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**Investigating the Link between Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural
Communicative Competence in EFL Context. Case Study: Second Year LMD
Students of English, University 08 Mai 1945 Guelma**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master's Degree in Language and Culture**

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DEDICATION

All praise and thanks are due to Allah (SWT) Without His blessings, this achievement would not have been possible. I dedicate this humble work

To my parents, thank you for your unwavering support and unconditional love.

You are my foundation.

To My beloved Siblings and Brother-in-Law, my cheerleaders. I'm forever grateful for your presence in my life.

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To Myself, for surviving, growing, and thriving.

For every challenge I faced, every tear I shed, and every moment I kept going when giving up seemed easier.

To you, the one reading this

May you find something here, a spark of courage or comfort within these pages.

And finally, **To every voice that stands for justice and freedom...** Free Palestine.

AOUAMRI Malak

DEDICATION

In the name of Allah the most gracious and merciful, the most compassionate, I dedicate this humble work to my mother, the light of my darkest days and the strength behind every step I take. Her love, sacrifices and belief in me have carried me through every challenge. Words cannot express how deeply grateful I am to have her as my guide and support. This accomplishment is hers more than I believe it is mine. To my dear friends Samoura, Joujou, Meryoumi, Bella, Wisso and Khawla each one of you holds a special place in my heart; thank you for being part of my life. To my thesis partner thanks for playing a role in this exceptional experience, I wish you all the best in your future life. To my precious cousins who were there always and supported me in every challenge, treated me like their little sister and helped me when I felt weak; thank you all for being part of this beautiful journey.

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ABSTRACT

The major aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among EFL students, through examining the ways individuals with different levels of EI handle intercultural communication challenges. To achieve this, the researchers used a quasi-experimental study where a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Classroom observations were conducted with three randomly selected groups of second-year LMD students during their Oral Expression sessions at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 08 Mai 1945 – Guelma, in order to examine how emotional and intercultural skills appear in real communication contexts. In addition, a semi-structured questionnaire was administered to the same population in order to collect their perceptions and experiences. Throughout the study, the focus was also on how emotional cues such as facial expressions, body language, and differing viewpoints are understood and responded to in intercultural situations. Results revealed that students recognized the importance of empathy, self-regulation, and openness for building successful intercultural relationships not only for managing emotions.

Keywords : Emotional Intelligence, Intercultural Communicative Competence, EFL Classroom.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Plutchik's (1980) psychoevolutionary theory of basic emotions.....	8
Figure 2.1: Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram 1997).....	42
Figure 2.2: Process Model of ICC (Deardorff, 2006).....	45
Figure 2.4: Intercultural Awareness Model (ICA) (Baker, 2011).....	47

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Distinguishing Between Low and High EI Characteristics.....	20
Table 1.2: Goleman's 5 Components of EI.....	26
Table 3.1: The Observation Checklists.....	69
Table 3.2: EI Indicators.....	80
Table 3.3: ICC Components.....	85
Table 3.4: The link between EI and ICC.....	90
Table 4.1: Students' Gender.....	99
Table 4.2: Students' Years of Studying English.....	100
Table 4.3: Students' English Language Mastery Level.....	100
Table 4.4: Students' Decision to Study English.....	101
Table 4.5: Students' Satisfaction with Studying English.....	102
Table 4.6: Students' Prior Awareness of Emotional Intelligence.....	102
Table 4.7: EI & Healthy Relationships.....	105
Table 4.8: Students' Beliefs about EI Being Inborn or Learned.....	106
Table 4.9: Acknowledging Emotions.....	108
Table 4.10: Using EI in Decision-Making.....	109
Table 4.11: Managing Emotions in Difficult Moments.....	110
Table 4.12: Strategies Used in Emotional Decision-Making.....	111

Table 4.13: EI in Interpersonal Conflicts.....	112
Table 4.14: Traits that Define a Successful Person.....	113
Table 4.15: Key Characteristics of Emotional Intelligence.....	115
Table 4.16: Relationship Between Linguistic and Intercultural Competence.....	116
Table 4.17: Perceptions of Culturally Inclusive Lessons.....	118
Table 4.18: Understanding of Intercultural Communicative Competence	119
Table 4.19: Frequency of Cultural Discussions in Class.....	122
Table 4.20: Perceived Benefits of Discussing Culture in the Classroom.....	123
Table 4.21: Reactions to Intercultural Misunderstandings.....	124
Table 4.22: Exposure to Foreign Cultures Outside the Classroom.....	124
Table 4.23: Frequency of Interaction with Foreigners or Other Cultures.....	125
Table 4.24: Feelings When Interacting with Different Cultures.....	127
Table 4.25: Most Challenging Cultural Differences Encountered.....	127
Table 4.26: Attitudes Toward Cultural Diversity.....	128
Table 4.27: Cultural Aspects Not Preferred in the EFL Classroom.....	129
Table 4.28: Views on the Influence of EI in Intercultural Communication.....	131
Table 4.29: Typical Reactions to Intercultural Misunderstandings.....	132
Table 4.30: How EI Facilitates Intercultural Communication.....	133
Table 4.31: Need to Develop Emotional Skills for Intercultural Success.....	136
Table 4.32: Best Approaches to Develop EI and ICC.....	137

Table 4.33: Managing Emotions in Online Intercultural Communication.....138

Table 4.34: Summary of Students' Overall Understanding of the EI–ICC Relationship.....139

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA: American Psychological Association

CC: Communicative competence.

CQ: Cultural Intelligence

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

EI: Emotional Intelligence.

EQ: Emotional Quotient.

FL: Foreign Language.

IC: Intercultural Communication.

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence.

IQ: Intelligence Quotient.

SI: Social Intelligence.

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

CONTENTS

Dedication I.....	i
Dedication II.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
List of Figures	v
List of Tables	vi
List of Abbreviations.....	vii
CONTENTS.....	viii
General Introduction.....	1
1. Statement of the Problem.....	1
2. Aims of the Study.....	2
3. Research Questions.....	2
5. Research Methodology and Design.....	2
a. Research Method.....	2
b. Population of the Study.....	2
c. Research Tools.....	3
6. Structure of the Dissertation.....	3

CHAPTER ONE: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Inroduction.....	6
1.1. Emotions: General Definition	6
1.2. Types of Emotions.....	7
1.3. Theories of Human Emotions.....	8
1.4. The Emergence of EI as a Distinct Psychological: Definition and Conceptual Understanding of EI.....	11
1.5. Models of EI.....	13
1.5.1. Salovey & Mayer’s Ability Model.....	14
1.5.2. Bar-On’s Trait Model Model.....	15
1.5.3. Goleman’s Mixed	16
1.5.4. Trait model.....	18
1.6. Differentiating between High vs Low EI.....	19
1.7. Emotional Intelligence and EFL Learning	21
1.8. EI and other Types of Intelligence.....	23
1.9. Components and Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence.....	25
1.10. Challenges of EI	28
Conclusion.....	32

CHAPTER TWO: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Introduction.....	35
2.1. Definition of the Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	35
2.2 Communicative Competence VS Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	38
2.3. Importance of ICC in EFL Classrooms.....	39
2.4. Evolution of ICC and its Models.....	41
2.4.1. Byram’s Model.....	41
2.4.2. Deardorff’s Process Model.....	42
2.4.3. Baker Model of ICA.....	47
2.5. Key Components of ICC.....	48
2.6. Promoting ICC.....	50
2.6.1. Teachers' Role in Promoting ICC.....	50
2.6.2. Techniques of Teaching ICC in the Classroom.....	51
2.7. Assessment of ICC.....	54
2.7.1. Challenges of Assessing ICC.....	55
2.7.2. Formats of Assessing ICC.....	56
2.7.3. External Tests for Assessing Intercultural Competence.....	58
2.8. Impact of Social Media on ICC.....	60

2.9. Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	61
Conclusion.....	63

CHAPTER THREE: THE ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATION

Introduction.....	65
3.1. Methodology and Data Collection Tools.....	65
3.2. Population and Sampling.....	66
3.3. Administration of Classroom Observation	66
3.3.1. Classroom Observation Questions.....	71
3.4. Analysis of the Observation	75
3.5. Summary of the Observation results.....	94
Conclusion.....	94

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction.....	97
4.1. Means of Data Collection	97
4.2. Population of the Study.....	98
4.3. Results' Analysis	99
4.4. Summary of Results from Students' Questionnaire	142
Conclusion.....	143
GENERAL CONCLUSION.....	143

1. Pedagogical Implications.....	145
2. Limitation of the Study.....	150
3. Suggestions for Further Research.....	151
References.....	152

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Résumé

ملخص

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The complex field of intercultural communication (IC) faces obstacles as well as opportunities as an outcome of globalization. In the contemporary global landscape, intercultural communication skills are crucial for achieving success in personal, professional, and academic spheres. It is a concept associated with the psychomotor skills necessary for productive interaction with people from other cultures. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) makes an individual capable of interacting with others in a multicultural environment, or even tolerant and respectful to distinct mindsets. This means that the components of cultural knowledge and the relatively stable psychological and activity-related characteristics of the individual, such as the ability to perceive, and interpret external contents add value to successful interactions. A person who embraces a positive attitude towards other people from different cultures, and expresses the need to become included, manifests behaviors that foster mutual understanding among people with different convictions; this person is assumed as emotionally intelligent.

1. Statement of the Problem

In today's interconnected world, navigating intercultural communicative competence is vital especially in EFL classrooms. Where students are increasingly required to interact across cultural boundaries. However, it is often challenging due to emotional and cultural complexities and intercultural misunderstandings. EI and ICC are both critical for effective cross-cultural interactions, yet the relationship between these two constructs remains underexplored. While existing research has addressed them individually, there is limited understanding of how emotional awareness supports intercultural. This study aims to examine the relationship between EI and ICC among EFL learners, contributing to a better understanding of how these competencies affect one another in intercultural contexts.

2. Aims of the Study

This study aims to investigate EFL students' perceptions of the role of emotional intelligence in intercultural communication, and identify how cultural background and prior experiences shape students' views on emotional intelligence in intercultural settings. Also, provide a framework for understanding the interplay between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competences in fostering effective cross-cultural interactions.

3. Research Questions

This study seeks to understand and to answer the following questions:

- What is the relationship between emotional intelligence and the development of intercultural communicative competence among EFL students?
- What are the perceptions of EFL students regarding the role of emotional intelligence in their intercultural communication experiences?
- In what ways do students' cultural backgrounds and prior experiences influence their perceptions of emotional intelligence in intercultural contexts?

4. Research Methodology and Design

a. Research Method

This research adopts a quasi-experimental study through a descriptive mixed method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence among EFL students. Using classroom observation and a semi structured questionnaire.

b. Population of the Study

The population of the study is represented by second year EFL students consisting of 256 second-year EFL students at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8

Mai 1945 – Guelma. The sample includes 75 students distributed across three groups out of six; these students are already familiar with the main terms used in the research because of the previous courses they encountered such as Oral Expression, Literature, and Civilization. The reason behind choosing this sample is because they are at an intermediate stage in their studies, actively engaging with both linguistic and cultural content. They also represent the largest group in the population, making the sample more representative. The same students participated in both the observation and the questionnaire, allowing them to respond based on what they had experienced during the observation sessions.

c. Research Tools

The data gathering tools used in this research are a classroom observation as a primary data-gathering tool, to observe real-life examples of emotional and intercultural communication during classroom activities through understand how EI & ICC interact in real classroom settings. The second tool is a students' questionnaire that seeks to explore students' perceptions, beliefs, and self-reported experiences in relation to EI, ICC, and perceptions of the relationships between both.

5. Structure of Dissertation

The present dissertation is composed of three main chapter, in addition to a general introduction and a general conclusion. The General Introduction presents the background of the study. Meanwhile, Chapter One is devoted to the theoretical and conceptual foundations of EI. It provides definitions from key scholars, discusses major theories, outlines the core components of EI and highlights its role in communication, particularly in academic and social settings.

Chapter Two focuses on ICC. It introduces major definitions and models as it explains the importance of ICC in EFL contexts. This chapter also discusses the theoretical connection between EI and ICC, providing a framework for understanding their potential relationship.

Whereas, the practical part is composed of two chapters, chapter three devoted to the classroom observation and chapter four devoted to administration and analysis of questionnaire result. The two chapters include both the analysis of the mixed-format, the interpretation of classroom observation findings and the analyses of the questionnaire, and end with the General Conclusion that summarizes the key results of the study and discusses their pedagogical implications. It also outlines the main limitations encountered during the research and offers suggestions for future investigations in the field.

CHAPTER ONE: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Inroduction.....	6
1.1. Emotions: General Definition	6
1.2. Types of Emotions.....	7
1.3. Theories of Human Emotions.....	8
1.4. The Emergence of EI as a Distinct Psychological: Definition and Conceptual Understanding of EI.....	11
1.5. Models of EI.....	13
1.5.1. Salovey & Mayer’s Ability Model.....	14
1.5.2. Bar-On’s Trait Model Model.....	15
1.5.3. Goleman’s Mixed	16
1.5.4. Trait model.....	18
1.6. Differentiating between High vs Low EI.....	19
1.7. Emotional Intelligence and EFL Learning	21
1.8. EI and other Types of Intelligence.....	23
1.9. Components and Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence.....	25
1.10. Challenges of EI	28
Conclusion.....	32

Introduction

Emotions play a vital role in shaping human behavior especially by influencing how individuals feel and react. Historically perceived as disruptive to rational thinking, emotions now are rather recognized as fundamental to different aspects of life. This chapter will be providing an in-depth exploration of EI as a psychological construct that integrates emotional awareness with cognitive processing. EI will be compared to other intelligences, such as IQ and cultural intellect, after outlining its fundamental models by Salovey and Mayer, Goleman, and Bar-On. Additionally, EI will be linked to education and learning foreign languages, highlighting its significance for classroom achievement, maintaining motivation as well as emotional regulation. At the end, this chapter will discuss various ethical issues and challenges faced in the field of EI, including the roles of nature vs. nurture.

1.1. Definition of Emotions

Emotions, according to the American Psychological Association (APA), are a complex pattern of reactions made up of behavioral, physiological, and experiential components that help people cope with significant events in their lives. The kind of emotion, such as fear or embarrassment, depends on the importance attached to the event. For instance, fear arises when a situation is perceived as frightening, but shame arises in response to social rejection. Emotions are distinct from other feelings because they always include an interaction, whether explicit or implicit, with the environment.

Previously, psychologists believed emotions to be disruptive forces that interfere with logical action (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999). It was widely accepted that emotions are primitive urges that need to be controlled or repressed. People assumed that they are raw, instinctual forces that endanger behavior and reason in society. Yet, traditions place a strong emphasis on controlling or repressing emotions in order to conform to social standards, morality, or rationality.

Nowadays, psychologists are well aware of the role emotions play in several areas of human behavior, including beneficial goals' setting, intentional actions, and rational decision-making (Mellers, 2000; Loewenstein et al., 2001). This idea was defended by Bechara et al. (1997) who claimed that our emotions influence most of our decisions, often without our knowledge.

From another perspective, emotions are seen as a whole-body phenomenon that involves loosely-coupled changes in the domains of subjective experience, behavior, and central and peripheral physiology (Mauss et al., 2005). As if it draws attention to the complex interplay between our ideas, deeds, and physical reactions, serving as a reminder that emotional health necessitates a comprehensive strategy that recognizes the connection between the mind and the body.

1.2.Types of Human Emotions

Psychologists classified emotions into various categories based on their characteristics, origins and functions. Paul Ekman (1999) identified six universal emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, and disgust. These feelings are conceptualized as innate and biologically fixed since they are known in other cultures as well. Later on, Ekman added to his list feelings like pride, shame, embarrassment, and excitement (Ekman, 2003, p. 78). Additionally, in the research conducted by Ekman, he suggested that these feelings are practically essential to human life, because they help humans to react to challenges posed by their environments. From another perspective, there is the psychologist Plutchik (1980) who proposed a more complex view of emotion's types, identifying eight primary emotions: joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation (p. 23). These emotions are arranged in pairs of opposites, such as joy versus sadness and fear versus anger. In addition, feelings can combine to create more complicated emotional states. For instance, disappointment arises from sadness and surprise, but love arises from a mix of joy and trust (Plutchik, 2001, p. 56). Alternatively, the feeling of

aggression that results from the feeling of anger mixed with the expectation of action. Moreover, the whole idea is called Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions.

