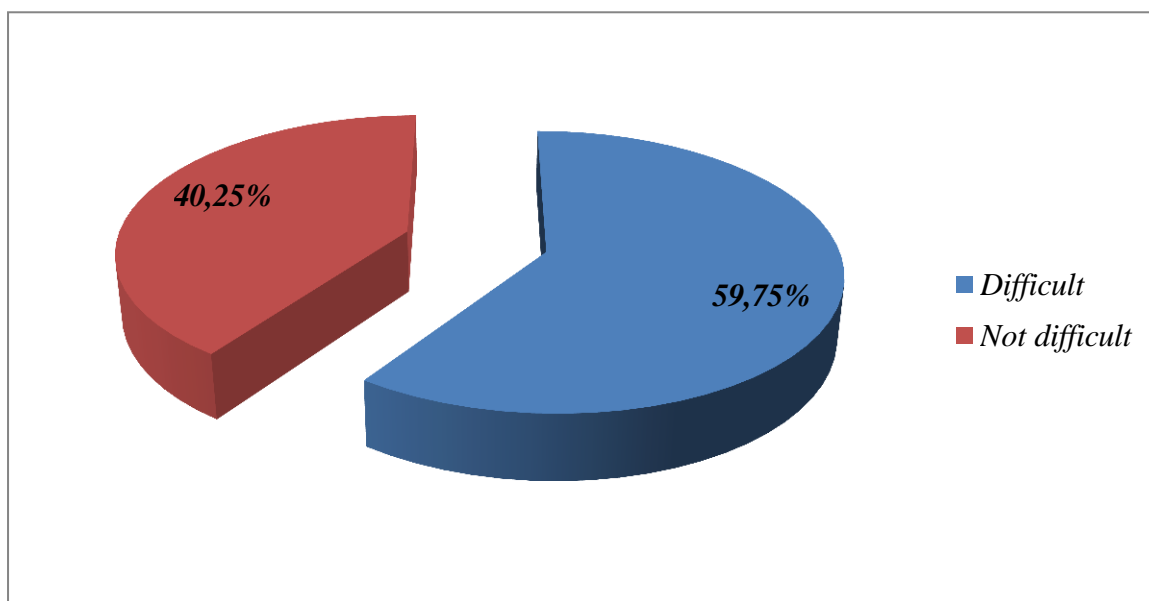


Figure21: The Participants' Opinions about whether the Completion of the Tasks was difficult

The explanations provided by the participants were centred on the following five points:

1. I took me a lot of time to complete the three tasks, which brings to my attention how unfamiliar they were to me
2. I was really confused and unsure, I thought I know the expressions but it was impossible for me to explain some of them
3. I was trying to interpret them from the viewpoint of a foreigner; however, I was constantly, and unconsciously, dealing with the cultural situations in a subjective way
4. Thank you for making me realize it, I undoubtedly need to learn more about cultural expressions and idioms
5. I was really thinking that I can live abroad without any difficulties since I am satisfied with my level in English. However, I, for sure, need much more practice, learning, and preparation than what I thought.

The explanations revealed that a significant number of the participants were unaware that they have difficulties in regards to the cultural elements of the foreign language. They

realized, through the tasks' accomplishment, that their level of cultural awareness was much lower than what they thought, and that they need to do more work on their cultural knowledge and skills. Moreover, as it can be seen in the fourth and fifth points, some of the participants' attention was drawn towards the importance of the development of cultural awareness for cross-cultural communication.

The second item of the present section aims at gathering information about students' perceptions towards their degree of awareness of the differences that exist between the native and the foreign cultures. The participants' responses showed the following results:

<i>Alternatives</i>	<i>Students' Responses</i>	
	<i>N°</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Yes, completely</i>	10	4.15%
<i>Somehow</i>	41	17.01%
<i>Not really</i>	164	63.90%
<i>No</i>	26	10.79%

Table29: Students' Perception of their Degree of Cultural Awareness

From the results shown in the table above, 78.84% of the participants (190 students) consider themselves having either low or no degree of cultural awareness. The provided explanations demonstrate that they have serious difficulties to detect the dissimilarities that exist between native and target cultures and to perceive them from a multicultural perspective. On the other hand, 21.16% of the participants (51students) regard themselves as having a certain or high level of cultural awareness. From the explanations that followed their answers, they claimed that even though the tasks required them some time to complete, they still consider themselves that they are aware and that they simply need some practice and exposure to the target culture.

The third item relates to students' opinion about whether the courses they follow at the University should include more the cultural aspects they need for appropriate communication. The obtained results showed that the majority of the participants, 223 students, responded 'yes' to the question.