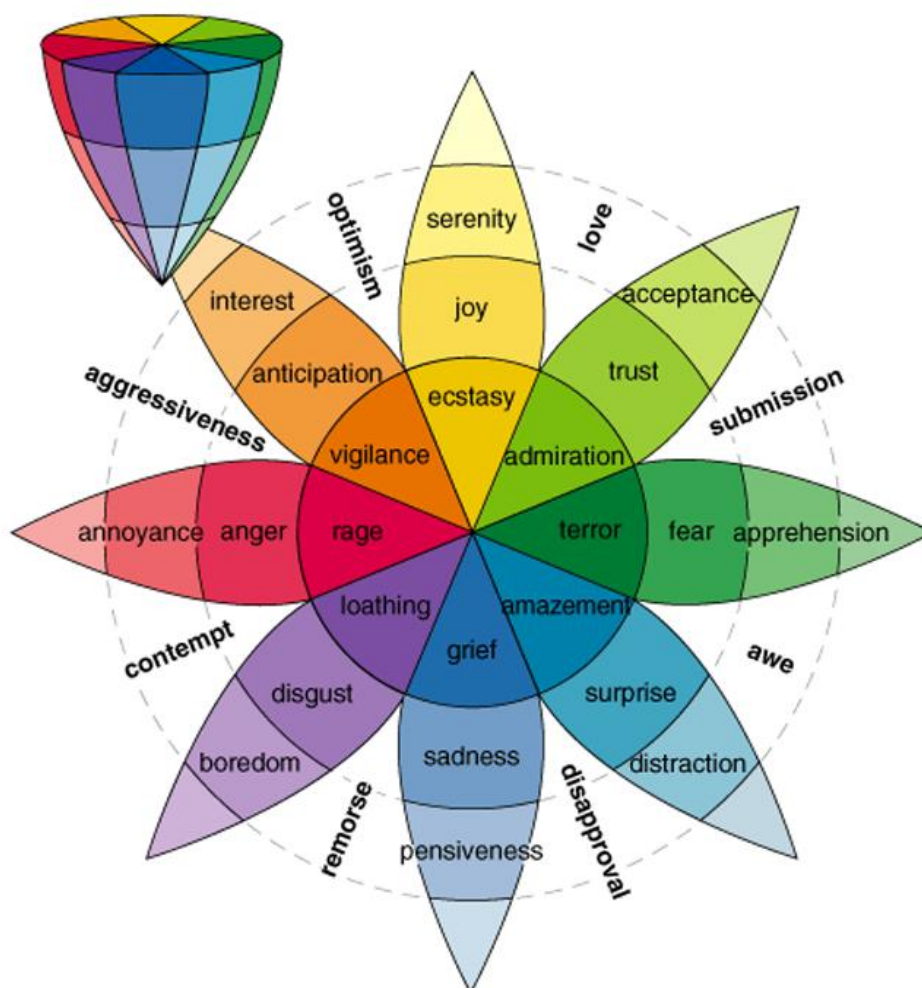


Figure.1.1. Plutchik's (1980) psychoevolutionary theory of basic emotions has ten postulates.

Not only that emotions are classified by Richard Lazarus (1991) according to cognitive evaluations, which determine how a person perceives a situation. He made a distinction between primary emotions, which are immediate and instinctive (e.g., fear and happiness), and secondary emotions, which are shaped by personal experiences and social influences (e.g., guilt and pride). This perspective emphasizes the role of cognition in emotional responses, suggesting that emotions are not only biological but also influenced by cognitive processes.

1.3. Theories of Human Emotions

Emotions are integral to the human experience, influencing decision-making, behavior, and interpersonal relationships. Theorists such as Paul Ekman, Joseph LeDoux, and Antonio Damasio agree that emotions have a biological basis: the amygdala (part of the limbic system of the brain) plays a large role in emotions; it is activated before any direct involvement of the cerebral cortex (where memory, awareness, and conscious “thinking” take place). Although different academics make most of the proposed theories, they share some similarities between each other.

1.3.1. Evolutionary Theory of Emotion

Darwin's principle work, *Emotions in Man and Animals*, was crucial for handling a strong perspective about emotions and how they can be helpful for surviving back at that time. Darwin addressed how emotions could have evolved to supplement his theory of natural selection, extending it from the development of physical structures and processes to mental and behavioral processes. Darwin's study (1872) of emotions emphasized how feelings and their expressions, such as smiling when happy, or frowning when upset, are not purposed but evolved for survival of human beings and even among animals. He believed that emotions and their expressions of fear, anger, and happiness are not only human, but also universal and shared across cultures and species, demonstrating the evolutionary nature of emotions. Moreover, he suggested three main ideas about how emotions work: first, some expressions, like fear or anger, become habits because they were helpful in the past; second, opposite emotions, like happiness and sadness, often have opposite expressions; and third, some emotional responses happen automatically, without us thinking about them.

1.3.2. James-Lange Theory of Emotion

Proposed independently by the psychologist William James, later developed by the physiologist Carl Lange. James (1884) proposed that bodily sensations are prior to feelings and not the other way around. The theory proposes that emotions occur because of physiological reactions to events. A similar hypothesis that emphasized the importance of physical responses in emotions was suggested by Carl Lange in 1885. Then James-Lange proposed that the human brain firstly notices physiological and behavior changes and then it uses the observation of these changes to label the emotion as a reaction. For instance, somebody sees a bear (event), his heart races (physiological response), and then s/he feels fear (emotion); so briefly it is more likely to happen this way: Event → Physiological Response → Emotion.

1.3.3. Cannon-Bard Theory

The Cannon-Bard theory also known as the Thalamic theory of emotion and it is a physiological explanation of emotions developed by Walter Cannon (with contributions from Philip Bard). This theory appeared (1927) as a rejection to James-Lange theory claiming that emotions do not occur as a result of physiological changes, instead it suggested that emotions are physiological responses that occur simultaneously and independently. This theory states that the lower part of the brain, what neurologists call the thalamus, controls the emotional experiences. Meanwhile, the higher part of the brain, the cortex, controls emotional expressions; which means that they occur at the same time but independently by separating emotional and physical processes.

Such as: Event → Simultaneous Physiological Response + Emotion.

1.3.4. Schachter-Singer Theory

The Schachter-Singer Theory of Emotion, also known as the Two-Factor Theory, Schachter and Singer (1962) believed that the interaction of physiological arousal and cognitive

interpretation factors may produce emotions. In particular, if a person feels physiological arousal without having an explanation, the person will look to the environment for cues to label their emotions and classify their emotional state. In contrast, if a person has a suitable explanation for their arousal, they are less likely to seek cues in the environment to label their emotion. To examine their theories, Schachter and Singer performed an experiment in which participants received an injection of either epinephrine (the chemical that produces physiological arousal) or a placebo. Participants who received epinephrine included one group who were told accurately about the side effects, one group that had been told misleading information and one group that were told nothing at all and thus assumed they did not have any side effects. Afterwards, all participants interacted with a confederate that displayed either euphoric or angry behavior. The findings revealed that participants who did not know the cause of their physiological arousal (the injection of epinephrine) or were misinformed about it were more likely to imitate the emotional behavior of the confederate. This lends further evidence that cognitive meaning and representation of some level exists in the experience of emotions. In essence, Schachter and Singer concluded that "given a state of physiological arousal for which an individual has no immediate explanation, he will 'label' this state and describe his feelings in terms of the cognitions available to him" (Schachter & Singer, 1962, p. 381). This finding emphasizes the importance of both physiological and cognitive factors in the formation of emotional experiences.

1.4. Emotional Intelligence as a Psychological Construct

Before examining the concept of EI in isolation, it is essential to consider its composition, which consists of two main components, which are emotion and intelligence. Although psychologists have different definitions for emotion, they all agree that emotions are psychophysiological responses to environmental stimuli (Lazarus, 1991; Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2002; Frijda & Mesquita, 1994). Whereas, intelligence is a very broad term that reflects

individuals' capability to reason, plan, and solve problems. Accordingly, Emotional intelligence is a part of intelligence that was studied since the last century. However, even before the concept of "emotional intelligence" being established, emotions were typically viewed as distinct from intelligence and were frequently regarded less significant in cognitive processes.

Building on the previous point, it is essential to note that EI was later renamed emotional quotient (EQ). According to Peter Salovey and John Mayer, the first two psychologist-researchers to employ the term "emotional intelligence" in a 1990-article, their fundamental concept actually centers on the interconnected skills that may enable a person in managing, recognizing, understanding, and interpreting their own emotions as well as those of others. In addition, their ability model relies on the person's capacity to interpret emotional information and to use it to navigate the social environment (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

In another definition, Freedman (1998) described EI as "a way of recognizing, understanding, and choosing how we think, feel, and act. It shapes our interactions with others and our understanding of ourselves. It defines how and what we learn; it allows us to set priorities; it determines the majority of our daily actions. Research suggests it is responsible for as much as 80% of the successes in our lives." (p. 20). This idea suggests that our ability to recognize, understand, and manage our emotions influences how we relate to others, make decisions, and learn. Essentially, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in our personal and professional success, potentially accounting for up to 80% of our achievements. What distinguishes this definition from the previous one is that Freeman's perspective of EI is that it is more outcome-oriented, stressing its role in shaping life experiences, whereas Salovey and Mayer focused on emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability that aids emotional processing and decision-making.

Moreover, from the existing body of literature about EI definitions, there is Bar-On and James Parker who considered EI as a general construct encompassing, emotional, personal, and social abilities that influence one's overall capability to effectively cope with environmental demands and pressures (Bar-On et al., 2000). They explained emotional intelligence in terms of emotional and social abilities that provide people with the capability to understand and most importantly to successfully interact with other members of society. Their work was considerably expanded by Goleman who identified that IQ is actually less important for success in life and work than EQ. Also viewed EI as a person's ability to manage his/her feelings so that those feelings are expressed appropriately and effectively.

Expanding on this idea, Stein and Book (2006) built upon Bar-On's model and explicitly emphasized EI as a broad construct that affects how we take control of both our internal emotional states and our external social relationships. Like Bar-On, they highlighted coping mechanisms, interpersonal effectiveness, and social functionality as core to emotional intelligence. This definition also aligns with Goleman's (1998) position that emotional intelligence is more crucial than IQ for real-world success, particularly in personal well-being and workplace setting. The focus is not only on understanding emotion, it is more about managing it to communicate effectively, empathize it, and most importantly motivate oneself and others.

1.5. Models of EI

Emotional intelligence turned out to be progressively mainstream as a measure for distinguishing individuals who are successful in life, and as an instrument for reaching this success. In some situations, people are successful not because of their knowledge but rather because of their ability to engage with others socially and emotionally through the use of a charming temperament in their interactions (St.Clair, 2004). This helps to explain why two people with similar IQs may achieve unthinkable different levels of success in life (Goleman,

1998). Recent studies focused on the effects of EI on social and academic skills, the connection to mental health, and the best ways to teach EI skills. The theoretical framework of emotional intelligence and a scientifically sound method of testing it still require significant improvements.

Research done in the field of EI suggests four distinct models: ability model, mixed model, Bar-On model and trait model. These models are described in terms of interrelated abilities and competencies, starting with:

1.5.1. Salovey-Mayer's Model

Also called the ability model or even the four-branch model, which characterizes EI as the capacity to comprehend and regulate our own feelings as well as those of others and of communities. In addition, Mayer and Salovey (1990) claimed that EI encompasses the following: the capacity to achieve and access feelings; the awareness and manifestation of emotions; the ability to be cognizant of "our emotions and emotional knowledge"; and the ability to control and regulate our emotions in order to elevate "emotional and intellectual growth" (p. 189). As well as suggesting this model to contain four main capabilities, which were perception, assimilation, understanding and regulation of emotions.

- **Perceiving Emotions**

This branch is the first step to spot emotions and it refers to the human's capacity to identify accurately how you, and those around you, are feeling and your ability to express these feelings. This process requires the skills to read other's facial expressions and to detect and decode signals; it is related also to the individual's ability to identify their feelings and others through facial expressions and body language (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

- **Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought**

Also refers to assimilation and ways to influence cognitive processes. Emotions can prioritize thinking, direct attention, and improve decision-making. That is to say, emotions help prioritize what one pays attention and reacts to respond emotionally to things that get one's attention (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

- **Understanding Emotions**

The emotions humans perceive may carry a wide variety of meanings. Even emotions have their own language, and the ability to understand this language means that you can determine why you feel the way a person behaves and what will happen next in his/her conduct. Knowing emotions entails being able to comprehend how a person may experience distinct emotions under various circumstances (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

- **Managing Emotions**

Effective emotion management is a crucial branch of EI. Important components of emotional management and emotional maturity include controlling emotions, reacting correctly, and responding to others' feelings. That is to say, managing emotions with intelligence, interacting with positive and constructive emotions, and keeping an eye on emotional responses (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004)

1.5.2. Bar-On Model

An alternative model known as Bar-On emerged in 1997 in contrast to Mayer and Salovey's idea of emotional intelligence. This model does not exclusively link emotional intelligence to either intelligence or emotions. Instead, according to this model, EI must encompass a wide variety of "personality traits that might predict the success in everyday and professional domains" (Neubauer & Freudenthaler, 2005). It describes EI as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with

environmental demands and pressures" (p. 40). Not only that, but also tries to look for the answer why some people have better probability of reaching success than others.

According to the Bar-On model, EI requires a strong social aspect in addition to its emotional component instead of just giving much importance to cognitive processes. This social element comprises interpersonal skills, flexibility, and stress management in relation to the social context. The term "emotional-social intelligence" is thus created, which is described as "a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills, and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands" (Bar-On, 2006, p. 14). Dividing Bar-on main characteristics into five different groups comprising:

- Intrapersonal skills are formed by self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-actualization and independence. It is connected with internal self and everything within it.
- Interpersonal skills consist of empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships.
- Adaptability comprises problem solving, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships.
- Stress management includes stress tolerance and impulse control.
- General mood covers happiness and optimism (Schulze & Roberts, 2005).

1.5.3. Daniel Goleman's Model

Another framework for emotional intelligence is Goleman's mixed model, expanded on Mayer and Salovey's work by introducing a more holistic model of EI that includes both emotional and social competencies. He was inspired to write "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ," a book that would achieve literary success, after pursuing an essay

on reasoning by Mayer and Salovey. Goleman provides a thorough overview of EI and its social importance in the book and his model became popular because of his interesting perception about EI. The term ‘mixed’ from his mixed model is described as the combination of both emotional and cognitive abilities, to provide a comprehensive understanding of EI. He argued that these traits are essential for personal and professional success, directly linking them to the concept of emotional-social intelligence. This implies that it gathers the skills and competencies that individuals are aware of and can actively develop, such as emotional regulation, or emotional awareness. In contrast, non-cognitive traits (like motivation, empathy, and social skills), which influence behavior but do not directly reflect learned or developed skills (Goleman, 1995). Moreover, this model reflects how individual’s potential for mastering the skills or competencies that determine the effectiveness to manage their feelings and understand others as well. The model suggests four areas of emotional intelligence divided into two categories intrapersonal and interpersonal, each competency is a learned ability that contributes to academic and career performance. And divided those competencies as represented; self-awareness, self-management, empathy, motivation and social skills. In essence, Daniel Goleman’s Mixed Model of EI integrates both cognitive abilities and personality traits, emphasizing how EI contributes to leadership and workplace success. Unlike purely cognitive models, Goleman’s approach blends those emotional competencies, social skills, and motivational factors, suggesting that EI can be developed through learning and experience as well.

In addition to those highlighted skills, Goleman thought that people who had a healthy mix of emotional and intellectual intelligence fared well in life. And his claim from the title of the book emphasizing that EI matters more than IQ especially in the business field, this assertion became the focal point of intense deliberation generating a widespread controversy among scholars. Among them, Salovey et.al (2008), they stated that EI is currently ‘used in too all-inclusive a

fashion and in too many different ways' ; i.e., the term EI is applied too broadly in business, and can be applied in different fields not necessarily in that one. They also contended that EI should be seen as a distinct cognitive ability rather than a substitute for IQ. Locke (2005) a cognitive psychologist, criticized Goleman for misrepresenting the role of intelligence by downplaying the importance of IQ in professional and academic success. Locke argued that while emotions are important, cognitive intelligence remains the primary factor in complex reasoning, decision-making, and technical expertise.

1.5.4. Trait Model

According to Petrides and Mavroveli (2018), EI is a stable personality trait rather than a cognitive ability or a learned skill. It focuses on how individuals perceive, regulate, and express their emotions in everyday life. According to this model, EI is embedded within a person's personality framework, meaning it influences behavior, social interactions, and emotional well-being in a consistent manner.

Even though trait EI is composed of 15 personal items such as Self-motivation, Social-awareness, Stress management....etc. They are grounded into the following four main factors. First, **well-being** indicates an individual's general emotional state, confidence, and pleasure with life. It assesses their capacity to properly manage emotions and have a good attitude. When stating **self-control**, it is important to know that it involves managing stress, impulsive control, and emotional regulation. As well as affecting one's capacity for emotional fortitude and composure under pressure. The third factor which is **emotionality**, that has to do with emotional expression with outsiders, awareness which might be found in the self, and comprehension. Its main job is to assess a person's capacity for emotional connection, as well as expression, and most importantly formation of deep connections. Moreover, **sociability** that emphasizes assertiveness and puts a stress on interpersonal skills, and the capacity to shape social

relationships. It is an essential communication skill in general, that appears usually in society when dealing with different people.

As noted by Petrides (2011), a person is not automatically classified as successful based on a single set of characteristics or of EI abilities, means that the trait EI model and its major factors do not really assume that there is a one “best” or “correct” way of being successful; rather, certain situations are likely to benefit more from certain feature EI profiles than from others. For example, in some situations it just requires emotionality more than other factors as in the contrary when another context requires self-expression or other features. Despite their importance for a successful and a healthy social life, it does not mean that they are required and valid for all contexts.

1.6.High vs. Low Emotional Intelligence

A considerable number of scholars and researchers endorsed the view that a high level of EI is linked to better interpersonal connections, focused, stable emotions that do not interfere with behavior or decision-making, and influence that is based on persuasion rather than domination. Conversely, a low level of emotional intelligence exhibits the opposite characteristics. The table below offers an analogy contrasting high and low emotional intelligence, even when observed within the same personality type.

Personality Type	Low EI	High EI
Dominant, Antisocial	Aggressive, Demanding Egotistical, Bossy Confrontational.	Assertive, Ambitious, Driving, Strong-willed, Decisive.
Influencer, Narcissistic	Selfish, Poor listener, Impulsive.	Warm, Enthusiastic, Sociable, Charming, Persuasive.
Passive, Dependent	Resistant to change, Passive, Unresponsive, Slow, Stubborn.	Patient, Stable, Predictable, Consistent, Good listener.
Analytical, Obsessive	Critical, Picky, Fussy, Hard to please, Perfectionistic.	Detailed, Careful, Meticulous, Systematic, Neat.

Table 1.1 Distinguishing Between Low and High EI Characteristics (Uchino, Yanagawa, Weigand, Stawicki, & Papadimos, 2015, as cited in Petruzzi, 2022)

The primary observation from the table is even when a personality type may appear unfavorable, high and low EI play a pivotal role in guiding individuals with such traits to become more constructive and beneficial. It means that problematic and negative characters can be improved by effective emotional intelligence's skills. Moreover, High EI skills seem always to have positive effects on individuals rather than low-level ones; without forgetting the emphasis on the idea that high EI is not solely an intrapersonal skill that affects an individual's inner self; it also contributes to success in social interactions. That was claimed by Mayer et al (2004), who concluded that people who are rated as higher in EI tend to be more agreeable, open and conscientious. The secondary main idea about these types of personality is that they

are studied not only by focusing on an individual's inner self but also by observing and analyzing how others perceive and express these traits, particularly in cross-cultural interactions. For instance, those who are high in EI can also perceive emotions in other people's faces accurately (Mayer, 2009).

Mayer (2009) also held the view that highly EI individuals are able to manage the emotions of themselves and others, and they can even be aware of optimistic individuals who are more inclined than unhappy ones to join a social gathering. In other words, people with high emotional intelligence may recognize that angry individuals can be harmful or toxic and that happy people are more inclined to want to socialize and deal with people than those sad ones who are usually withdrawn.

1.7. Emotional Intelligence and EFL Learning

Emotional intelligence emerged as a central factor in educational success, especially in foreign language learning contexts where students face a combination of emotional and cognitive challenges. Unlike traditional measures of intelligence that focus solely on cognitive ability, EI encompasses skills such as emotional awareness, self-regulation, interpersonal empathy, and adaptability, all of which are highly relevant in language classrooms.

As learners attempt to communicate in a second language, they must not only master grammar and vocabulary but also navigate performance anxiety, cultural nuance, and peer interaction. Research increasingly confirms that emotionally intelligent learners are better equipped to handle academic stress, navigate peer relationships, and collaborate effectively in group-based learning environments (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011). In fact, a study by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence found that students with high EI reported 11% greater academic motivation and 15% lower levels of school-related anxiety compared to their peers with lower EI (Brackett et al., 2012).

Another foundational study by Pishghadam (2009b) quantitatively examined the relationship between EI and FL learning among 240 Iranian EFL learners. The study revealed that EI was strongly associated with success in speaking and listening, moderately in writing, and to a lesser extent in reading. Learners with higher emotional intelligence including its components of emotional self-awareness, stress tolerance and optimism demonstrated greater fluency and participation in oral communication. Pishghadam (2009b) concluded that enhancing learners' emotional intelligence could lead to more effective language acquisition and called for the integration of EI-oriented instruction into EFL curricula. In a complementary work, Pishghadam (2009a) explored how both emotional and verbal intelligences influence language performance, particularly productive skills. The study showed that emotionally intelligent students performed better in areas such as turn-taking conversations, written expression, and even error control. These findings reinforce the idea that language learning is not solely about cognitive processing, but also about emotional engagement and social negotiation. At the end, Pishghadam (2009a) claimed that EI should be treated not as a soft skill, but as a core component of communicative competence in FL education.

Additionally, EI is not only vital for learners but also essential for teachers, whose emotional skills directly affect classroom atmosphere and students' motivation. Brackett et al. (2010) found that emotion regulation ability was significantly correlated with higher job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and stronger classroom management. In Brackett et al. (2010) study, it is founded that teachers with higher EI were more attuned to their student's emotional needs and they are more likely to foster an inclusive and safe learning environment. Such environments are particularly important in EFL contexts where students often experience performance-related anxiety. When teachers know how to deal with students carefully by responding with empathy, they help students feel valued and confident enough to take communicative risks.

1.8. EI and other Types of Intelligence

1.8.1. EI vs. IQ

Despite the similarities that may appear between EI and IQ (Intelligence Quotient), and the use of both of them in taking serious decisions about individuals for careers opportunities or other purposes. While EI refers to a person's ability to perceive, control, evaluate, and express emotions. It is crucial to understand how IQ and EQ (Emotional Quotient) are different, and look at what they measure and how they are assessed.

IQ, is a number used to express a person's overall mental ability. This score is derived from a standardized test. It was most of the time revolving around cognitive abilities and general intelligence. Until scholars came to give another view such as Daniel Goleman (1995) and other psychologist who strongly believed that the EQ is far more important than one's IQ. Many psychologists consider IQ scores, the standard intelligence measurements, too limiting strictly the measure of human ability. Likewise, the psychologist Howard Gardner (1983), for example, indicated that intelligence comprises more than just a single major ability. He thinks that there exist multiple intelligences, and that some persons have capabilities for several of these types. Other experts like Drigas and Papoutsis (2018), instead of proposing a single general intelligence, believed that EI and emotional expression might as successfully contribute to-or even more the accomplishment of an individual in life.

More broadly, since researchers such as John Mayer and Peter Salovey (1990), as well as writers like Daniel Goleman delved deeply in EI, they helped shine a light on EI, making it a hot topic in areas ranging from business management to education. With time, EI became crucial and considered seriously in many job opportunities as well as academic achievements just like IQ in spite of the distinctions that differentiate them both. Starting first with different abilities; in IQ there are ones such as visual and spatial processing, knowledge of the world,

fluid reasoning, working memory and short-term memory. Whereas, EI gathers other abilities such evaluating how others feel, controlling one's own emotions, perceiving how others feel or even using emotions to facilitate social communication.

1.8.2. EI vs. Social Intelligence

Despite numerous studies on social and emotional intelligence, there is an ongoing debate about the relationship between the two, particularly when considering biological understanding of emotions.

Howard Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences defines social (interpersonal) and emotional (intrapersonal) intelligence as separate but related entities. The distinction between them might be attributed to their different uses. Even though they both might appear and function in society, yet social intelligence means mainly understanding other people, how they work, what motivates them, and how to work cooperatively with them. Emotional intelligence in the other hand is more of an inward ability (Gardner 1983), means that emotional intelligence refers to the perception of self-emotion, mastering that emotion, and using it as a guide for one's conduct. In essence, both applied in society yet one is interpersonal and the other focuses much more on intrapersonal aspects.

1.8.3. EI vs. Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

'Emotional and cultural intelligence share more than just a last name. I think of them as fraternal twins. They're not the same person but they share similar DNA and the family resemblance is unmistakable.' (Livermore, 2023). He emphasized the close relationship between EI and CQ, viewing them as "fraternal twins." by highlighting that both are essential for effective social functioning, especially in today's diverse world. The four components of CQ are: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral that are conceptually aligned with the four components of emotional intelligence: perceiving, using, understanding, and

managing emotions. Consequently, scholars such as Rockstuhl et al. (2011) and Brătianu and Paiuc (2023) highlight that EI and CQ are related constructs that overlap in areas like self-regulation, motivation, and empathy, and that they jointly predict success in cross-cultural or multicultural environments. Yet, at the same time, it is equally clear that emotional and cultural intelligences are distinct from each other when it comes to their context.

Since cultural and emotional intelligences appear in societies where usually different cultures are interchanged among people, some scholars such as Cui et al. (2019) believe that cultural intelligence focuses on an individual's capacity to understand the context of cultural variety i.e. a comprehensive ability that influences behavior in diverse cultural settings.

In addition to this, as far as cultural intelligence appears among individuals in the community, many people believe that CI and SI are the same thing while they are not. Researchers acknowledge that both CI and SI may involve the ability to understand and navigate social situations. The distinction lies in cultural intelligence's specific focus on cross-cultural contexts instead of different aspects of society in general.

1.9. Components of EI

While many models exist, such as Bar-On's EI competencies model and Mayer & Salovey EI ability model, Goleman's framework and his dividing of EI's components remain one of the most widely recognized and applied in both academic and professional settings. Therefore, despite the existence of various perspectives on the components of emotional intelligence, Goleman's model is the most widely acknowledged one for understanding and applying EI concepts.

According to Daniel Goleman, there are five suggested key components of EI:

PERSONAL COMPETENCE		
SELF-AWARENESS	Observing yourself and recognizing your feelings; building a vocabulary for feelings; knowing the relationship between thoughts, feelings and reactions.	Emotional Awareness: recognizing one's emotions and their effect Accurate Self-Assessment: knowing one's strengths and limits Self-confidence: A strong sense of one's self-worth
SELF-REGULATION	Managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources	Self-control: Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
		Trustworthiness: Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
		Conscientiousness: Taking responsibility for personal performance
		Adaptability: Flexibility in handling change
		Innovation: Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches and new information
MOTIVATION	Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals	Achievement Drive: Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence
		Commitment: Aligning with the goals of the group or organization
		Initiative: Readiness to act on opportunities
		Optimism: Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks
SOCIAL COMPETENCE		
EMPATHY	Awareness of others' feelings, needs and concerns.	Understanding Others: sensing others' feelings and perspectives, taking an active interest in their concerns
		Developing others: Sensing others development needs and bolstering their abilities
		Service Orientation: Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs
		Leveraging Diversity:

		Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people
		Political Awareness: Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships
SOCIAL SKILLS	Adeptness at including desirable responses in others	Influence: Wielding effective tactics for persuasion
		Communication: Listening openly and sending convincing messages
		Conflict Management: Negotiating and resolving disagreements
		Leadership: Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
		Change Catalyst: Initiating or managing change
		Building bonds: Nurturing instrumental Relationships
		Collaboration and Cooperation: Working with others toward shared goals
		Team Capabilities: Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

Table 1.2 Goleman's 5 Components of Emotional Intelligence and the 25 Emotional Competencies [28] (Goleman, 1998, as cited in Ordun & Acar, 2014)

The table presents Daniel Goleman's five key components of emotional intelligence - self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills - and links them to certain emotional competencies. Those suggested emotional competencies provide a description of skills such as emotional self-control, flexibility, initiative, and cooperation. The table groups the five core elements (and emotional competencies) into two general categories: personal

competence (how we manage ourselves) and social competence (how we manage our relationships with others).

1.10.1 Self-awareness

Starting with self-awareness which is considered as the most significant component of EI and as a mean that helps other competencies function. According to Bar-On and Parker (2000), self-awareness is the ability to understand one's own feelings and how they influence one's experiences. You know your feelings and why you feel that way, as well as how to translate your feelings into your actions. You also connect your self-image to a larger reality by understanding how others view you. Goleman (1995) also defines self-Awareness as having the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, drives, and influence others. This skill includes having deep knowledge of one's feelings, strengths, weaknesses, and needs. People who enjoy high self-awareness are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful; they are honest with themselves and know what they want and more precisely what they can do with others. (Goleman, 2017)

1.10.2. Self-regulation

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines self-regulation as "the act or condition or an instance of regulating oneself or itself". On the other side, the American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology describes it as "the control of one's behavior through the use of self-monitoring (keeping a record of behavior), self-evaluation (assessing the information obtained during self-monitoring), and self-reinforcement (rewarding oneself for appropriate behavior or attaining a goal)." Goleman (2017) who actually suggested self-regulation as one of the components of EI considered it as the capacity to control or refocus uncontrolled feelings and impulses, allowing people to deliberate before acting. This skill includes self-control, reliability, flexibility, and creativity. From this he focused on the idea that self-regulation frees people from

being controlled by their impulses, enabling rational reactions as opposed to impulsive ones. For instance, when someone is willing to follow his/her impulsive ideas that might get good or bad results without thinking or making neither plans or analytical consequences, it would lead to uncontrollable results, whereas self-regulation plays a major role in the human's body to help making the right decisions as well as controlling emotions before doing any unexpected behavior.

1.10.3. Motivation

Motivation, when considered as a component of EI, is linked with intrinsic motivation. Based on the existing body of literature, The American Psychological Association defines motivation as "a person's willingness to exert physical or mental effort in pursuit of a goal or outcome." This idea emphasizes that motivation is the inner drive that leads an individual to engage in physical or mental effort in order to accomplish a certain objective or desired outcome. It places an emphasis on motivated by purpose action where effort is focused on achieving significant results. This same idea is shared among myriad scholars, from them there is Mullins (2002) who also believes that motivation is a 'driving force' through which people strive to achieve their goals and fulfill a need or uphold a value. Goleman (1995) defines motivation as the desire to reach goals for personal purposes rather than external rewards; it is characterized as the energy of the pursuit of a goal. It includes a willingness to commit to being the best, to being optimistic in the face of setbacks, and to focusing on continuous improvement. Goleman included motivation as a component of emotional intelligence because it does not only enhance individual success but also inspires and influences others, making it integral to both personal and social effectiveness.

1.10.4. Empathy

Additionally, empathy is a key component of emotional intelligence since it occurs within society where people exchange distinct experiences. According to Hoffman (2001) empathy is

"an affective response more appropriate to someone else's situation than to one's own", Batson (2009) sees it as "a sense of understanding and sharing in another person's emotional experience". Goleman aligns with the views of previous scholars on this idea by claiming that empathy is the ability to sense others' emotions, understand their perspectives, and take an active interest in their concerns. He includes it as a component of EI because it enables individuals to build strong relationships and most importantly navigate social complexities, and to make informed decisions by considering others' emotional states. In essence, simply by fostering empathy, individuals would be much more able to enhance their social skills, improve communication, and create more collaborative and harmonious environments.

1.10.5. Social Skills

The last component is about social skills which are considered crucial abilities that enable individuals to interact effectively and appropriately within various social contexts. It is defined by the American Psychological Association as "a set of learned abilities that enable an individual to interact competently and appropriately in a given social context." Means that social skills as acquired abilities rather than innate traits that can be developed through practice or feedback for everyone seeking personal and professional growth. Goleman (1995) emphasized that individuals with strong social skills are often good communicators, simply because they allow individuals to influence others and most importantly affect other component of EI to make the whole process work continuously.

1.11. Challenges of EI

Emotional intelligence is known for playing a crucial role in shaping interpersonal relationships, and overall well-being. A longstanding debate in psychology centers on whether EI is primarily determined by genetic factors (nature) or shaped through environmental influences and experiences (nurture). While some researchers argue that EI is biologically inherited and linked to brain structures and neural pathways, others emphasize the role of

education, and social interactions in its development. Multiple studies indicate that emotional intelligence has a genetic origin, which means some people might have a natural disposition toward higher EI based on genetics. Certain aspects of EI, such as self-awareness and emotional control were found to be highly heritable in twin studies (Vernon et al., 2008). This suggests that some social and emotional intelligence traits may be inherited from parents and genes. Simultaneously there is a assumption that EI exists at birth in a basic form, and as humans are born with emotional capacity, scholars emphasized that EI generally develops progressively over time through experience and socialization (Brackett & Rivers, 2020). Meanwhile, by seeing that EI's levels (high or low) differ from a person to another, it caused an open debate about putting much emphasis on whether EI is genetically based or environmentally shaped. Scholars like Zeidner et al. (2009) and Petrides & Furnham (2001) argued for a trait-based, genetic origin of EI, while others like Goleman (1995) and Brackett & Salovey (2006) emphasized the role of learning, socialization, and emotional education for improving EI.