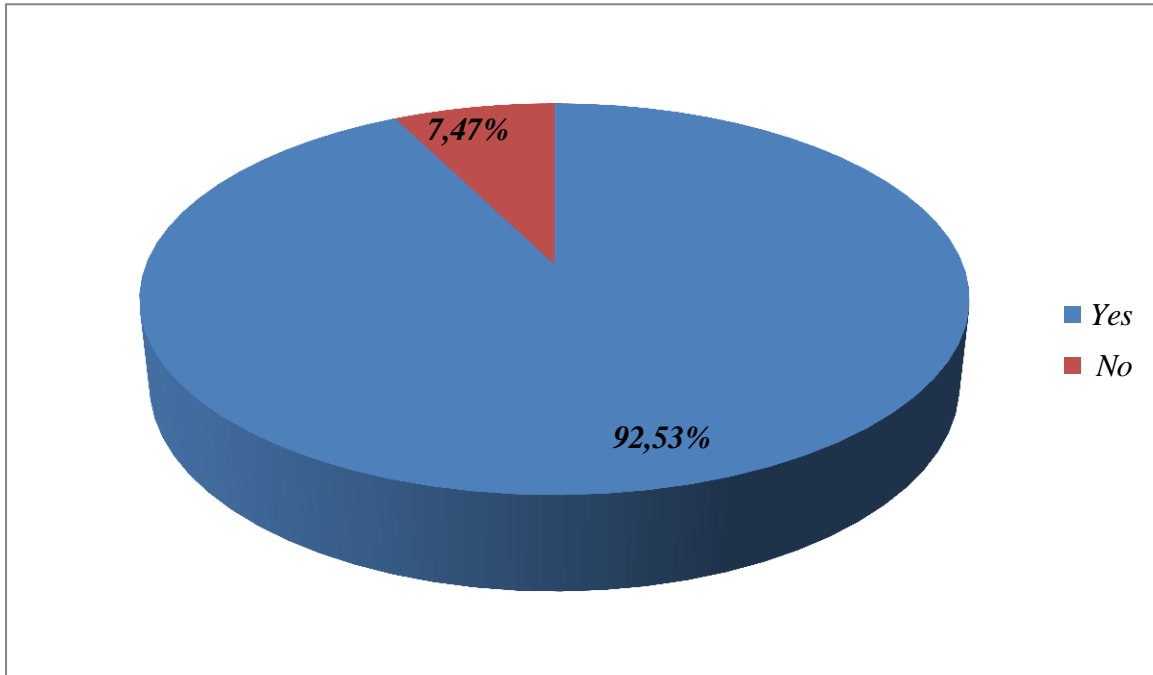


Figure22: Students' Perceptions of the Inclusion of Cultural Aspects at the University

The last item of the third section demonstrated a response rate of 26.56%. That is, only 64 participants provided an answer. Some of the answers were reported by the researcher as follows:

1	Students need to be introduced to the foreign culture from the first year
2	It would be beneficial to add a module called “cultural awareness”
3	At the University, teachers focus mostly (and sometimes only) on writing, and Pronunciation
4	I always try to learn about other cultures, but my teachers constantly ignore my questions
5	I think that “culture” should be introduced as a module in M2
6	Cultural awareness is not a big deal, students have to learn the language not the culture
7	From this questionnaire, I realized that I need to do much more work than what I have Done till now. The foreign culture learning is CRUCIAL
8	It is necessary to include culture in all courses, Explicitly
9	I learned today, thank you
10	English is a universal language, it has no culture
11	The foreign culture need to be given its due importance at the University. We need it for Our future after graduation
12	It is the first time I come across the expression “cultural awareness”, it is for sure Something I will do a lot of research about
13	Learning the culture of the target language is as important as learning its grammar and Vocabulary
14	Learning culture should occur after University; in real life
15	Developing cultural awareness is a priority in language learning

Table30: The Participants’ Suggestions and Comments

5.2. Evaluation of Students' Responses before and after the Test

This section is concerned with a contrastive analysis between the participants' answers of the items from the first section and the items from the third section of the questionnaire. There as on behind doing this analysis is to assure more validity and accuracy to the results by enabling students to test their knowledge and skills in regards to cultural awareness, and grasping their attention to what they may lack or ignore. The obtained results can be explained as follows:

5.2.1. Students' Opinion about the most Important Thing in Learning English

The displayed data evidence that, at the beginning of the questionnaire, the participants' answers indicated that only 31.54% of them consider learning the target culture as important. On the other hand, at the end of the questionnaire, 66.67% of the reported data showed that the participants provided either a comment or a suggestion that includes the foreign culture learning as a priority and a must in foreign language learning.

5.2.2. Students' Perceptions of their Degree of Cultural Awareness

<i>Alternatives</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%(average)</i>
<i>Yes, completely</i>	60.79%	4.15%
<i>Somehow</i>	27.18%	17.01%
<i>Not really</i>	7.05%	63.90%
<i>No</i>	0.48%	10.79%

Table31: Students' Perceptions of Their Degree of Cultural Awareness

The yielded results presented in the table lead us to suggest that there was a change in the participants' opinions. The results showed from the fifth item of the first section indicate that the majority of students considered themselves as being completely aware of both native and foreign cultures; however, the third item of the third section demonstrated that their opinion shifted to regarding themselves as not really aware of the cultural features and as being unable to detect the dissimilarities between the native and foreign cultures.

5.2.3. Students' Viewpoint about the Inclusion of the Cultural Aspects at the University Courses

<i>Students' answers</i>	<i>Before the test</i>	<i>After the test</i>	
<i>Yes</i>	78.42%	92.53%	+14.11%
<i>No</i>	21.58%	7.47%	-14.11%

Table32: The Participants' Responses in regards to the Inclusion of Cultural Features

The quantitative data reported above, demonstrate that, in the ninth item of the first section, the majority of the participants' answers were "Yes" to the question of including (or at least incorporating more) the cultural aspects to the University courses. Students considered what they are presented with as insufficient for their learning. Similarly, the third item of the third section also showed that the majority of the participants' answers were "Yes" in regards to the same question. Nevertheless, the two items did not present the same response rates. That is, after the test, 14.11% of the participants changed their answers from no to yes. In other words, the number of students who consider essential introducing or adding more elements of the foreign culture to the University courses increased by 34 students after completing the test.

Therefore, in reverence with the former indicated data, it could be inferred that, some differences were observed in the participants' responses before and after the test. The possible explanation of the findings could be students' non awareness of the pivotal role culture learning play in foreign language learning. What the students' prioritize in regards to language learning, their perceptions of their degree of cultural awareness, as well as the importance of the incorporation of the cultural elements to the language courses, are three points that demonstrated changes in the participants' perceptions before and after the test.

5.3. Summary of the Results

The main aim of the current study was the investigation of EFL students' degree of cultural awareness and ways of promoting it inside the classroom. It sought to bring about a number of results that may contribute to the development of the concept, in particular, and to the field and realm of academia, in general. The obtained results can be put under two categories; quantitative and qualitative. This section aims at discussing the findings of both categories and to revise the research questions stated in the first chapter of the present study. In regards to the collected data, the following points have been observed:

- a. Concerning foreign language learning, EFL students are found to give more importance to Grammar and vocabulary, putting their mastery as a top priority. This evidences that the students are not aware of the pivotal link between language learning and culture learning, and the role the latter plays in communication. This would make the students direct their focus and efforts towards learning the grammatical rules and words and expressions; ignoring the cultural side of the foreign language. Thus, this would probably result in a number of misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Indeed, as being discussed in previous chapters, language and culture are “intricately interwoven” (Brown, 2007), and prioritizing the learning of one over the learning of the other may lessen the quality of learning and result in communication problems and breakdowns.