Moreover, one of the dark sides of EI occurs when people with high EI use their abilities to manipulate and deceive others for their own benefit. It is considered as one of the main problems with EI because, although it is generally seen as a positive trait that improves communication, and interpersonal relationships, it may also be misused in ways that harm others. Grant (2014) believed that through EI, people may fabricate favorable impressions of themselves, expressing emotions strategically and reducing others' ability to think critically. Likewise, a review by O'Connor and Athota (2013) indicates that high EI individuals, especially with traits such as narcissism or psychopathy, are more capable of using their emotional skills in manipulative manners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Emotional Intelligence is a multifaceted concept that encompasses different emotional abilities. From its neurological foundations to its application in daily interpersonal interactions, EI proved to be a crucial factor in personal development and social functionality. The chapter presented key theoretical models that define and differentiate EI as an ability, a trait, or a combination of emotional and social competencies. It also demonstrated that EI could be closely related to other forms of intelligence especially in educational and intercultural contexts. As research continues to evolve, it becomes increasingly evident that EI is not only essential to psychological well-being but also instrumental in academic success. Particularly in foreign language education; EI enhances learners' capacity to manage anxiety, engage meaningfully in communication, and build empathy across cultures. All in all understanding and fostering emotional intelligence is essential for educators, learners, and institutions aiming to cultivate emotionally resilient and socially competent individuals.

CHAPTER TWO: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Introduction.....	35
2.1. Definition of the Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	35
2.2 Communicative Competence VS Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	38
2.3. Importance of ICC in EFL Classrooms.....	39
2.4. Evolution of ICC and its Models.....	41
2.4.1. Byram’s Model.....	41
2.4.2. Deardorff’s Process Model.....	42
2.4.3. Baker Model of ICA.....	47
2.5. Key Components of ICC.....	48
2.6. Promoting ICC.....	50
2.6.1. Teachers' Role in Promoting ICC.....	50
2.6.2. Techniques of Teaching ICC in the Classroom.....	51
2.7. Assessment of ICC.....	54
2.7.1. Challenges of Assessing ICC.....	55
2.7.2. Formats of Assessing ICC.....	56
2.7.3. External Tests for Assessing Intercultural Competence.....	58
2.8. Impact of Social Media on ICC.....	60

2.9. Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	61
Conclusion.....	63

Introduction

Intercultural Communicative Competence is a key element in language teaching, more specifically in EFL contexts. As the world becomes more interconnected, it is no longer enough to be competent in a language without being aware of how to communicate across its culture.

This chapter discusses the structure, models, and elements of ICC, contrasted with general communicative competence, and its significance in the modern multicultural educational settings. By analyzing the early theoretical models by researchers like Byram, Deardorff, and Baker, this chapter identifies the underlying principles that constitute ICC. Furthermore, it highlights teachers' roles, assessment concerns, as well as the growing significance of social media in building intercultural communication. More importantly, it tackles the emerging integration of emotional intelligence in intercultural education. By shedding light on how ICC might be assessed, taught, and developed, this chapter provides ways for understanding the dynamics of intercultural interaction and its profound impact on language learning.

2.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence

“Culture is that set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or social group, encompassing all the ways of being in that society; at a minimum, including art and literature, life-styles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2001).

Culture is a broad and complex concept that involves the social practices, lifestyle, values, traditions, and beliefs shared by members of a group. At its core, it influences each aspect of how individuals think, feel, behave, and interact within their society. This highlights the importance of understanding the culture itself not only the language to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries.

The concept of competence in language learning was first introduced by Noam Chomsky (1965), who coined the term linguistic competence to describe a speaker's knowledge of a language's lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological features, along with the ability to form grammatically correct sentences. However, this concept overlooked the social factors.

In response, Dell Hymes (1972) introduced communicative competence as a critique of Chomsky's theory. Hymes argued that understanding language acquisition requires not only grammatical knowledge but also the ability to use language appropriately in different social contexts. He proposed the term sociolinguistic competence, (as cited in Byram, 1997, p.7-8) emphasizing that language use should be interpreted according to the social context, linguistic varieties, and the appropriate meaning in communication. This idea became foundational for communicative language teaching, which prioritizes practical communication skills over purely grammatical accuracy.

Further contributions to the understanding of intercultural communication came from Samovar and Porter (2004), who defined it as the contact between individuals who do not share similar cultural perspectives to a degree that leads to misunderstanding by both parties (cited in Li & Patel, 2011, p. 17). This shows that IC occurs when people with distinct cultural perceptions and symbol systems interact, leading to adjust communication as cultural differences significantly impact how individuals understand and exchange messages.

Building on this foundation, Byram (1997) developed the concept of ICC, defining it as "the ability to communicate and interact across linguistic and cultural borders appropriately and efficiently" (p. 71). Unlike the traditional focus on imitating native speakers "Native Speaker Model", Byram emphasized that ICC involves understanding different cultures, being open to new perspectives, and respecting cultural values. His approach significantly influenced modern

language teaching by integrating both linguistic and cultural awareness to enhance cross-cultural communication (p. 7).

It is also seen as the ability to foster mutual understanding between individuals from diverse social backgrounds while recognizing them as multifaceted individuals with unique identities. It highlights the importance of seeing people beyond stereotypes and engaging with them in a way that respects their complexity and individuality (Byram, et al; 2002, p. 10). Thus, it helps foster tolerance and openness towards distinct cultures.

According to Fantini (2000), ICC is the set of skills needed to communicate successfully and respectfully with people from different languages and cultures. It involves being able to adapt, understand, and interact appropriately in diverse cultural settings (as cited in Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006, p. 12). Similarly, Sercu (2005) described ICC as the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are required for effective intercultural communication. They include being open-minded, self-aware, flexible, and respectful of cultural values and traditions, which enable individuals to communicate efficiently with individuals from diverse cultures.

In her 2006 study, Darla K. Deardorff defines ICC as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 247- 248). Spitzberg & Chagnon (2009) provided another perspective, introducing ICC as "the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent cognitive, affective, and behavioral orientations to the world" (p. 7). This points out the ability to communicate effectively with people whose ways of behaving and thinking is shaped by different cultural aspects.

Kunanbayeva (2013) highlights the intercultural-communicative approach in foreign language education, where learners act as mediators between cultures. Unlike native or second language acquisition, foreign language learning lacks natural immersion, requiring learners to

develop intercultural-language consciousness to bridge cultural gaps. Her model integrates cognitive, linguistic, and cultural competencies, framing language learning as a cognitive restructuring process that fosters adaptability to different cultural contexts. This competency-based approach aligns with modern intercultural communication theories by emphasizing language as a tool for both effective communication and deeper cultural understanding (Kunanbayeva, 2013, p. 123-129).

Hammer (2015) emphasizes ICC in terms of behavioral approach, highlighting the importance of adaptability, consideration, and receptiveness across cultural contexts. It is suggested that intercultural competence goes beyond merely being open-minded or informed about other cultures; it also requires the ability to act appropriately and effectively in diverse intercultural situations (Hammer, 2015, p. 483).

A more recent definition views intercultural competence not only as mastering cultural distinctions but also as mastering fundamental “skills, attitudes and behaviors” (Deardorff, 2020, p. i) that promote comprehension and meaningful interaction with others, in order to exhibit intercultural awareness. According to her, IC encompasses a variety of social and cultural differences inside any culture, not just those that are worldwide.

2.2. Communicative Competence vs. Intercultural Communicative Competence

Communicative competence (CC) refers to the capacity of using language properly in different contexts. Dell Hymes first coined the term in the mid-1960s, as a challenge to Noam Chomsky’s emphasis on linguistic competence; it has since been used to signify that communication is not just about grammatical knowledge, but also about knowing how, where, and when to express oneself. Canale and Swain (1980) expanded this framework and identified four components: grammatical competence (knowledge of syntax and rules), sociolinguistic competence (appropriate use of language in context), discourse competence (effects of

coherence on communication), and strategic competence (problem-solving during communication). In essence, CC is about achieving communicative goals while considering the social and cultural context (Hymes, 1972). When Hymes proposed the term communicative competence, his focus was not on foreign language teaching and learning (Byram, 1997).

Intercultural Communicative Competence builds on CC by integrating the skills needed to communicate effectively across cultures. Byram (1997, pp. 34-35) defines ICC as the ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds through a combination of linguistic skills, cultural knowledge, and attitudes of openness. Unlike CC, ICC emphasizes cultural sensitivity and adaptability, enabling individuals to mediate between their own culture and others. ICC also requires critical cultural awareness, which Byram highlights as essential for understanding and respecting diverse perspectives (Byram, 1997, p. 36).

While CC focuses on effective communication within a single cultural framework, ICC addresses the complexities of intercultural interactions. Sercu (2005) explains that CC and ICC provide a comprehensive framework for fostering both linguistic proficiency and intercultural understanding in today's interconnected world.

2.3. Importance of ICC in EFL Classrooms

Byram (1997) underlined that the language classroom naturally provides opportunity to enhance intercultural competence, arguing that linguistic competence in a foreign language should not be separated from the teaching of intercultural competence (p. 22).

First, a central element of ICC is building openness and curiosity towards other cultures. The Council of Europe (2014) claims that ICC does not require learners to abandon their cultural selves but encourages them to understand and interpret cultural differences without forgetting their own sense of self. In EFL environments, learners employ English not just as a

language but also as an entrance to numerous ways of perceiving, reducing ethnocentrism and optimizing mutual understanding.

Second, ICC encourages self-reflection through the examination of students' own culture as it helps people to understand and relate to various cultural points of view, therefore inspiring them to consider their own cultural ideas and values more closely. Since cultural norms are profoundly imprinted through early socialization, thinking outside of one's own perspective can be challenging. However, Interculturally competent people gain more self-awareness and a deeper grasp of their own cultural identity through interactions with people from various cultures (The Council of Europe, 2014).

Additionally, linguistic proficiency is insufficient. As The Council of Europe (2014) points, communicative awareness and cultural sensitivity are essential as well. Which means that being an intercultural competent communicator involves dealing with cultural nuances, recognizing different communication styles, and interpreting meanings. By mastering these skills, teachers prepare students for authentic intercultural communication.

Moreover, while ICC is required for effective intercultural conversation, it is not always sufficient on its own. Structural inequality, discrimination, and unequal access to resources repeatedly prevent marginalized communities from being equal partners in spite of their competence. Power differences and institutionalized discrimination can also result in unequal conversation in favor of more privileged groups. Thus, encouraging intercultural competence should be complemented by tangible actions aimed at reducing social and economic disparities, fighting discrimination, and helping disadvantaged groups. Only through this dual strategy can inclusive and equitable intercultural communication be attained (The Council of Europe, 2014).

Furthermore, incorporating ICC into EFL education is important to prepare learners to navigate a diverse world. It fosters openness, enhances self-awareness, and strengthens the link

between language and culture. Through structured pedagogical approaches, educators can ensure students develop both linguistic competence and the intercultural sensitivity needed for meaningful global engagement.

2.4. The Evolution of ICC and its Models

It is crucial to mention the three influential models that examine the concept of ICC and its implications for education: Byram's (1997) framework, focusing on the "savoirs" and critical cultural awareness; Deardorff's (2004) Pyramid Model, emphasizing developmental outcomes; and Baker's (2011) model of Intercultural Awareness (ICA), highlighting the distinction between cultural and intercultural awareness.

2.4.1. Byram's ICC Model

Byram (1997) introduced ICC as an extension of Communicative Competence emphasizing the ability to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultures. His framework has five key components (49-53). The five interaction factors based on Byram's model of ICC (The "Savoirs") are: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction and critical cultural awareness.

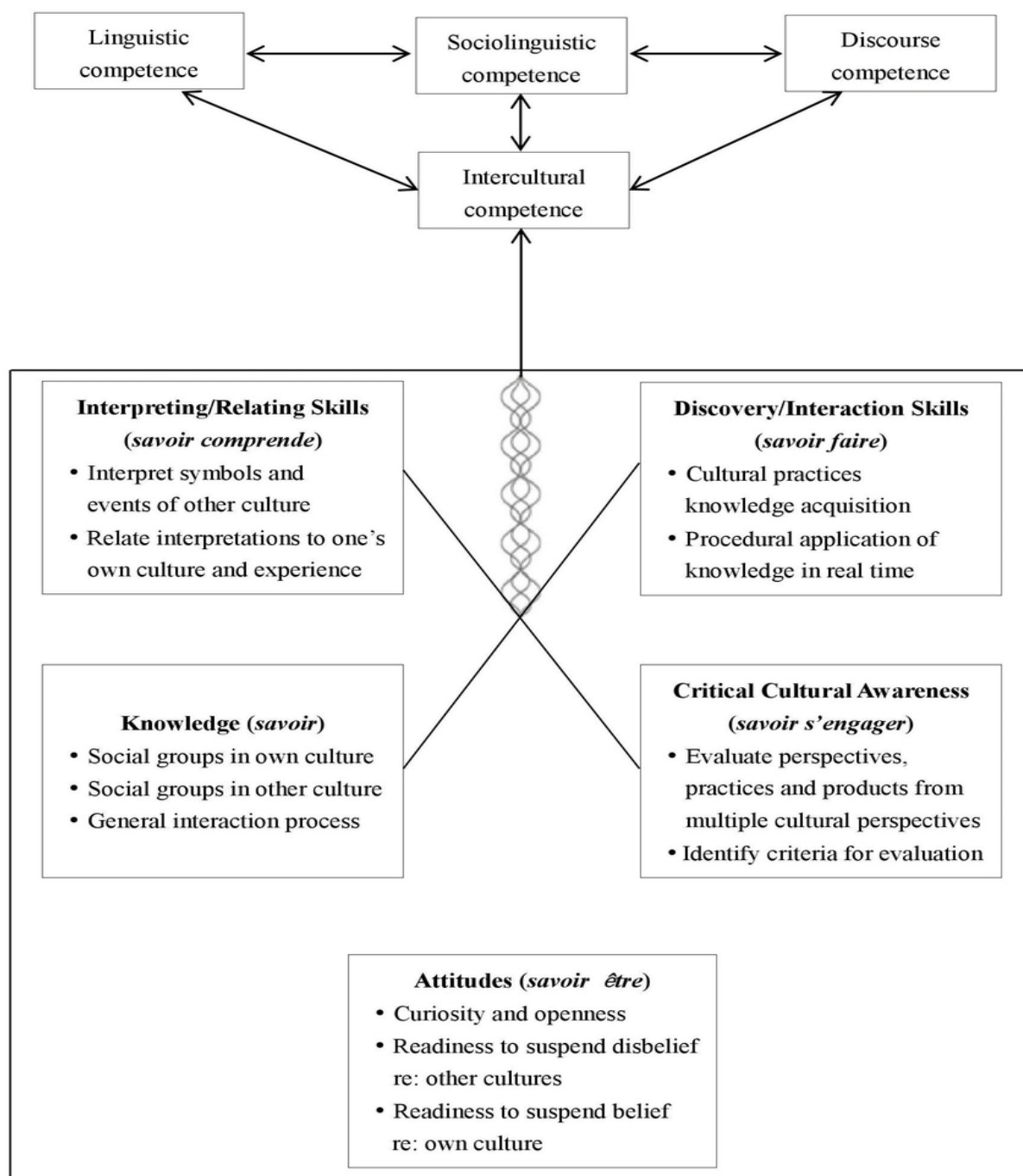


Figure 2.1: Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram 1997)

2.4.1.1. Attitudes (*savoir être*)

Attitudes in intercultural competence refer to being curious, ready to be open-minded, inquiring, and engaging with another culture, think from multiple angles, and interact equally. Attending to adopt, question cultural practices respectfully, as well as getting oneself heard

loud, clear, and communicate effectively using both verbal and non-verbal cues. Having these attitudes creates long-lasting ties among cultures that go beyond difference as it fosters meaningful relationships across cultural boundaries and promotes mutual understanding and respect.

2.4.1.2. Knowledge (savoirs)

Knowledge in intercultural competence involves understanding the social groups, practices, and products of one's own culture and those of others. This includes awareness of historical and contemporary relationships between cultures, methods for establishing intercultural contact, and the causes of misunderstandings in cross-cultural interactions.

Additionally, it involves recognizing how national histories, geographical perceptions, and social distinctions are viewed from different cultural perspectives. Knowledge extends to understanding societal institutions and their roles in shaping daily life and intercultural relationships. This knowledge is relational, often acquired through socialization processes that influence perceptions of others. Understanding these processes is important for effective intercultural communication, as it helps individuals recognize how their own socialization shapes their interactions with people from other cultures.

2.4.1.3. Skills of Interpreting and Relating (savoir comprendre)

These are fundamental to ICC as they allow one to interpret and examine ideas, documents or occurrences of another culture. Through recognizing and describing these biases, one is able to bridge two different cultural environments and achieve mutual understanding. They also allow one to create cultural awareness and work through complex intercultural situations with tact.