- b. From the outcomes of the investigation, EFL students are found to be able to identify one or multiple aspects of cultural awareness. Nevertheless, they demonstrated that they have a fragmented idea. Indeed, the students were unable to give a holistic picture of what cultural awareness refers to. This appears as strong evidence that EFL students have no real experience of and exposure to the concept of cultural awareness. To put differently, EFL learners demonstrated that they are unfamiliar with the concept of cultural awareness; the findings showed that they have really small knowledge about the concept and its importance in foreign language learning and communication.
- c. The results revealed, as well, that EFL students are found to experience major difficulties to identify the elements that are parts of culture. This might demonstrate a lack of knowledge of culture itself; native and target, and cultural non-exposure.
- d. It has been demonstrated through the quantitative findings that the students agree on the fact that, at the University, the cultural aspect of language is the least focused on. This indeed explains the blemish picture students have of the importance of culture in language learning.
- e. The results obtained so far, in regards to students' perceptions of the degree of their cultural awareness, showed that EFL students consider themselves as having a sufficient degree of cultural awareness, and that they are aware of both native and target cultures. However, after completing the three tasks of the included test, the number of these students had diminished significantly. Thus, it could be inferred that there is a gap between the EFL students' perceptions and the reality of their cultural awareness degree. To put it differently, EFL students have serious struggles to determine their lacks in regards to cultural awareness, which could be a consequence of the lack of explicit cultural instruction and assessment.
- f. In addition, the findings revealed that EFL students face serious struggles with respect to communication in both academic and natural contexts. The faced problems are centred on four points; lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, mispronunciation, and lack of cultural knowledge and consideration. The findings demonstrated that, despite the fact that cultural appropriateness was a top answer in natural settings and second answer in academic settings, knowing the target culture and developing cultural awareness remains a central issue that EFL students face in communication. In addition, it might be inferred that this is an evidence of the strong impact cultural awareness have on students' performances, and that this impact is observed in both inside and outside the foreign language classroom.

- g. The obtained results showed, also, that the students consider that there is no necessity to learn language and culture alongside, and that it could be impacting negatively their language learning process in terms of quality and speed. This demonstrates the EFL students' negative attitudes towards culture learning, and their unawareness of its importance in EFL.
- h. It has been observed, from the quantitative findings, that the EFL students' attitudes and perceptions towards cultural awareness do change after being assessed. On this basis, it could be inferred that the EFL students show both signs of ignorance and fear of cultural otherness, and that they have a readiness to detect their lacks and comprehend them. However, a strong sign of cultural rigidity had been observed. The obtained results showed that the students are not ready to adapt to the target culture, which could be an indication of our students' need for promoting their cultural understanding and awareness.
- i. From the investigation outcomes, it has been noted that the EFL students favour their native culture more than the target one. That is, they think that their native culture should be imposed to people that belong to other cultural communities, and that they should preserve it. This could be considered as an additional sign of the EFL students' intolerance and rigidity, and that their cultural awareness needs to be promoted.
- j. The results of the quantitative data, also, showed that the students have little knowledge about the cultural features of other countries. They showed difficulties to associate the cultural features with the cultural communities they belong to. Moreover, the students are unable to determine the features that belong to their native culture. This, also, could be an indicator of the students' lack of cultural knowledge.
- k. It has been demonstrated through the findings that the EFL students agreed on the fact that more courses that include culture learning should be introduced at the University. This perception was shown before and after the students were exposed to some elements of the target culture. This confirms their ability to change their viewpoints and positions when presented with cultural knowledge and assessment.

Second, in regards to the qualitative findings, the following has been observed:

What is apparent through the findings is that EFL students have little knowledge about the foreign cultural features; they are unable to detect the dissimilarities between cultures and, by extension, are incapable to understand them and deal with them. Moreover, students face major struggles in regards to perceiving cultural features of the target cultures with a

multicultural view. The obtained results demonstrated that the EFL students did not portray instances of intercultural awareness, and that they have the tendency to approach cultural otherness from their own cultural perspectives. To put it differently, the students did not show a sense of flexibility, and tolerance towards the differences that exist between native and target cultures, in the contrary, they tried to interpret them and react to them on the basis of the guiding rules of their native culture. Thus, this is a real representation of the facts resulting from not being exposed to the target culture, having insufficient or no cultural instruction and practice, as well as being unaware of the impact that developing cultural sensitivity have on language learning and communication.

In a nutshell, the collected data from both quantitative and qualitative means do concord in the following instances:

- Algerian Universities little concern for culture learning
- EFL learners unawareness about the concept of cultural sensitivity and its role in foreign language learning
- EFL learners' unpreparedness for cross-cultural communication

5.4. Revision of the Research Questions

The present section deals with a verification of the research questions on the basis of the data collected via the questionnaire and test used for the investigation. The study includes three research questions where each one of them is discussed separately.

The first research question of the present study was: What does cultural awareness mean to Algerian English as Foreign Language students? The results revealed that EFL student are unfamiliar with the concept of cultural awareness as well as with its relationship with language learning. The collected data showed that, despite the fact that students appeared to have an idea about the concept, they are unable to give a complete and relevant definition of it. Their perceptions were fragmented and deficient. In addition, EFL students do not present instances of positive attitude towards the impact of cultural awareness on their language foreign language learning. They consider its development as a loss of time and energy that would probably cause a loss of identity and slow down the learning process. Therefore, taking into account the data collected, It can be inferred that EFL students are not familiar with the

concept of cultural awareness neither with its impact on language learning and communication.

The second research question of the study was: Do EFL students regard the development of cultural awareness as a mean to overcome some of the issues they face during their learning path? The obtained results showed that EFL students' low level of cultural awareness severely impacted their learning and behavior. They were found to face major difficulties inside and outside the classroom due to the fact that they were unable to interpret and deal with foreign cultural situations properly. This can be seen in the fact that it was difficult for them to understand some cultural expressions, and to interpret and react appropriately to cultural situations. This is an indication of the major impact cultural awareness has on students' achievements. On this ground, the results demonstrated that, before the completion of the tasks included to the questionnaire, the majority of the students put culture learning at a lower stage than other aspects as grammar and vocabulary. That is, from respondents' answers one can see that EFL students think that learning culture is not necessary for the development of their learning and communication.