2.3.1.4. Discovery and Interaction Skills (*savoir apprendre/faire*)

It enables individuals to navigate through intercultural interactions through dynamically procuring and applying knowledge, attitudes, and skills during real-time communication. They include eliciting cultural concepts and values from interlocutors, interpreting significant cultural references, and negotiating verbal and non-verbal interaction norms. They also involve the identification of similarities and differences in the practices of cultures for facilitating intercultural contact, and effective mediation between one's own culture and other cultures. Consequently, learning discovery and interaction competences allow one to identify cultural miscommunications and establish substantial relationships through proper communication, prioritizing appropriateness and respect in multicultural situations.

2.3.1.5. Critical Cultural Awareness (*savoir s'engager*)

It is the ability to evaluate cultural perspectives, traditions, and products based on certain criteria. It entails identifying and interpreting values in cultural texts and events, conducting evaluative analysis based on identifiable frameworks, and enabling intercultural interaction through negotiation and ethical engagement.

In educational contexts, teachers ask the students to pronounce their judgments explicitly and apply standards to both their and the other culture. This approach helps learners move beyond simplistic condemnations of unfamiliar customs and instead develop nuanced, informed perspectives.

2.4.2. The Pyramid Model of ICC

Deardorff's Pyramid Model of ICC is seen as a framework that guides and encourages the development of intercultural learning and awareness (See Figure 2.2). It is based on a set of elements: attitude, knowledge, skills, internal and external outcome (Deardorff, 2006).

Deardorff (2006) prescribes three main attitudes that are respect, openness, and curiosity; that help in fostering the necessary knowledge and proficiency to become an intercultural competent. Next, Knowledge and comprehension encompassing cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness and culture-specific information play a crucial part in comprehending cultural perceptions and observations from across the world. Following this, there are also listening, observing, analyzing, evaluating, and relating skills necessary for intercultural communication. Internal and external results are placed at the apex of the pyramid. Internal outcome refers to an informed frame made up of flexibility, adaptability, and empathy. It is the result of attitude, knowledge and skills to demonstrate that an individual may act and communicate appropriately cross-culturally. External outcome is considered the appropriate and effective behavior and communication in intercultural interactions.

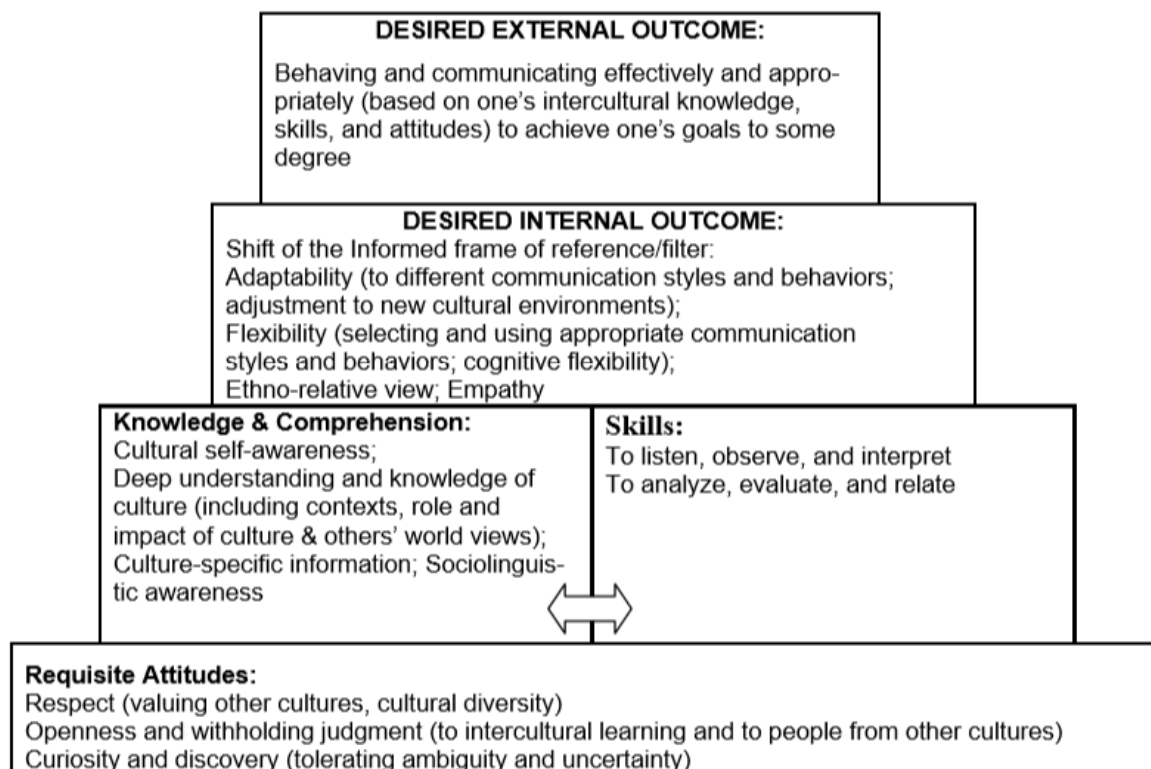


Figure 2.2: Pyramid Model of ICC (Deardorff, 2006)

While the Pyramid Model presents the key components of ICC in a structured way, Deardorff (2006) Process Model, offers a more dynamic and developmental perspective. Highlighting the ongoing nature of intercultural learning, showing that individuals grow through continuous reflection, interaction with others, and life experiences.

2.4.3. Baker Model of Intercultural Awareness (ICA)

ICA, in the view of Baker (2011), is the awareness of how differences in habits, values, and perspectives affect communication. It also includes the ability to apply this awareness in real conversations. Briefly, it is not just about information but includes behavior and communication competence since it goes beyond thinking in terms of "ours". His model provides a systematic way of navigating through the complexities of IC by distinguishing between levels of cultural and intercultural awareness and emphasizing both theoretical knowledge and practical skills by outlining the different levels of CA and how they connect with each other. It distinguishes conceptual knowledge from actual practice and how different levels intersect. On one hand, Baker (2011) states that Conceptual ICA is concerned with the kind of cultures and attitudes individuals need to have in order to communicate interculturally and the ability to account for these attitudes and knowledge (See Figure 2.3). Practice-oriented ICA, on the other hand, is concerned with applying this knowledge in actual-time intercultural communication and demonstrating it through behavior and abilities. i.e., the practice-oriented ICA completes the conceptual ICA so he introduces three levels of ICA:

a- Basic Cultural Awareness

Baker asserts that the initial stage of CA revolves around a mindful awareness of one's own culture (C1) and realizing that there are other cultures that are different from one's own, although such awareness might be founded on stereotypes or generalizations. People at this

level can explain their own cultural outlook and make general comparisons between both cultures.

b- Advanced Cultural Awareness

Baker believes that (CA) goes beyond generalizations and means seeing cultures as rich, dynamic, and contextually meaningful. An awareness that people are members of diverse cultural societies with a multiplicity of perspectives. At this level, people expect miscommunication and misunderstanding in cultural differences and learn the skill to bridge cultures.

c- Intercultural Awareness (ICA)

This category goes beyond the limited view of cultures, focusing on the ability to facilitate and negotiate among various cultural frames, references, and communicative modes.

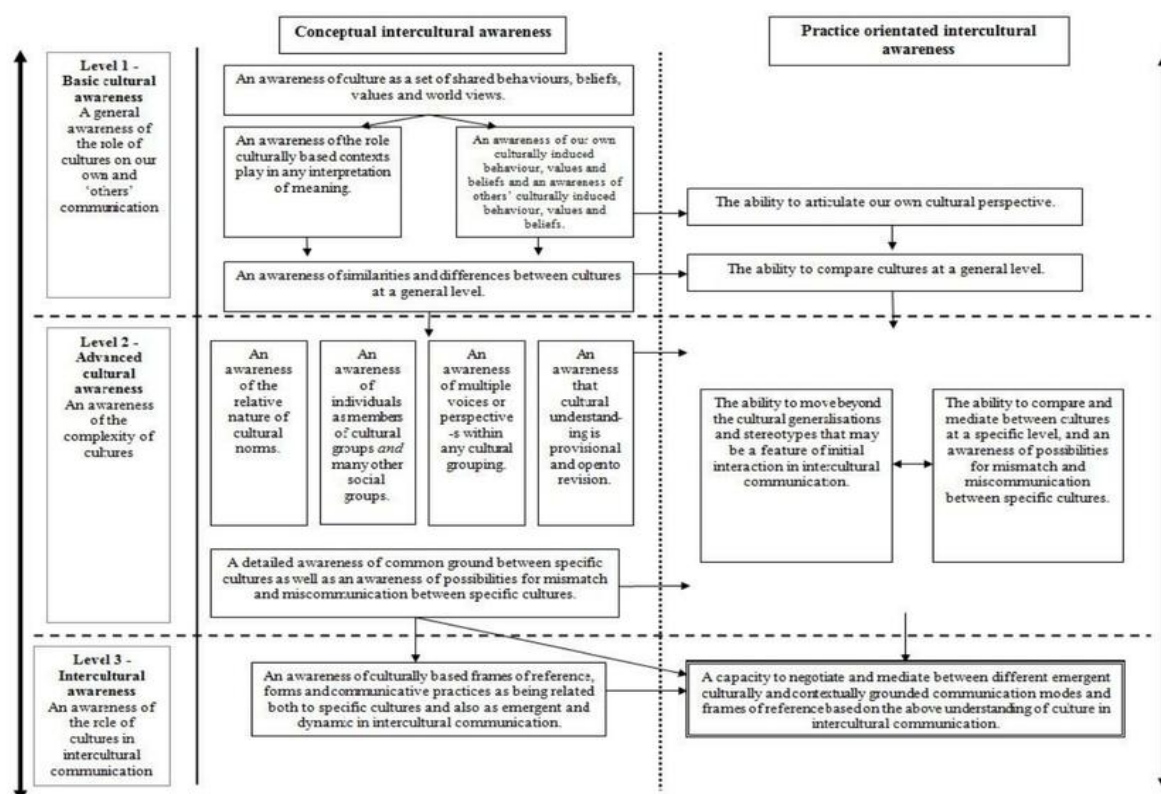


Figure 2.3: Intercultural Awareness Model (ICA) (Baker, 2011)

Byram's (1997), Deardorff's (2006), and Baker's (2011) models offer contrasting yet complementary perspectives of ICC. Byram emphasizes critical engagement, Deardorff developmental outcomes, and Baker focused on awareness development. While differing in scope and focus, all three underscore attitudes, knowledge, and skills are vital in cultivating effective intercultural communication, providing helpful frameworks for conceptualizing and building ICC.

2.5. Key Components of ICC

The Council of Europe (2014) outlines intercultural competence into four key components: attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills, and actions.

2.5.1. Attitude

Effective intercultural communication needs an ensemble of underlying attitudes. First, showing respect for the inherent worth of different cultures, and appreciating people from diverse cultures. Second, open interest and curiosity towards learning about opposing perspectives. Third, empathy, through which the individual can understand others' experiences. Fourth, there must be a willingness to question one's own assumptions and perceived norms. Fifth, having the capacity to manage with and accept ambiguity and uncertainty is essential. Finally, an intentional effort to seek opportunities to work together with individuals of various cultural orientations is essential to ensuring understanding and successful relationships.

2.5.2. Knowledge

Intercultural competence relies on specific knowledge and consciousness and awareness of the internal diversity of all cultures and sensitivity to one's own and other individuals' assumptions, stereotypes, and biases. It involves knowing how language and culture shape worldviews and that different languages and cultures have different means of communicating,

both verbally and non-verbally. It also involves knowing cultural beliefs, values, practices, and an awareness of how cultural interactions and knowledge are socially constructed.

2.5.3. Skills

Intercultural competence involves a range of skills through which it is possible to effectively and respectfully interact between cultures. They consist of being able to see things from different perspectives, to find and interpret culture-based practices and beliefs, and being empathetic to other people's thinking and feelings. It further requires cognitive adaptability to a change of thought, ability to critically evaluate cultural values (one's own as well), and ability to adjust behavior appropriately in a particular culture. Strong language and sociolinguistic communication skills are needed too, as is plurilingual competence and the capacity to mediate through translation or explanation across cultures.

2.5.4. Relevant Action

Effective intercultural action involves a variety of significant behaviors that help in interpreting the efficacy of the interaction, actions are considered as replies that interpret the information that the learners obtain culturally. It starts with, first, actively looking for opportunities for interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds. Second, it demands communicating effectively and respectfully with these individuals. Third, it demands engaging with them in shared activities, engaging in discourse on difference of opinion, and building shared senses. Finally, ICC involves actively challenging human rights violations in attitudes and language, and acting to protect the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of culture.

2.6. Promoting ICC

In today's globalized world, developing ICC is essential for communicating successfully with people from different cultural backgrounds. Through intercultural experiences, people may learn about other cultures and reflect on their own. In today's globalized world, the absence of ICC may lead to major consequences, such as conflict, misunderstandings, and even bloodshed. As a result, gaining the skills required for successful intercultural communication and learning a second language emerged as crucial educational priorities (Fantini, 2009, p. 212).

2.6.1. Teachers' Role in Promoting ICC

Teachers play a central role in the development of student's ICC. As noted by Abdulhasan (2024), educators are not merely transmitters of information; they need to establish a tangible knowledge foundation of what ICC entails and how it is different from teaching superficial cultural knowledge. ICC involves a combination of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that allow learners to collaborate with cultural diversity. Therefore, the teacher's task is that of a transformer they must provide students with the ability to act in intercultural contexts and become autonomous, lifelong communicators.

Moreover, as Nafisah et al. (2025, p.30) describe, teacher interpretations and understandings of ICC are solely responsible for delineating its realization in the classroom. When teachers view ICC as inherent in language use and learning, they tend to integrate it more significantly into their practice. When, on the other hand, they view it as an add-on characteristic, its integration is superficial or gets lost entirely.

Additionally, Wagner (2021) stresses the need for an integral pedagogy. Language teachers have a particular obligation to cater not just to the linguistic but also to the personal and cultural identity development of their learners. This double orientation cultivates a richer intercultural

sensitivity and prepares the learners to be respectful and proficient communicators in multiculturally diverse settings.

2.6.2. Techniques of Teaching ICC in Classrooms

Peterson and Coltrane (2003) collected some useful techniques to present culture in the class. They claim that cultural activities should be carefully organized and incorporated into lesson plans to enrich the teaching content. According to them, the culture surrounding a language cannot be truly learned or comprehended through certain courses that focus on holidays, folk music, or national costume. Learners of any language must become conscious of culturally appropriate behaviors, like how to respond to individuals, show appreciation, request things, and manage disagreement or agreement in line with the target culture.

Reid (2015) similarly emphasizes that cultural activities should be incorporated into foreign language instruction from the very beginning. In addition to the target culture, the learners' awareness, attitudes, knowledge, and abilities toward their own and other cultures are to be enhanced starting by:

- **Authentic Materials**

Learners should be meaningfully exposed to real-life cultural contexts through authentic materials that come from the target language community. These materials, which include movies, TV shows, websites, images, newspapers, menus, and brochures, give students the chance to interact with the language in authentic contexts. Depending on the age and skill level of the students, their integration into the classroom can be customized. Simplified exercises, such as watching brief video clips that demonstrate cultural conventions like welcomes, can help even inexperienced learners. Teachers can use guided worksheets, visual aids, or translations to help students understand. After being exposed to the content, students can take

part in conversations on cultural norms, values, and cultural comparisons with their own (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003).

- **Using Role Play**

Role play is an instructional technique that involves students in dramatizing situations including cultural misunderstandings. In this setting, students role-play scenarios in which cultural differences lead to misunderstandings, such as the incorrect usage of greetings based on age or social status in the target culture. Through peer observation during these dramatizations, students are able to identify the cause of the misunderstanding and then reenact the scenario using language and conduct that is appropriate for their culture. This method simulates real-world communication situations, which promotes language proficiency and multicultural awareness (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003).

- **Proverbs**

Proverbs are a powerful tool for promoting intercultural understanding when used in language training. Students can discover cultural similarities and differences by comparing well-known proverbs in the target language with equivalent expressions in their mother tongue. These variations frequently mirror more profound historical and cultural narratives that influence worldviews and societal ideals (Ciccarelli, 1996). Proverb analysis also gives students a chance to consider the principles ingrained in their own linguistic and cultural history while critically assessing cultural prejudices and misconceptions. Therefore, proverbs serve as a language prism that allows for the exploration and discussion of cultural norms and ideas (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003).

- **Culture Assimilation**

As mentioned by Reid (2015), the cultural assimilation technique involves presenting learners to a significant event that is likely to be misinterpreted because of cultural differences.

They have to decide which of the multiple explanations they are given is accurate. This strategy challenges misconceptions and fosters intercultural awareness. Students frequently believe that the norm is their own cultural practices. The intention is to emphasize that diversity can exist even within a single nation and to demonstrate that all variants are culturally respectable. By assisting students in recognizing and appreciating cultural diversity, this method seeks to foster comprehension, tolerance, and ICC.

- **Culture Capsule**

Culture Capsule according to Taylor and Sorensen (1961) is a brief descriptive presentation of a particular cultural difference between the learner's native culture and the target culture, often accompanied by visual or audio. It serves to foster international understanding by highlighting important cultural components, such as traditions or social standards. In order to encourage students to think about cultural differences in a targeted and understandable manner, it is usually delivered with a brief explanation followed by a class debate or comparison.

The following activity serves as a culture capsule by focusing on a single cultural element: New Year celebrations, through a comparison between Yennayer, the Amazigh New Year in Algeria, and the American New Year. In Algeria, Yennayer is celebrated in January with traditional dishes, family gatherings, and symbolic rituals that reflect Amazigh heritage. In contrast, the American New Year, is marked by public festivities, fireworks, and a countdown at midnight. Authentic materials, such as photos of Amazighen traditional food can be used to support the activity. Adding to that, a set of guiding questions can help students explore and compare the two traditions, such as: What do both holidays have in common? How are their meanings or activities different? Which values are present in both? This activity encourages cultural awareness and understanding in a simple, non-evaluative way.

- **Story Circles**

Story Circles, referred to as “learning from one another,” “sharing through experiences,” and “intergroup connections,” is a practical tool created by Deardorff (2020) to foster intercultural competencies. Story Circles serve as a practical and flexible approach that includes small groups (3 - 7 participants) engaging in organized two rounds of storytelling driven by intercultural prompts, along with guided reflection. It aims at fostering intercultural competencies such as empathy, openness, respect, careful self-reflection, and attentive listening for understanding. It is also seen as an accessible and suitable tool that can be used in different situations such as education, community development, and conflict resolution, as it does not need any special resources for intercultural training.

2.7. Assessment of ICC

In foreign language education, assessment holds considerable importance, as it allows students to reflect on their performance and engage in self-directed improvement, while also offering teachers valuable feedback to enhance their pedagogical practices and the overall effectiveness of instruction. As noted by Sercu (2004), Educators too are looking for ways of assessment which can provide them with feedback on whether their learners are benefitting from their intercultural teaching, and which may prove to society that learners are reaching the educational goals set in the curricula (p. 73).

Assessing intercultural competence is essential and benefits both students and educators as it serves as a tool for tracking student development, identifying areas for improvements and gaining insights into both the students’ progress and the impact of teaching strategies.

2.7.1. Challenges of Assessing ICC

As Schauer (2016, pp. 196–199) points out, assessing intercultural competence remains a complex and evolving task. Although interest in the field increased with time, the assessment of intercultural competence is still in its developmental stages. This is largely due to several challenges:

A major issue is lack of consensus regarding the terminology of IC, noting that various disciplines use different terms to describe this concept (Deardorff, 2006). Fantini (2009) further identifies a range of terms found in academic literature and assessment tools, including multiculturalism, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence, international communication, transcultural communication, global competence, cross-cultural awareness, and global citizenship. This diversity in terminology often leads to confusion and ambiguity in both theoretical frameworks and assessment methods.

The continuous debate among academics about the elements of intercultural competency presents still another major obstacle. To bridge the gap, institutions are supposed to select carefully the ICC model that suits their assessment goals. Even though many models are available, only a few are useful for assessments where language or communicative competence are viewed as essential aspects. The selection of an intercultural competence model is often based on the preference for a broad scope or narrow scope framework. Broad scope models present a general framework with a set of components such as attitudes, knowledge, skills, and outcomes that aim to cover the complexity of intercultural competence. However, narrow scope models focus on a specific single aspect like language proficiency, making them more targeted and easier to assess. Another factor is whether the model is empirically based, via actual data collected through quantitative and qualitative methods (such as the Intercultural Development Inventory, IDI), or theoretically based, which means that it is grounded from existing literature

and expert opinion, but not yet perhaps tested with actual data. For instance, Deardorff's (2006) model was developed theoretically, relying on expert agreement and a thorough review of previous researches.

Additionally, there is a difficulty in developing a suitable assessment tool that does not measure knowledge only as a component but focuses on the four components, Fantini (2009, p. 464) suggests the following assessment strategies and techniques offer a comprehensive understanding of learners' development:

- Close and open questions;
- Objective strategies that involve scoring (e.g., matching items, true/false questions, multiple choice questions, cloze or gap filling items);
- Oral and written activities (e.g., paraphrasing, translation, essay);
- Active and passive activities;
- Individual and interactive activities in pairs and groups;
- Dialogues, interviews, debates, and discussions;
- Demonstrations, poster sessions, role-plays and simulations;
- Structured and unstructured field tasks and experiences;
- Questionnaires that require self-evaluation, peer evaluation, group evaluation, and/or teacher evaluation.

2.7.2. Formats of Assessing ICC

Researchers find that ICC may indeed be evaluated successfully if a multidimensional and holistic approach is employed. The assessment of ICC is multiperspective, continuous, integrated, aligned and purposeful through a variety of techniques such as observations, interviews, and peer and self-evaluations (as cited in Deardorff 2006, p. 241). This mixed-

methods approach is considered essential to valid and reliable assessment processes (Deardorff, 2006, 2015).

According to Deardorff (2015), measuring outcomes through direct and indirect approaches illuminates students' learning outcomes more clearly, especially since such outcomes in international education are complex. One method alone creates too little data and is too risky. Furthermore, measuring ICC involves others to judge appropriateness of students' behavior and communication in intercultural contexts (Deardorff, 2009). In a similar vein, Fantini (2006, 2009) argues for the use of a multimodal approach that incorporates both indirect (e.g. presentations, inventories, reflective classroom activities) and direct assessments (e.g. tests). These diverse tools help educators monitor progress over time and support the holistic evaluation of learners' intercultural development.

Direct assessments, as characterized by Fantini (2009, p. 208), tend to be formal and scheduled and deal with tangible products such as assignments, projects, and presentations. One extremely prominent tool used to collect direct evidence is the e-portfolio, an intentional and structured process that helps learners critically examine their experience, assumptions, and cultural perceptions. Journaling and guided questions support deeper understanding and link personal learning to broader social and cultural contexts. It is a key ingredient in intercultural competence development and assessment, which provides students with a means of ordering work over time and reviewing their progress. E-portfolios facilitate consistent and meaningful evaluation of intercultural learning outcomes.

Some of the other direct assessment tools include critical thinking with guided journaling and prompts, which help students reflect on their own experience and become more culturally sensitive (Deardorff, 2006; Rice & Pollack, 2000). Performance-based assessment, such as host-family feedback and classroom observation, provide external feedback on students'

intercultural behavior. Learning contracts also allow learners to collaborate with each other in establishing their goals and creating their own measures of learning, promoting students' autonomy and relevance (Deardroff: 2015, p.75). The learning contracts may indicate:

- What specifically will be learned?
- How it will be learned?
- What is the timeline for learning to occur?
- What is the evidence of learning?
- What are the actions taken because of learning?

In contrast, indirect assessment tends to be informal and not written down; it focuses on learners' views and experiences. Indirect assessment includes interviews, focus groups, inventories, and self-report surveys, which take learners' intuitions regarding their intercultural learning. Although powerful, Fantini (2009, p. 208) advises that such measures need to read between the lines thoroughly and are to be supplemented by hard evidence since they typically account for perception rather than actual performance.

2.7.3. External Instruments for Assessing IC

Fantini (2006) presents a list of 44 different external tests that help in assessing ICC, each aiming at different aspects of this multifaceted construct. They can be found in academic literature, on the web, and commercially, with some being sent out for payment by specialist bodies. These tools can serve different purposes depending on how they are used. Predictive tests forecast an individual's future intercultural performance, while formative assessments provide ongoing feedback to support learning and improvement. Normative tests compare a person's competence to that of a reference group, and summative assessments evaluate overall

level of competence at the end of a learning period. As they can address and assess both language and cultural aspects.

While choosing an instrument, it is critical to know the focus of the instrument and make sure it aligns with your evaluation objectives. Utilizing a wrong tool can produce extraneous data. Since there is not one instrument that can measure all aspects of IC, multiple tools should be used together. It is recommended by Deardorff (2004, p. 203) and Fantini (2006) to keep the following points in mind while selecting an assessment tool:

- Is the instrument consistent with your learning goals and assessment purposes?
- Does it align with your overall assessment plan?
- Is it theory-derived?
- Is it culturally biased, or are there variations among groups?
- Is it at an appropriate level for the age and developmental stage of participants?
- What are the logistical requirements (e.g., cost, time, resources)?
- To whom are the results targeted to be sent—students, teachers, researchers, or administrators?

These are examples of External Instruments:

✓ **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)**

Hammer (2009) designed the IDI. It is a 50-questions instrument available either online or on paper. It takes merely 15–20 minutes to complete and provides a visual profile, positioning individuals or groups on an intercultural development continuum, ranging from monocultural to intercultural orientations.

✓ **Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC) Measures**

This tool measures both intercultural competence and language skills by tracking development over time through repeated evaluations. It captures changes in learners' attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors as they engage in cross-cultural interactions, it also observes their growing ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. To assess this progress, it offers normative, formative, and summative evaluations. The AIC specifically uses both self-reported and peer-reported questionnaires, along with structured interviews lasting approximately one hour. These methods collect both qualitative and quantitative data on an individual's intercultural experiences and competencies, providing a comprehensive picture of their development (Lombardi, 2010).

2.8. Impact of Social Media on ICC

The Digital technologies, and more particularly social media platforms, are important in shaping contemporary communication and enhancing worldwide interconnectedness by enabling rapid, diverse, and accessible forms of communication and information exchanges. With internet users continuing to grow globally, social media sites became deeply integrated into daily lives, affecting the ways individuals interact (Georgetown University, 2010 p.3).

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networking sites as digital spaces where individuals construct profiles, establish connections with personal and extended networks; however, the quality of these interactions may vary based on the site used (p.211). In these virtual spaces, individuals are enabled to express opinions publicly and take part in meaningful conversations as well (Georgetown University, 2010).

Metev and Veiko (2013) argue that social media united individuals from various backgrounds, reflecting the notion of the "global village" (as cited in Monika et al., 2019: p.483), in which cultural interactions are no longer constrained by geographical distance.

Meanwhile, Sawyer and Chen (2020) emphasize that social media revolutionized global communication by enhancing a sense of belonging and enabling individuals to extend their social networks beyond geographical borders. Lastly, social media is a potent tool for intercultural connection, enabling understanding and enhancing cultural adaptation in a world that is intensively networked (p.154).

According to Golbeck (2015), Social media facilitates communication and connection maintenance in any aspect of life. Through sharing everything from major events to everyday activities, it enables users to interact with one another, express themselves and create virtual avatars. Social media is a useful tool for investigators because of the digital trail that is created by this continuous engagement, which exposes social connections, personal characteristics, and actions. A key feature is the ability to share photos and videos, with sites and applications such as Facebook: a multipurpose platform with features like gaming, video streaming, and messaging, making it a major online gathering place for people of all ages; Instagram: popular among teenagers and young adults, mostly used for posting photos and short videos; YouTube: concentrates on providing visual materials like videos.

2.9. EI and ICC

Daniel Goleman (1995) proposed the theory of Emotional Intelligence as the capacity to know, comprehend, and control one's own and other people's emotions. This model extensively developed our knowledge about interpersonal relationships by conceptualizing five most significant dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 1995, 1998). Nevertheless, while widely used in other areas such as business and leadership, EI was given minimal focus in the context of intercultural education (Goleman, 1995).

One of the most significant elements of EI, empathy is central to ICC. Empathy, for Goleman (1995, 1998), enables people to observe and feel others' emotions. Guntersdorfer & Golubeva (2018) highlight that several models of intercultural communication indicate that empathy is both a precursor to and an outcome of ICC. Deardorff (2006), Ting-Toomey & Kurogi (1998) and Arasaratnam (2008) add that people with emotional intelligence are better able to establish significant relationships across cultures.

Guntersdorfer and Golubeva (2018) argue for a pedagogy that is active, asserting that empathy, along with other EI elements, is an attractive and achievable instructional goal within intercultural classrooms. Through the instruction of intercultural education, students will more easily be able to empathize with, as well as perceive the emotional reality of, culturally different others. While included in many ICC models (e.g., Hwang et al., 1980; Imahori & Lanigan, 1989; Gudykunst, 1993; Deardorff, 2006), empathy has often been vaguely defined or conceptualized. This lack of clarity spurred recent research efforts to deconstruct and develop practical approaches to implementing EI in intercultural education.

Guntersdorfer & Golubeva (2018) mentioned that at the 2016 the American Association of Teachers in Foreign Languages (ACTFL) conference, one scholar adamantly asserted, "Well, you can't teach empathy!" This brings to mind Davis's (1990) interpretation of Edith Stein's phenomenological perspective, a philosophical view that focuses on how we experience things from a first-person point of view. Where he contends that empathy cannot be enforced and simply taught like grammar or vocabulary, instead it is something much deeper. In short, empathy is a natural emotional response more than a skill we consciously practice.

Stein describes it as "nonprimordial", showing that empathy is not immediate or fully within our control. Instead, it is indirectly sensed and unteachable (Davis, 1990, p. 707). Yet, it can be developed and nurtured through structured interaction and reflection. Guntersdorfer and

Golubeva (2018) advocate for systematic integration of empathy-generating activities and content in intercultural education. This implies a move towards skills pedagogy in which emotional intelligence is not presupposed as natural but can be cultivated through instructional design.

Conclusion

Put briefly, Intercultural Communicative Competence is the point where linguistic capacity and cultural sensitivity come together, as it helps managing cross-cultural communication. ICC was examined from multiple angles in this chapter, tracing its evolution, key components, theoretical frameworks, and pedagogical applications. It also highlighted the teacher's central contribution to ICC development, the different teaching methods used to integrate it into classrooms, and the challenge of measuring it. In addition, the connection between emotional intelligence and the impact of digital tools like social media justifies the evolving and diverse nature of ICC in modern contexts. As language students and educators struggle to comprehend a growing multicultural world, the acquisition of ICC continues to be a basic aim along with enhancing communication, empathy, tolerance, and international comprehension.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATION

Introduction.....	65
3.1. Methodology and Data Collection Tools.....	65
3.2. Population and Sampling.....	66
3.3. Administration of Classroom Observation	66
3.3.1. Classroom Observation Questions.....	71
3.4. Analysis of the Observation	75
3.5. Summary of the Observation results.....	94
Conclusion.....	94

Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes the findings of the current study, which aims to investigate the relationship between EI and ICC in the EFL classroom. Two data collection tools were employed: a classroom observation, used to examine how students experience and respond to various situations, and a student questionnaire (Chapter 04), administered to second-year LMD students in the Department of Letters and English Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945-Guelma.

3.1. Methodology and Data Collection Tools

This research follows a descriptive approach, based on a combination of different data collection methods, where the research combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study. Quantitative methods focus on numerical data and patterns, while qualitative methods explore personal experiences and perspectives. This approach is especially useful for gaining both broad insights and deeper understanding of complex research (McLeod, 2024). The mixed method was chosen for this study because it helps to understand the data from different angles.

To achieve this, two data gathering tools were used: participant classroom observation and student questionnaire. The observation came first, where the researchers took part in the classroom activities and delivered the material. After the observation, a semi-structured questionnaire was handed out to gather student's opinions and personal reflections on their Emotional and Intercultural skills. Both the observation and the questionnaire were conducted with three randomly selected groups of second-year LMD students from the Department of Letters and English Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945-Guelma.

The first tool is classroom observation, used to see how students actually behave and interact in class. It helps the researchers notice how emotional and intercultural skills appear in real

classroom situations and how they affect communication. The second tool is a questionnaire given to EFL students; it aims to find out how much they know about Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence, and whether they see a link between them in real-life communication.

3.2. Population and Sampling

The sample of this study consists of second-year students majoring in English as a Foreign Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945-Guelma-Algeria. The overall population comprises 256 students, distributed on six groups. A sample of 75 students was available from three of these six groups. These three groups represent approximately half of the total population, they were supposed to provide a population of more than 120 students, but due to negligent absences at the end of the second semester and lack of commitment to voluntary research involvement, the researchers found themselves working with approximately half the targeted sample. Second-year students were selected for both classroom observation sessions and the questionnaire because they were directly relevant to the aims of the study. The research will devote a separate chapter (Chapter 4) to discuss the administration and analysis of the questionnaire results.

3.3. Administration and Description of the Classroom Observation

Executing this tool involved collecting data that helps the researchers understand how people behave and interact in semi-real life situations, through exposing them to culturally challenging settings and observing how they experience it or comment on it (George, 2023). This classroom observation was conducted as a primary tool; three randomly selected groups over two consecutive days, from April 27th to April 28th, 2025. During two sessions (one hour and a half for each session) for each group, the students were invited to watch the same videos and photos and answer the same questions that specifically addressed the same topics. In the course of the first session of each group, students were shown a short report on black refugees in the United

States, followed by a video featuring a young African refugee in Algeria speaking the Algerian dialect (The Links to the report and the video are included in Appendix A). These materials aimed to discuss the presence of black refugees in Algerian society. In the second session of each, the focus shifted to intercultural marriage where students were exposed to images from the wedding of Algerian footballer ‘Riyad Mahrez’ and his British wife ‘Taylor Ward’ (Pictures of the wedding are included in Appendix B).