The third and last research question of the study was: According to EFL students, are sufficient measures taken for the purpose of developing cultural awareness in some of North Algerian Universities? The collected data from the EFL students' opinion revealed that they consider that insufficient measures are taken in regards to the inclusion of the cultural elements to the EFL classes and the development of students' cultural awareness. Mostly speaking, culture is not explicitly taught and its relationship with language learning is not highlighted. Therefore, even if a number of techniques and materials are used inside the EFL classrooms, the objective behind their use remains not revealed or explained to students. This may draw students' attention away from culture features learning to the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation learning. Accordingly, it can be said that no (or at least few) measures are taken at the University for the sake of promoting EFL learners' cultural awareness.

Conclusion

As explained formerly, the present study used a questionnaire for the sake of gathering data. This combination proved to be useful for providing insights into the EFL students' degree of cultural awareness. The yielded findings presented in the aforementioned discussions casted some light on a number of cultural hurdles that EFL students may encounter in cultural contexts, and how the development of cultural awareness prevent from communication breakdowns. The challenge is to give the enhancement of students' cultural awareness its worth in foreign language teaching and learning, making both teachers and learners more aware of the importance of including the cultural features as a central part of language teaching. By doing so, it will assure an overcoming of cultural obstacles and will lead to effective communication. The next and last chapter will be rounded off by a number of pedagogical suggestions that aim at reaching the desired objectives.

Chapter Six
Pedagogical
Recommendations

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Pedagogical Recommendations

Introduction

In the present chapter, the quantitative and qualitative findings are summarized with the main focus of answering the research questions mentioned forth in the general introduction of the study. It reflects on the main themes and the focal points of the study. Then, it presents a number of pedagogical recommendations followed by a suggested model of developing cultural awareness in order to make provision of them. After that, the chapter is rounded off with an identification of some possible areas for further research.

6.1. Pedagogical Recommendations

The literature and findings of the present study gave rise to a number of obstacles that hinders both foreign language teaching and learning, and might possibly affect the whole field of EFL. Accordingly, the present section presents a number of recommendations that can be summarized as follows:

- There is a serious and urgent need for incorporating cultural awareness as a central issue in EFL teaching and learning at the Algerian Universities; i.e. teaching it explicitly and highlighting all its aspects in the classrooms.
- Since English is a worldwide used language, there is a necessity to call for learning about foreign cultures; and that, as part and complement of foreign language learning.
- The dissimilarities between cultures need to be emphasized and comprehended; however, without holding judgmental opinions or thinking which culture is superior and which one is inferior. In other words, there is no bad or negative cultures, differences should simply be respected and accepted in order to maximize and facilitate the learning and communication processes.

- The findings of the present study call for some modifications in the FLT system. That is, some considerations need to be taken in regard to the incorporation of culture as a central part of language learning. Therefore, as the present study deals with North part of Algeria, further wider research need to be conducted in order to add credit to the promotion of cultural awareness and cast light on its importance in the field of FLT.
- It is necessary to emphasize that cultural awareness has a development process which requires comparison between native and target cultures in order to detect the dissimilarities between them and to deal with them. Thus, both cultures should be included in the EFL classrooms.
- EFL students' negative opinions about culture learning are engendered by their ignorance of the concept, how it proceeds, and what impact it has on their learning. Therefore, EFL students' should be provided with theoretical knowledge before moving to the practice.
- EFL students need to be introduced with the concept of cultural awareness from their first year of EFL.
- Culture learning should not focus on cultural information only. It should develop cross-cultural minds. It should make a balance between cultural knowledge and cultural skills.
- The strong and coactive relationship between language and culture calls for a need to teach them together as parts of a whole. Learning one in separation of the other causes serious breakdowns.
- In order to develop cultural awareness, EFL students need to learn and understand their native culture before the target one. They need to begin with the familiar and then move to the unfamiliar in order to ensure the reaching of the desired objectives.
- The promotion of cultural awareness will, undoubtedly, equip EFL students with the necessary skills for cross-cultural communication.
- Understanding cultural awareness and being aware of the advantages it offers enables EFL learners to focus on the cultural elements included in the classroom, even if these latter are implicit.
- Due to the strong link between language and culture, cultural awareness needs to be included as a central issue to the curricula. This will raise awareness about its pivotal role, and will enhance learners' motivation and interest.

- Knowing the target culture makes EFL learners avoid inappropriate and embarrassing situations, and makes communication smooth and accurate. Therefore, bringing the cultural situations to the classroom and practicing them would be very beneficial and enjoyable.
- A mixed methods and approaches should be used in the classroom in order to include culture. This will, certainly, ensure that the content and practices will suit all learners' learning styles and will facilitate the teaching/learning process.
- Organizing cultural events at the University and letting students participate to them would be of a great help in raising awareness about the huge impact culture has on language learning.
- Teachers who succeed at including cultural features to their classes in a creative manner should be praised and encouraged.
- Using cultural expressions and explain them in the classroom would be beneficial for promoting cultural awareness.
- In order to increase students' motivation and interest, it would be beneficial to include them in the choice of the cultural content they want to learn and practice. That is, through investing in the cultural inclusion process, EFL learners will participate actively and will be more eager to reach the previously-defined goals.
- Devoting five to ten minutes to learning a new cultural expression or fact at the end of sessions might be very useful to prepare EFL learners for cross-cultural communication and to raise their level of interest.
- The use of authentic materials in the classroom might be very useful for providing EFL learners with factual information that relate to the target culture. The students, by doing so, will be exposed to real-life materials and situations, which might serve as an awareness developer and a motivation booster.

6.2. Contribution of the Study

Despite the fact that a number of research works have been conducted on the relationship between language and culture, the issue remains a relatively recent one and it is in a constant development due to its huge significance in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. To the best of our knowledge, no research work has been dedicated to the subject in the same context, and this novelty constitutes an entry for further related research.

The present study contributes to the knowledge based on the strong link between language and culture, EFL learners' cultural awareness and the effective ways that ensure its development, as well as the presence of the latter in the Universities of North Algeria. It is wished that it provides both EFL teachers and learners with an insight about the cultural instruction and ways for its promotion at the Universities of North Algeria.

The population of the present study concerns five of the well-ranked Universities located in the Northern coast of Algeria; however, the findings and conclusions could be transferrable and applicable to other Universities situated in different regions of Algeria.

6.3. Implications of the Study

The present section is devoted to the implications of the study. These latter are summarized as follows:

The present study findings are significant in casting some light on the extent and manner with which culture learning is regarded in the Algerian Universities, as well as EFL students' knowledge about and degree of cultural awareness. This might be useful for teachers to make the necessary changes in order to include the cultural features into the classroom and to emphasize the strong existent link between language and culture. Similarly, it also might be useful for learners to increase their awareness about the importance of culture teaching in EFL and, accordingly, change their perceptions and attitudes towards cultural awareness and make the necessary efforts to develop culture-related knowledge and skills.

In addition, the present study included five different Universities of North Algeria. That is, the findings are more representative of the foreign language learning system in Algeria, and give holistic and detailed picture of how cultural awareness is regarded and approached. This might be very useful for policy makers in Algeria.

Moreover, the study is not limited to only one element of EFL learners' cultural awareness; such as acknowledging cultural otherness or understanding ones' own culture, it covered all elements and dealt with cultural awareness as a whole.

Into the bargain, the present study provides policy makers with an insight about what the Algerian EFL Students' lack and need to develop in terms of culture learning, so that it could be possible to make the necessary reforms. Moreover, EFL teachers' needs are also to be taken into consideration. It would be necessary to provide teachers with the adequate

training and preparation in order to make them meet the students' needs and expectations, as well as the desired culture-and-language learning objectives.

6.4. Limitations of the Study

The focal point of the present study is on the EFL students' degree of cultural awareness. After careful scrutiny of the whole study it has been noticed that there are two major limitations that could be taken into account in future research. Firstly, the drawn results were based exclusively upon the students' opinions and experiences. The researcher had desired to involve a number of culture teaching specialists in order to reflect on the inclusion of culture into the FLT process and the development of students' cultural awareness; nevertheless, these specialists were not at the researcher's disposal. Still, the researcher's conviction was that it would be beneficial for the study purposes to engage EFL students as the focal sample to work with, aiming at reflecting on their experiences and viewpoints about their cultural awareness and its process of development at the University. Secondly, due to the health crisis the world is passing through, which affected the participants' availability and presence, as well as the different regions in which the sample is located, the researcher had faced difficulties to access the informants. Therefore, e-solutions (social networks and e-mails) had been used in order to collect data. Thus, the researcher had met the necessity to redesign the study and adapt the data collection tools to the situational conditions, in order to make sure that the obtained results are reliable and valid.

6.5. A Suggested Model for Developing EFL Students' Cultural Awareness

The researcher of the present study suggests a self-designed model that can be used for including culture into the teaching/ learning process and developing learners' cultural

awareness. This model can be used by both teachers and students and is summarized in the following scheme:

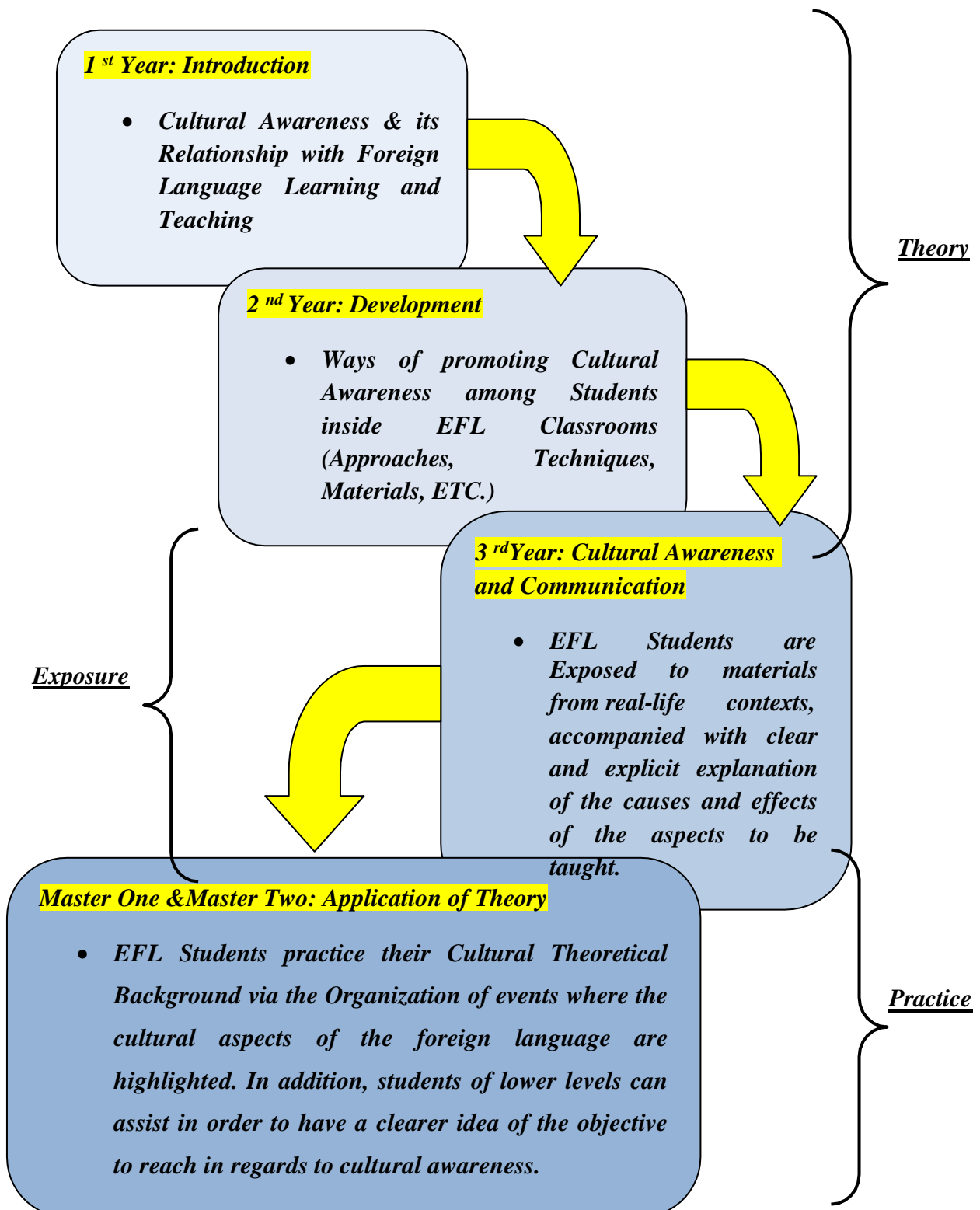


Figure23: Model for Developing Cultural Awareness among EFL Learners

6.6. Suggestions for Further Research

By nature, research provides answers and clarifies subjects; however, it gives rise to other questions as well. Accordingly, the researcher of the present study would strongly cast light on a number of suggestions that might be useful for future research. Five suggestions are to be stated:

- In order to obtain more concrete data, it is highly recommended to opt for a longitudinal study on the development of EFL students' cultural awareness and the effective ways used for the inclusion of culture into the classroom. Some examples would be classroom observations, which enable an active evaluation of students' knowledge and skills as well as their development over time, or the use of tests before and after EFL students being exposed to specific content and activities that promote their cultural awareness.
- Due to the pivotal role that teachers play in the students' learning process, their inclusion in the investigation would be useful to approach the topic differently. In addition, it would extend the scope of the study and provide more precise and relevant data.
- The enlargement of the investigation of EFL students' cultural awareness to outside classrooms is another area for further research. The process of culture learning and comprehension is not limited to EFL classrooms; therefore, effective ways that help for its promotion outside classrooms are worth exploring.
- Implementing the present research to other regions in Algeria may not result in identical findings; thus, applying it to Universities in West Algeria could be very useful for the planning and conduction of possible future reforms.
- The present investigation is applicable for all foreign language learning. Therefore, investigating other specialties as well as institutions other than Universities can be an area for further research as well.

General Conclusion

The major aim of the present study was to investigate EFL learners' level of cultural awareness at the Universities of North Algeria. Their degree of knowledge about the concept and the impact the latter has on their academic level and achievements was surveyed and studied. More precisely, the study sought to gather information about EFL learners' perceptions of cultural awareness and the place culture teaching and learning takes at the University, as well as how they approach cultural diversity and their attitudes towards them. Moreover, the study aimed at attracting both EFL learners and teachers towards the importance of culture inclusion and cultural awareness development in EFL, and to regard language learning and culture learning as inseparable parts of a whole; i.e. they should not be dealt with in isolation from one another.

The first three chapters represent the theoretical part of the study. They provided an insight into the concept of cultural awareness and its position in the EFL field. Firstly, the literature review started by providing a background of the two notion of language and culture, clarifying the relationship between the two, and identifying and describing the position culture have gained in the field of FLT overtime. Then, major key terms were defined, the concept of cultural awareness was discussed from different perspectives, and light was shed on cultural awareness and ICC. Last, the relationship between cultural awareness and EFL was investigated via discussing the different techniques, approaches, and content to include into EFL classes for the purpose of incorporating culture into the foreign language teaching and learning and developing learners' cultural awareness. In order to be rounded off, the literature review provided an insight into the major obstacles teachers encounter while teaching culture in EFL classrooms.

For the study to be undertaken, a sample of two hundred fifty EFL master students' was worked with. The sample was extracted from a population from five different Universities of North Algeria. In order to collect data, the researcher used a questionnaire as a research tool. Taking into account the quantitative and qualitative findings, the present research work suggests what follows:

- Firstly, EFL master students at the Universities of North Algeria are not familiar with the concept of cultural awareness. Despite the fact that some of them have shown instances of comprehension, they still have not been able to define it or to associate it with the field of EFL. This resulted in rigidity towards and, in some

cases, a complete rejection of cultural otherness. To put it differently, EFL students' are not aware of the differences that exist between native and target cultures, they are not comfortable with cultural diversity, tend to approach cultural situations from their own culture's perspectives, and maintain judgmental and nonflexible opinions and attitudes towards what is not familiar to them.

- Secondly, EFL learners demonstrated instances of a really low degree of cultural awareness which is not limited to only one or two specific aspects of the foreign culture. In fact, their lack of cultural knowledge extends to a large and different number of aspects; punctuality, greeting, social distance, etc. However, they also showed a readiness to widen their cultural knowledge and to work on their culture-related skills after being faced with their lacks and needs and recognising their impact on their learning and communication.
- Thirdly, EFL students' unfamiliarity with cultural awareness is due to the fact that no, or really few, measures are taken at the Algerian Universities for the purpose of including culture into the classrooms, and culture teaching is not put on the same scale than language teaching. To put it differently, even though a number of cultural content and techniques are used in the EFL classroom of the Algerian Universities, culture teaching remains implicit; neither the reasons behind the use of those techniques nor the objectives behind teaching culture are stated or explained. Therefore, this prevents learners from having a clear perception of their needs in regards to cultural awareness, brings their attention away from its importance in the EFL pedagogy, and redirects their focus and efforts to learning other aspects such as grammar and vocabulary, which will certainly cause culture-related problems and communication breakdowns.
- Lastly, Universities' little consideration for the notion of cultural awareness, and EFL learners' unawareness of the significant role of this latter in their learning process result in serious damages in their academic level and achievement. EFL students with low degree of cultural awareness will, undoubtedly, be unequipped with the necessary knowledge and skill and will face numerous obstacles during their learning parcours and in real-life communication

In a nutshell, in consideration for the aforementioned quantitative and qualitative results, one can clearly say that the previously raised research questions (in the introduction of the study) have been answered. Moreover, one can say that the non-inclusion of the notion of cultural awareness to EFL learners' at some of the Universities of North Algeria results in

many difficulties that hinder learners' attitudes and performance, and integrating it into the EFL classroom would, certainly, have a direct and positive impact on students' learning, level and communication.