For the groups, group one included 29 students who marked a high level of engagement during both sessions. The Oral Expression teacher's presence played a supportive role by guiding students when needed and occasionally participating in the discussions himself, which helped create a dynamic and interactive environment. With 27 students, the same teacher using the same method and materials led group two. For the third group, only 19 students were present, the other Oral Expression teacher was not present during the observation, so the researchers managed the sessions on their own.

After exposing them to the above-mentioned materials, and in order to guide the discussions, Yes/No, open-ended and provoking questions were prepared based on both materials. These questions encouraged students to express their opinions, share personal experiences, and critically engage with cultural differences’ stereotypes. Their reactions were varied; some responded with logical reasoning, while others relied more on emotional expression. However, a few cases of aggressive responses were observed as well, especially with the first discussed material.

Students showed a high level of interaction and engagement throughout the sessions. Their responses were analyzed using an observation checklist that was designed in the form of rubrics and organized into three main sections comprising seventeen (17) criteria. The first section

focused on indicators of emotional intelligence, the second on the components of intercultural communicative competence, and the third examined the interconnection between EI and ICC.

Speaking about the measurement of the appearance of each criterion, in order to measure how frequently each criterion appeared during the sessions, a simple mathematical formula was applied to determine whether each criterion was **met**, **to a degree**, or **not met**. Through the use of the following mathematical formula:

Number of times a criterion appeared $\times 100\% \div$ total number of sessions (6 sessions)

The following tables represent the checklists designed the researchers using Goleman's (1998) five Components of Ei: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, and linked them to certain emotional competencies. Additionally, the checklists include the four essential components of ICC: attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills, and actions as cited in The Council of Europe (2014). These elements were used to evaluate the manifestation of the variables of the study with all their nuances:

3.Students show openness and curiosity about other cultures OR perspectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.Students adapt culturally appropriate language and style.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5.Teacher uses real-life or authentic materials related to different cultures.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.Students are aware of cultural norms or misunderstandings.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The link between EI and ICC						
1.Student moderates tone or emotion based on cultural context	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2.Student uses emotional awareness to respond to cultural feedback or humor	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3.Emotional safety in the classroom leads to more open cultural sharing	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.Student remains calm and respectful in a cultural disagreement	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. shows awareness of cultural stereotypes in class discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Table3.1: The Observation checklists

3.3.1. Classroom Observation Questions

First Session: Refugees in U.S and Algeria

Introductory Questions:

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word refugee?
2. Do you know the difference between a refugee and an immigrant? Why do people become refugees?

Material 01: Exposing them to pictures of refugees (See Pictures in Appendix A)

Material 02: Exposing them to a report about black refugees in USA (See Report in Appendix A), then asking them the following questions:

3. Why do you think many refugees try to go to countries like the U.S.? What do you think refugees expect to find when they arrive in a country like the U.S.?
4. What surprised you about their experience in America?
5. Do you think media like the provided video shows refugees in a positive or negative way in America?
6. What about American films, social media?
7. Do you believe refugees are treated fairly in the U.S.? Why or why not?
8. If u think they are not treated well do they deserve it or not? Why?
9. Who do you think benefits more from these moments — the refugees or the people welcoming them? Why?
10. What about our country? Are they welcomed?

11. If you had the power to change one law or policy about refugees in Algeria, what would you change?

Material 03: Exposing them to a video of an Algerian man welcoming Malian Kids (See link in Appendix A), then asking them the following questions:

12. Do you agree with the man who is welcoming them in Algeria? Do you think that it is okay to let them live among us?

13. Have you ever communicated with them? When you meet them what do you do usually?

14. Would you like them to stay or prefer them to go back to their country?

Students were also asked to plot where they think a refugee feels each emotion from the video or the role-play and add words or symbols for each stage. On the blackboard or a sheet of paper, they were invited to draw a line from:

Fear → Confusion → Relief → Hope → Belonging.

Then, they were provoked to discuss: What helps move someone from fear to hope? And the provided options were:

- Kindness from locals
- Education opportunities
- Government/legal support
- Learning the language
- Being listened to
- Community programs
- Time and emotional healing

Material 04: Exposing them to videos of refugees in Algeria, then asking them the following questions:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the content of the video?

Second Session: The intercultural Marriage

Introductory questions:

1. Do you think that Algerians are open towards other cultures?
2. In your opinion, what are the main cultural differences between Algerian and Western societies?
3. Do you think that personal choices like marriage should be influenced by one's cultural background? Why not?

Material 01: Traditional Clothes: Exposing them to pictures of Tylor wearing Algerian Traditional clothes (See Picture in Appendix B)

4. What do Algerians think when a non-Algerian woman wears traditional Algerian clothing?
5. Do they view it as cultural appreciation or appropriation?

Material 02: Lifestyle : Exposing them to her video of Christmas decoration (See link in Appendix B)

6. How do people perceive Taylor's lifestyle in relation to Algerian culture?
7. Is there a sense that her lifestyle aligns with or diverges from traditional Algerian values?

Material 03: Friendship with a Male Best Friend:

8. What is the public opinion on a woman having a male best friend while being married in the Algerian society?

9. Do people view this as acceptable or inappropriate within Algerian cultural norms?

Material 04: Social Media Impact : Exposing them to Her Instagram account and feed.

(See link in Appendix B)

10. How did Algerian fans react to Taylor Ward's presence on social media?

11. What role does social media play in shaping perceptions of her lifestyle and career?

12. Does one culture tend to dominate a relationship, or do couples from various cultural backgrounds usually compromise equally?

13. Do you believe that multicultural relationships are commonly accepted in Algerian society?

14. What kind of challenges do you think a couple from two different cultures might face in Algeria?

15. Do Algerian women face more social criticism than males in cross-cultural relationships?

16. When living overseas, are Algerians more receptive to cultural diversity than when they are at home?

17. Have you ever interacted with a person from a different religion or culture? What feelings or thoughts resulted from that experience?

18. Should children from multicultural households be raised in a single cultural context or should both cultures be equally represented?

Concluding Questions:

19. If someone close to you married someone from a totally different culture or religion, how do you think you would feel about it? Why?

20. If someone close to you married someone from a different culture, what advice would you give them?

21. How would you feel if someone from a different religion comes to your country and try to build a place to worship and practice his own religion?

3.4. Analysis of the Observation

3.4.1. Section One: Emotional Intelligence (EI) Indicators

The table 3.2 provides a detailed assessment of key EI indicators observed in the classroom. Each indicator is evaluated using a three-point scale "**Met**," "**To a degree**," and "**Not met**", to determine the extent to which these indicators are demonstrated by the participants in the educational environment.

The first criterion “**Students recognize and name their emotional state**”, refers to when students identify and articulate their current emotional experience during classroom activities. Across six sessions, 66% of the students demonstrated a clear ability to recognize and name the emotional states during the discussions, often expressing how they felt when facing challenges. For instance, many students when debating Black African refugees, expressed feelings of discomfort and disapproval of the refugees’ behaviors through using emotional terms such as “**They are annoying**” or “**disrespectful.**” These comments reflect their awareness of their emotions, indicating an average level of emotional awareness even if their expressions were not always framed in the most respectful or kind way.

In contrast, 33% of the students demonstrated limited emotional awareness, suggesting that although they may have perceived changes in their emotional state, they struggled to clearly identify or express those feelings, through using reacting with facial expressions only even when the observers asked them directly. Still, none of the students completely failed to recognize their emotional state, indicating a generally solid baseline of emotional self-awareness across the observed groups.

The second criterion “**Students express their feelings appropriately**” indicates the way students communicate their emotional states in socially acceptable and constructive ways. 66% of the students were observed to express their emotions using respectful language, maintaining composure, and expressing discomfort or confusion in a manner that supports a positive classroom climate.

When students were asked if refugees should be allowed to stay in their country, they first asked whether the question referred to **Syrian refugees** or **Black African refugees**, and their answers changed depending on the group. Most students were more accepting of Syrian refugees. However, some gave strong emotional responses about Black African refugees, saying

things like: **“We shouldn't give them freedom because they started attacking us.”** These responses showed real emotions, but they were sometimes harsh and not very respectful. On the other hand, some students gave more thoughtful answers, such as: **“If they behave well, they can stay.”** This shows that while some students were upset, others were able to express their feelings in a more respectful and socially aware way.

However, 16% of the students expressed their emotions in ways that were only occasionally appropriate, either hesitating, withdrawing, or showing fluctuating levels of clarity in communication like raising their voices during the discussion. Another 16% of the students displayed low levels of emotional expression, including signs of frustration, discomfort, or emotional shutdown, raising voices or using nonverbal cues such as frowning and giving an impassive face expression rather than explicit language indicating the need for more support in managing and expressing feelings effectively.

The findings showed that the third criterion **“Students demonstrate empathy during interaction & group work”** is highly met. Data revealed that 66% of the students demonstrated a strong capacity for empathy, offering help, which indicates sensitivity to the emotions of others and contributes to collaborative learning during peer interaction and group work.

As an example, during the classroom observation, students were asked: **“If someone close to you married someone from a totally different culture or religion, how do you think you would feel about it? Why?”** In response, one student shared a personal story about her relative who had married someone from a different cultural background. As she spoke, another student responded empathetically, saying: **“That must have been difficult for your family at first, but it's really good they're happy now.”** He then added: **“I think it's brave to face those kinds of challenges.”** This exchange demonstrated that her classmates had listened carefully, recognized the emotional significance of the story, and responded with kindness and support. It

reflects a clear moment of empathy during group interaction, showing emotional sensitivity and social awareness in a respectful learning environment.

Meanwhile, 33% showed empathy on a more superficial or inconsistent level, participating but not always engaging emotionally or supportively. No students were found to be entirely lacking in empathy, which indicates a positive, collaborative classroom climate overall.

The fourth criterion is “**Students stay engaged despite making mistakes**” This criterion reflects students' emotional resilience that is shown through their continuous participation and engagement even after experiencing setbacks or correction.

These results yielded a strong outcome, as 100% of the students remained engaged and involved in the learning process despite making mistakes. This complete absence of disengagement indicates not only a well developed sense of a healthy resilience but also shows that the classroom environment fosters a supportive atmosphere that encourages risk-taking and persistence.

The fifth criterion is “**Students offer emotional support to peers**”. This involves students encouraging classmates who are nervous, offering kind words or helping each other reduce tension in group activities.

Over half the students (66%) showed emotional support through clear verbal encouragement and nonverbal cues. During discussions, they used phrases like 'I agree with you,' 'That's true,' and 'Good point' to support their classmates' ideas. In addition to words, they also used facial expressions such as nodding and smiling to show they were engaged and respectful. These behaviors helped create a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere where students felt comfortable sharing their thoughts

The other 33 % offered emotional support inconsistently or in more passive ways, such as observing without active participation. Notably, no students were observed actively with holding or resisting peer support, pointing to a generally supportive peer culture.

According to the observation data, the sixth criterion **“Teacher helps students manage anxiety or fear of speaking”** was fully met, with a 100% of students benefiting from teachers’ support. Such practices helped students build confidence, reduce anxiety, and feel emotionally supported during oral interactions leading to zero instances of observed neglect in this area across all groups.

In both Group One and Group Two, the teacher demonstrated a clear ability to recognize student’s fear of public speaking and implement strategies to moderate that anxiety, including positive reinforcement, encouraging participation without judgment, modeling vulnerability to make students feel more comfortable. In Group 3, where the teacher was absent, the observers took responsibility for creating a non-threatening and supportive atmosphere.

3.4.2. Second session ICC Indicators

Table 3.3 Intercultural Communicative Competence Indicator

Criteria		C1			C2			C3			C4			C5			C6		
Groups	Sessions	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low
Group 01	Session 01	X			X			X			X			X			X		
	Session 02	X			X			X			X			X			X		
Group 02	Session 01		X			X		X					X	X				X	
	Session 02			X	X				X			X		X					X
Group 03	Session 01	X			X			X				X		X			X		
	Session 02		X			X		X			X			X				X	
Total (N)		3	2	1	4	2	0	5	1	0	4	2	0	6	0	0	3	2	1
Percentage (%)		50%	33%	16%	66%	33%	0%	83%	16%	0%	50%	33%	16%	100%	0%	0%	50%	33%	16%
Total Percentage (%)		100%			100%			100%			100%			100%			100%		

The first criterion **“Students express curiosity about other cultures”** measures student's willingness to learn about and explore cultural practices, beliefs, and communication styles different from their own. As the table indicates, 50% of the students showed curiosity about other cultures during discussions on refugees and intercultural marriage.

When shown images of Riyad Mahrez and his wife, they reacted with interest, making comments like **“Taylor’s clothes are cultural appreciation.”** Others reflected on how Mahrez’s exposure to other cultures may have influenced his mindset. These responses indicate that students were not only interested in appearance or lifestyle, but also in how culture shapes identity and personal choices. Their engagement reflects a genuine curiosity about cultural differences and how they affect real-life relationships (see AppendixB).

A further 33% demonstrated moderate curiosity, often reacting positively to cultural information but without deep engagement or inquiry. Meanwhile, 16% of the students, especially in Group 2, students mostly remained silent during discussions, which may suggest a limited level of intercultural curiosity or a lack of genuine interest. This highlights the need to use more engaging and interactive materials to spark their curiosity.

The second criterion **“Students avoid stereotypes or challenge them respectfully”** involves students recognizing and avoiding using the generalizations about cultural groups.

The data revealed that 66% of the students actively challenged stereotypes in respectful ways, showing critical awareness of cultural generalizations during discussions. A proof of this is their ability to distinguish between racial identity and behavior when speaking about refugees claiming that **“It is not about race, but about acts of corruption”**.

Another 33% managed to avoid stereotypes but did not always challenge them, indicating a more passive approach to cultural sensitivity, such as when asked whether women in Algeria is allowed to be influencers, a few students replied, **“It’s okay if she’s respectful,”** or **“It**

depends on what kind of content she posts.” These comments did not support the stereotype that women should stay out of public roles, but also did not oppose classmates who disapproved of women being visible online as well. Importantly, none of students promoted or reinforced stereotypes, reflecting effective classroom management and prior exposure to inclusive values

A substantial majority, 83% of students, engaged thoughtfully with alternative worldviews and showed willingness to listen or adapt and express openness to cultural integration, particularly in the context of intercultural marriage. Which means that the third criterion **“Students show openness towards different cultural perspectives”** is evident.

Students noted that while cultural differences can pose challenges, highlighting that **“a shared culture could be created between partners”**. Additionally, several students emphasized the importance of giving children the freedom to form their own cultural identity, stating that children **“can learn both cultures and decide as they mature”**. Yet, their acceptance was typically reserved for those who shared similar religious values.

However, 16% of students remained neutral or hesitant when discussing topics such as **having a male best friend for women or a female best friend for men**. While they did not explicitly reject the idea, they also refrained from fully accepting it, often expressing discomfort or uncertainty. This cautious stance appeared to be influenced by prevailing cultural and religious norms in Algerian Muslim society, where such relationships are generally viewed as inappropriate. Despite varying degrees of engagement, all students showed at least minimal openness to intercultural perspectives.

Observation data revealed that the fourth criterion **“Students adapt culturally appropriate language and style”** is 50% met, since of the students actively adjusted their language and communication style to suit culturally appropriate contexts. These students demonstrated awareness by using polite expressions, avoiding culturally insensitive terms, and showing

consideration for differing norms of interaction. For instance, saying that **“this land is God’s land”**, when talking about refugees. This shows a respectful and inclusive way of expressing the idea that all people are welcome, using religious language that aligns with local values instead of political or harsh words. In other terms, it reflects both linguistic flexibility and cultural sensitivity that are essential components of effective intercultural communication.

Another 33% tried to adapt, though inconsistently or with occasional misunderstandings, indicating emerging but underdeveloped intercultural pragmatics. Such as claiming, **“foreign men treat women better than Algerian men”**. While this shows a cultural comparison, the used language sounds judgmental. The student here was trying to express her point of view but struggles with culturally appropriate expression, which indicates that her intercultural communication skills are still developing. The remaining 16% showed no visible effort to adapt, which suggests a noticeable gap in their ability to navigate culturally nuanced communication.

The fifth criterion **“Teacher uses real-life or authentic materials related to different cultures”** is fully met in 100% of the observed sessions. As the observers integrate culturally diverse pictures, videos into the observation, offering students a more experiential and meaningful engagement with other cultures, fostering a deeper intercultural understanding. By engaging students with authentic cultural expressions, these materials offer rich contextual learning, which significantly contributes to the development of both intercultural competence and cultural sensitivity. The consistent presence of such materials across all sessions reflects a strong pedagogical commitment to diversity and cultural relevance. No sessions were found lacking in this aspect, indicating a deliberate and effective effort by the observers to promote intercultural awareness in the classroom.