To conclude, we wish that the present study's findings and conclusion will open the path for additional research works in regards to the inclusion of culture as a central component in EFL, as well as to cross-cultural studies and communication, and that in order for the necessary and adequate reforms to be made in the Algerian foreign language Pedagogy.

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Appendix 01
Students' Questionnaire

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire which probes Master one & Two EFL students' degree of cultural awareness and the pivotal role this latter plays in FL teaching/ learning processes. Your contribution is important and your answers will be anonymous. Please, circle your answer(s), tick the right box (es) or complete with full statements if necessary.

Thank you in advance for your valuable time and help.

• Section One: Background Information

1. You are:

Level:

Master One

Master Two

University:

2. According to you what is the most important in learning English

- a. Knowing the target language (grammar and vocabulary)
 - b. Using language to communicate in common (native) contexts
 - c. Knowing the culture of the target language (literature and civilization)
 - d. Mastering native-like pronunciation
 - e. All of the above mentioned
- If another answer (please explain)

.....
.....

3. Which of the above mentioned skills is the least focused on by your teachers? And which one is the most focused on?

.....
.....
.....
.....

4. What is, to you, "cultural awareness"?

.....
.....
.....

.....

5. *In the table bellow, indicate which one(s) is considered to be part of society's culture?*

<i>Clothes</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Ideas</i>	<i>Language</i>
<i>Gestures</i>	<i>Beliefs</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Arts</i>	<i>Music</i>
<i>Literature</i>	<i>Civilization</i>	<i>Rituals</i>	<i>Attitudes</i>	<i>Interpretations</i>

6. *As an English student, are you aware of the culture of the language you are learning? Please circle your answer*

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Native</i> | <i>Foreign</i> |
| - <i>Yes, completely</i> | - <i>Yes, completely</i> |
| - <i>Somehow</i> | - <i>Somehow</i> |
| - <i>Not really</i> | - <i>Not really</i> |
| - <i>No</i> | - <i>No</i> |

7. *Do you face problems while communicating in English?*

Yes No

- *IN NATURAL SETTINGS, what hinders your effective communication?*
 - a. *Mispronunciation*
 - b. *Lack of vocabulary*
 - c. *Difficulties to know what is culturally appropriate or not*
 - d. *Lack of confidence*
 - e. *Some or all of them*

If your answer is the latter, please explain

.....

.....

.....

- *IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS, what are the problems you encounter while communicating in English?*
 - a. *Mispronunciation*
 - b. *Lack of vocabulary*
 - c. *Difficulties to know what is culturally appropriate or not*
 - d. *Lack of confidence*
 - e. *Some or all of them*

If your answer is the latter, please explain

.....

.....

.....

8. Say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<i>I can learn English without learning its culture</i>					
<i>While communicating, I refer only to my culture and do not take into consideration the target one</i>					
<i>Learning about other cultures cause the loss of my culture</i>					
<i>I have to learn the English language along with the Foreign cultures</i>					
<i>I am ready to adapt to peoples' different cultures</i>					
<i>Ignoring others' cultures may cause misunderstanding and embarrassing situations</i>					
<i>My culture should be imposed on my interlocutors in Order to preserve it</i>					
<i>I accept the differences between cultures and am eager to know them</i>					
<i>Focusing on all aspects of the foreign culture slows down my language learning process</i>					

9. Identify the cultural differences by associating them to people from four different cultural communities: UK, Japan, Germany, and United States of America. Please tick the appropriate answer(s)

Characteristics	UK	Japan	Germany	US
<i>Punctuality is put at a high priority; showing up late is considered to be very rude</i>			.	
<i>It is very common, and not considered rude when you ask peoples' age when you meet them for the first time</i>		.		
<i>Failing to make eye contact when someone is addressing you is considered to be offensive for your interlocutor</i>				.
<i>Discussing money and how much things cost is a strictly Taboo thing and seen as inappropriate</i>	.			
<i>Apologizing for everything at any moment; it is a part of peoples' everyday speech</i>	.			

- Which of the above-mentioned statements concord with your culture? Please comment

.....
.....
.....
.....

10. Do you feel the need to be introduced to courses about cultural aspects?

Yes

No

Section Two: Quick test

A. Please explain what is meant by the following expressions

1. He has his head in the clouds

.....

2. It is on its last legs

.....

3. They always have to put their two cents in

.....

4. Every cloud has a silver lining

.....

5. Of course he did, like father like son!

.....

B. Please examine the following situations and answer the related questions

1- You are in England for a vacation, your English pal invites you to have dinner at his place, and you arrive late; 20 minutes after the stated time.

• Did you detect any sign of inappropriateness?

Yes

No

• If you answer by “Yes”, explain your answer (in what way do you find it inappropriate?)

.....
.....
.....

2- During dinner, your pal says, with a large smile, “my friend’s bakery burned down last night. Now his business is toast”

- Did you find that your friend is rude because it is supposed to be a sad event or that he has a good sense of humor?
- Explain your answer (which part and in what way)?

.....
.....
.....

3- At the desert time, you found the plate original and classy, so you kindly asked from where they got it and how much it costs. The owner’s reaction was intriguing!

- Do you think the owner found that

Flattering

Rude

- Please, comment

.....
.....
.....

C. Please translate into Arabic or French what you understand from the following expressions

1. “Speak of the devil”

.....

2. “Once in a blue moon”

.....

3. “See eye to eye”

.....

4. “To cut corners”

.....

5. “You can’t judge a book by its cover”

.....

• **Section Three: Check- up Information**

D. Did you find the tasks difficult to answer? Please, explain!

.....
.....
.....

E. Do you consider yourself aware of the differences that exist between your culture and the foreign one? Please explain!

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Yes, completely | 3. Not really |
| 2. Somehow | 4. No |

.....
.....

F. Please, explain whether you think that The English courses you are following at the university sufficiently include the cultural aspects you need for an appropriate communication?

.....
.....

G. Any other comments or suggestions?

.....
.....

Thank you for your valuable time and contribution!

Abstract

The development of cultural awareness in foreign language education has been a main issue all along the last few decades, and its significance is constantly gaining interest and power. Thus, the major focus of the present study is to shed some light on the degree of cultural awareness of English as Foreign Language learners, as well as the role culture plays in foreign language communication. English language learners are required to learn about both their own and others' cultures, to be tolerant towards the divergences that exist in different cultural communities, and to adopt adequate attitudes in cross-cultural situations.

This acceptance and adaptation will ensure appropriateness and effectiveness while exchanging with people from foreign cultures and to avoid communication breakdowns with them. On these basis, the aim of this study is to investigate the degree of cultural awareness of Algerian Master students and the role it plays in their academic a results and achievements. Moreover, the study attracts learners and teachers' attention towards the positive impact of regarding culture as an integral component of foreign language learning on the process of acquisition, understanding, and communication. In order to achieve the aim of the present study, a questionnaire is presented to two hundred (250) students from five different Universities of North Algeria; University of Abou- Bakr Belkaid- Telemcen, University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis- Mostaghanem, University of Lunici Ali- Blida 2, University of Frères Mentouri- Constantine 1, University of Badji Mokhtar- Annaba. The obtained data cast light on Algerian Universities' little concern for cultural awareness, EFL learners' unawareness of the concept and the impact it has on their language learning process, and their unpreparedness for cross-cultural communication. On these accounts, a number of pedagogical recommendations are suggested in order to improve quality learning and communication.

Résumé

Le développement de la conscience culturelle dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères a été un enjeu majeur tout au long des dernières décennies, et son importance ne cesse de gagner en intérêt et en puissance. Ainsi, l'objectif principal de la présente étude est de faire la lumière sur le degré de sensibilisation culturelle des apprenants de l'anglais comme langue étrangère, ainsi que sur le rôle que joue la culture dans la communication en langue étrangère. Les apprenants de langue anglaise sont tenus d'apprendre à la fois leur propre culture et celle des autres, d'être tolérant envers les divergences qui existent dans les différentes communautés culturelles et d'adopter des attitudes adéquates dans des situations interculturelles. Cette acceptation et cette adaptation assureront la pertinence et l'efficacité des échanges avec des personnes de cultures étrangères et éviteront les ruptures de communication avec elles. Sur ces bases, l'objectif de cette étude est d'étudier le degré de conscience culturelle des étudiants algériens en Master et le rôle qu'elle joue dans leurs résultats et réalisations académiques. De plus, l'étude attire l'attention des apprenants et des enseignants sur l'impact positif de considérer la culture comme une partie intégrante de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères sur le processus d'acquisition, de compréhension et de communication. Afin d'atteindre l'objectif de la présente étude, un questionnaire est présenté à deux cent cinquante (250) étudiants de cinq Universités différentes du Nord Algérien; Université d'Abou-Bakr Belkaid-Telemcen, Université d'Abdelhamid Ibn Badis-Mostaghanem, Université de Lunici Ali-Blida², Université des Frères Mentouri-Constantine¹, et Université de Badji Mokhtar-Annaba. Les données obtenues mettent en lumière le peu d'intérêt des universités algériennes pour la sensibilisation culturelle, la méconnaissance du concept et de l'impact qu'il a sur leur processus d'apprentissage des langues, et leur manque de préparation la communication interculturelle. Sur ces comptes, un certain nombre de recommandations pédagogiques sont suggérées afin d'améliorer la qualité de l'apprentissage et de la communication.

ملخص

الاهتمام والقوة باستمرار وبالتالي، فإن التركيز نكتسب وأهميته الماضية، القليلة العقود طوال رئيسية قضية الأجنبية اللغات تعليم في الثقافي تطوير الوعي لقد كان باللغة التواصل في الثقافة تلعبه الدور الذي إلى بالإضافة أجنبية، كلغة للغة الإنجليزية الضوء على درجة الوعي الثقافي إلقاء بعض الرئيسي للدراسة الحالية هو الثقافية المختلفة ، المجتمعات في الموجودة الاختلافات تجاه متسامحين يكونوا أن و الآخرين، وثقافات ثقافتهم على التعرف الإنجليزية اللغة متعلمي من يُطلب. الأجنبية أثناء التبادل مع أشخاص من ثقافات أجنبية الفعالية و الملائمة والتكيف القبول سيضمن هذا. الثقافات المواقف متعددة في مناسبة مواقف يتبنوا وأن الجزائريين والدور الماستر الثقافي لطالب الوعي على هذا الأساس ، فإن الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو مسح درجة. وتجنب انقطاع الاتصال معهم تعلم من يتجزأ ال مكونا باعتبارها للثقافة التأثير الإيجابي نحو والمعلمين المتعلمين انتباه الدراسة تجذب على ذلك، علاوة. الأكاديمية وإنجازاتهم في نتائجهم الذي تلعبه تعليم في من أجل تحقيق هدف الدراسة الحالية ، يُفترض أنه إذا تم تضمين فكرة الوعي الثقافي. الأجنبية في عملية الاكتساب والفهم والتواصل للغ مستوى. مهاراتهم تحسين و فيتعلمهم، الثقافة بأهمية على دراية الإنجليزية للغة الإنجليزية اللغة متعلمي سيجعل هذا فإن الجزائرية، الجامعات في الأجنبية اللغات في مختلفة جامعات خمس طالبا من 250 إلى واختبار مقدم الفرضية على المحك باستخدام استبيان تموضع. الاتصال عملية ونقلها، وتسهيل اللغة اكتساب جامعة -1 قسنطينة -منتوري جامعة-0 البلدية -علي لونيبي جامعة- مستغانم- الحميد بن باديس عبد جامعة- تلمسان- أبو بكر بلقايد شمال الجزائر ؛ جامعة اللغة متعلمي وعي وعدم الثقافي، بالوعي الضئيل تلقي البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها الضوء على اهتمام الجامعات الجزائرية. عنابة-باجي مختار عدد من التوصيات اقتراح الحسابات، تم في هذه الثقافات استعدادهم للتواصل بين اللغة لديهم، وعدم تعلم عملية على وتأثيره بالمفهوم أجنبية كلغة الإنجليزية جودة التعلم والتواصل أجل تحسين التربوية من