The sixth criterion **“Students are aware of cultural norms or misunderstanding”**, marked

a 66% ‘high’ rating indicates that the majority of students hold a clear understanding of cultural norms and were able to navigate potential misunderstandings effectively. This was evident in conversations about how Algerians are perceived abroad, students expressed awareness of cultural misunderstandings. One student remarked: **“When we go abroad, people misunderstand us too.”** showing an awareness that cultural behaviors and values can be interpreted differently depending on the context. Similarly, when discussing how foreigners may view Algerian gender norms, some students mentioned that others might see them as strict or conservative, especially regarding interactions between boys and girls.

Only 33% of them were rated ‘medium’ suggesting that while they often identify cultural differences, they occasionally misinterpret or fail to respond appropriately. No ‘low’ ratings were recorded, which suggests that all students exhibited at least a basic level of cultural awareness, with none entirely lacking the ability to recognize or respond to cultural variation.

3.4.3. Third Section: The Link between EI and ICC

Table 3.4 The Link between EI and ICC

Criteria		C1			C2			C3			C4			C5		
Groups	Sessions	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low
Group 01	Session 01	X			X			X			X			X		
	Session 02	X			X			X			X			X		
Group 02	Session 01		X			X		X				X			X	
	Session 02		X			X			X		X					X
Group 03	Session 01	X			X			X			X			X		
	Session 02	X				X		X				X		X		
Total (N)		4	2	0	3	3	0	5	1	0	4	2	0	4	1	1
Percentage (%)		66%	33%	0%	50%	50%	0%	83%	16%	0%	66%	33%	0%	66%	16%	16%
Total Percentage (%)		100%			100%			100%			100%			100%		

The first criterion **“Students moderate tone or emotion based on cultural context”** evaluates their ability to adjust their emotional expression such as humor according to culturally appropriate norms. This skill reflects both emotional regulation and intercultural sensitivity, which are essential for respectful and effective communication in diverse settings. 66% of students successfully adopted their emotional expression through phrases like “I understand your point” or staying calm and composed during a group discussion, even if they strongly disagree.

The remaining 33% displayed a partial ability in this area, showing occasional mismatches between emotional expression and situational expectations. Notably, no students were completely unaware of emotional appropriateness, suggesting a foundational level of awareness across the observed groups.

The findings revealed that half of the observed population met the second criterion, **“Students use emotional awareness to respond to cultural feedback or humor”**, with a percentage of 50% of the sample were able to apply EI in interpreting and responding appropriately to culturally specific feedback or jokes emotionally attuned to these cultural cues. This criterion was mostly observed while discussing the second topic of the intercultural marriage.

Whereas, the other half (50%) struggled to fully interpret or react suitably to such cues, often displaying uncertainty or neutral reactions. No students responded inappropriately or with complete unawareness indicating a baseline level of emotional control and cultural respect, even when full comprehension was lacking.

The third criterion **“Emotional safety in the classroom leads to more open cultural sharing”** reflects the extent to which students feel emotionally secure enough to engage in intercultural dialogues and share personal experiences. This criterion highlights the impact of a

supportive and non-judgmental classroom environment on developing intercultural communication.

Results indicated that an impressive 83% of students felt emotionally secure enough to share their own cultural experiences or participate in culturally sensitive discussions. As mentioned in the previous example of the intercultural marriage, where students openly shared the stories of their relatives, which demonstrates a strong connection between emotional safety and intercultural openness.

The remaining 16% of students appeared more reserved, suggesting a potential need for additional confidence-building strategies to encourage fuller participation. As a result, not a single student refrained from engaging entirely, indicating that even the more hesitant individuals experienced a basic level of emotional security within the classroom environment.

The fourth criterion “**Student remains calm and respectful in a cultural disagreement**” shows the student’s ability to manage emotional responses during intercultural conflict or differing cultural perspectives. It also involves maintaining a respectful tone and open-minded attitude in culturally sensitive discussions

Observation data indicated that about two-thirds (66%) of students even when expressed disagreement such as rejecting the idea of welcoming refugees, **they did so without verbal aggression**, using calm language and maintaining a respectful tone. This reflects a basic level of emotional regulation and respect for differing viewpoints, even when discussing controversial or sensitive topics. With maintaining composure and respect when facing cultural disagreements, navigating these moments through emotional regulation. Meanwhile, 33% showed some signs of emotional discomfort, such as defensiveness, with zero instances of disrespect observed.

This suggests that, although emotional regulation during disagreement may still need development for some, a foundational level of respect and awareness is present across the group.

The fifth and last criterion **“awareness of cultural stereotypes in class discussion”** examines their ability to recognize when a stereotype arises during conversation and either avoid its use or critically address their opinions and arguments.

Findings revealed that 66% of students demonstrated clear awareness of how stereotypes can shape or influence perceptions. During the observation, the researchers asked **whether students were familiar with Western stereotypes about Algeria**. The students mentioned that foreigners often view Algerians as very strict, especially concerning girls’ freedom. This indicates that the students are aware of how their culture is perceived through a cultural lens, and that such perceptions do not always reflect the reality.

However, 16% were indifferent or unaware, and another 16% showed evidence of stereotypical thinking, marking this as one of the few areas where some improvement is needed. For example, claiming that all **refugees are uneducated or the use of “People from that country, they..”**, all these are considered as over generalization. Such act shows the importance of helping students think critically and respect cultural differences.

3.5. Summary of the Observation Results

The classroom observations showed a generally positive integration of Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence in the EFL context. The majority of students demonstrated the ability to identify, articulate, and express their emotions in a way that is suitable, creating a respectful, emotionally supportive, and engaging classroom climate. Key emotional competencies such as empathy, resilience, and emotional regulation were frequently observed, as students maintained engagement despite their mistakes and offered emotional

support to peers. The role of teachers was also important in fostering such an environment through reducing their anxiety and promoting emotional safety.

In terms of ICC, students showed curiosity about other cultures, openness towards other perspectives, and the capacity to question stereotypes. Many adjusted their communication styles to cultural norms. This positive outcome was reinforced through the ongoing use of authentic, culturally relevant materials that linked between learning and real life situations.

The results highlight that students who demonstrated higher levels of emotional intelligence were also more likely to engage respectfully and openly in intercultural communication. For instance, students who were able to manage their emotions in culturally sensitive situations were also those who adapted their communication style, challenged stereotypes, and expressed curiosity toward other cultures. Additionally, emotional safety, guided by the teacher's support, was essential in enabling open, thoughtful cultural sharing.

In sum, the findings suggest that fostering both variables, EI and ICC, leads EFL classrooms to become more inclusive, empathetic, and communicatively effective environments.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the practical aspect of the current study, through analyzing the data gathered via the classroom observation and the student's questionnaire. These tools were used to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence in the EFL classroom.

The results showed that there is an obvious link between both variables. In other words, students who demonstrated higher levels of emotional intelligence also showed more effective and respectful intercultural communication. The analysis further highlighted that fostering emotional awareness, empathy, and self-regulation in the classroom contributes significantly to

enhancing learner's ability to navigate cultural differences and engage meaningfully in diverse communicative situations. This study confirmed that developing student's emotional intelligence is not only beneficial for their personal growth but also essential for building a cultivated, tolerant, more respectful, and communicatively competent learning environment.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction.....	97
4.1. Means of Data Collection	97
4.2. Population of the Study.....	98
4.3. Results' Analysis	99
4.4. Summary of Results from Students' Questionnaire	142
Conclusion.....	143

Introduction

The current study aims to explore the link between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competences in EFL classrooms. To reach this aim, second year EFL learners from the Department of Letters and English Language in Guelma University participated to give their own views about this subject. This chapter is devoted to present the sample of the study. It also centers on describing the data collection tool, then analyzing the results according to the students' answers.

4.1. Means of Data Collection

Researchers differ in their research methods in the scientific inquiry, developing distinct methods for data collection. To increase the researcher's credibility in this quasi-experimental study, a quantitative qualitative approach was employed, using a questionnaire as the secondary tool to collect data from university students, mainly their attitudes and perceptions. This method was chosen to facilitate a systematic exploration of the relationship between EI and ICC. The questionnaire contains 36 questions that were divided into four sections; each section contains different kinds of questions. That is to say, either multiple choice questions in which the participants were required to select box (es) that correspond to their answers, or open-ended questions that enable learners to express their opinions and ideas. Each of the four sections was designed to gather specific types of information relevant to the research objectives.

Section One: General Information (Q1–Q5): This section collects background data about the participants, such as gender, years of EFL study, self-assessed language proficiency, motivation for studying English, and satisfaction with their academic experience. These questions help contextualize the participants and provide a demographic overview of the sample.

Section Two: Emotional Intelligence (Q6–Q15); it focuses on emotional intelligence. It includes both closed- and open-ended questions that assess participants' awareness, understanding, and management of emotions. The questions explore key components such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and decision-making, all of which are fundamental to evaluating EI.

Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence (Q16–Q26); it investigates participants' attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to cultural awareness and interaction. It assesses their understanding of cultural diversity, recognition of cultural differences, and the frequency and nature of cultural discussions in the classroom. Questions also examine their ability to adapt communication styles in multicultural contexts.

Section Four: Link between Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence (Q27–Q34); the final section is specifically designed to explore the perceived relationship between EI and IC. Participants are asked to reflect on how emotional skills might influence their ability to communicate effectively across cultures. This section helps establish whether learners themselves recognize a connection between these two constructs.

4.2. Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of second-year EFL students from Guelma University. 256 students make up the students' body; however, 75 participants represent the real sample. Second year students were chosen for two main reasons: first, they represent an intermediate stage in their academic journey where they started acquiring their foundational knowledge and are beginning to engage more with both linguistic and cultural aspects of language learning. At the same time, they represent a larger number of the population which entails that their perceptions carry more weight and offer a broader view of common attitudes and behaviors, compared to a smaller population. The same sample went through observation and

questionnaire. Since they gathered some information in the observation, so at the end of its session they were exposed to answer the questionnaire according to what they learned and knew from the observation. The sample represented three groups out of six from the population.

4.3. Results' Analysis

The following sections deal with the analysis of the results extracted from the students' questionnaire.

4.3.1 Section One: Background Information

Q1- What is your gender?

Table 4.1

Students' Gender

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Females	60	80%
Males	15	20%
Total	75	100%

As revealed in Table 4.1, 80% of the students are females and only (20%) are males. This indicates a **gender imbalance** in the sample, with females being four times more represented than males. As it suggests that in comparison to males, females are more interested in learning foreign languages.

Q2- How many years have you been learning English (including this year)?

Table 4.2

Students' Years of Studying English

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
9 years	67	89%
10 years	08	11%
Total	75	100%

As shown in the table 4.2, most of the sample (89%) answered that they have been studying English for 9 years, however, 11% have been learning it for 10 years. The precedent results entail that the students gained a significant experience in studying English.

Q3- How would you describe your level of English language mastery?

a- Beginner

b-Intermediate

c-Advanced

Table 4.3

Student's Level of English Language Mastery

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Beginner	05	07%
Intermediate	51	68%
Advanced	19	25%
Total	75	100%

In table 4.3, the results show that the majority of students (68%) consider themselves as intermediate learners of English. A smaller group (25%) reported an advanced level, while only a few students (7%) described their level as beginner. This indicates that most students feel confident in using English, although they may be still in the process of improving their skills.

The presence of advanced learners also suggests that a small amount of the participants reached a higher degree of fluency. Since only a small number of students identified as beginners, we assume that the overall English competence in the groups is moderate to high.

Q4- Is studying English your own choice? a-Yes b-No

Table 4.4

Student's Decision of Studying EFL

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	66	88%
No	09	12%
Total	75	100%

Based on the findings presented in Table 4.4, a large majority of the students (88%) claimed that studying English was their own choice, while only 12% said it was not their choice. The fact that 88% of students decided to study English voluntarily suggests that most participants are likely motivated and interested in the subject. This may positively influence their learning outcomes and willingness to communicate.

Q5- To which extent are you satisfied with studying English at the University of Guelma?

a- Satisfied

b-Neutral

c-Not satisfied

Table 4.5

Student's Satisfaction with Studying English at Guelma University

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Satisfied	29	37%
Neutral	40	53%
Not satisfied	06	08%
Total	75	100%

According to the results showed in the table 4.5, more than half the students (53%) feel neutral about their experience of learning English at the University of Guelma, while 37% are satisfied. This suggests that although some students have a positive view, many may feel indifferent or unsure about the quality or the effectiveness of the programs. A small percentage (08%) expressed dissatisfaction, which is relatively low.

4.3.2. Section Two: Emotional Intelligence

Q6- Have you heard of the term emotional intelligence (EI) before?

a- Yes If so, what does it mean to you?

b- No

Table 4.6

Student's Prior Awareness of the Term Emotional Intelligence

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	51	68%
No	24	32%
Total	75	100%

According to table 4.6, 68% reported that they already heard of the term emotional intelligence, while 32% said they did not. The majority of the students are familiar with the term **EI**, which suggests a good level of general awareness. However, the 32% who are unfamiliar with the term indicate that EI is not universally known, even among university-level English students.

Explanations of those who answered with “yes”:

- “The ability to understand one’s own emotions.”
- “The ability to manage emotions.”
- “The ability to understand my emotions and those of others.”
- “Emotional intelligence helps dealing with people.”
- “I don’t know it in depth, but I believe it helps people to be aware of what they feel.”
- “Some people use it as a tool of manipulation.”
- “Understand and manage your own emotions.”
- “To know how to control your emotions.”
- “Someone who understand his/her emotions.”
- “Is being aware of the emotions that you have and not letting them control your actions”
- “The ability to manage and express your own emotions and recognize and influence the emotions of others.”
- “The ability of empathize with others without bias.”
- “Ability to manage, express and deal with others effectively.”
- “I think it is about how to understand people.”
- “It means controlling your emotions.”
- “You think with your heart.”
- “Using emotions with intelligence.”

- “Unlike other types of intelligence, it focuses on how a person can handle interactions with other humans, and how to handle communication and analyze their characters to deal with them appropriately.”
- “It is the way we analyze people’s feelings and link it to thinking.”
- “To know if your feelings are valid or not.”
- “Acting wisely in social situations.”
- “It depends on my reaction in bad situations on the relationship.”
- “I think it’s to understand how people think and feel.”
- “To be emotionally aware and have decent knowledge for quick good decision making”
- “Being smart in relationships.”
- “Handling relationships well.”

The students’ definitions of emotional intelligence reflect a general awareness of key components such as self awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy. Many responses (e.g., “controlling your emotions,” “understand and manage your emotions”) align with well-established EI models, such as Goleman’s framework. Others showed personal insights, suggesting EI as “being smart in relationships” or a way to “act wisely in social situations”. Very few responses, however, some showed some misconceptions such as considering EI as thinking with heart, or describing it as “a tool of manipulation” which indicates that while the term is familiar, deeper conceptual understanding varies across the sample.

Q7- Emotional intelligence is essential for healthy relationships.

a- Agree

b-Neutral

c-Disagree

Table 4.7*Student's Perception of the Importance of EI in Maintaining Healthy Relationships*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Agree	50	67%
Neutral	15	20%
Disagree	10	13%
Total	75	100%

As represented in table 4.7, the majority of students (67%) agreed that emotional intelligence is essential for healthy relationships. Proving a positive perception of EI and its role in social life and communication in general. Besides 20% of the sample who gave a neutral response, they seemed unsure possibly due to limited understanding of the concept. While 13% disagreed.

Q8- Do you believe emotional intelligence is something you are born with or something that can be developed over time?

- a. Born with it – People either have it or they don't
- b. Learned – You can develop it over time
- c. A little of both – Some people are naturally more emotionally intelligent, but others can improve

Tables 4.8

Student's Perspective about whether Emotional Intelligence is Innate or Learned

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
A	11	15%
B	28	37%
C	36	48%
Total	75	100%

In table 4.8, 48% of students believe emotional intelligence is both natural and learnable. This indicates that the large majority of students think that EI can be developed, whether entirely through learning or as a mix of natural ability and growth. While 37% believe it can be completely learned over time. Only 15% think people are born with it and cannot change, reflecting an ignorance of the well-established fact that EI can be improved through education and life experiences.

Students suggestions of ways to improve emotional intelligence:

- “Through using critical thinking skills on parallel with emotions.”
- “Being aware of your words and actions, paying attention to other people’s feelings.”
- “When dealing with people.”
- “Social interaction.”
- “Whenever someone is getting mature over time.”
- “According to our intercatations and experiences with other people. Also, we can improve it by reading psychological books. I think we have to improve it to avoid future misunderstandings with others, because it helps indeed in making good relationships.”
- “By analyzing people’s emotions and how they react to things”

- “By listening carefully to others, managing stress and learning to express feelings in a healthy way.”
- “Socilizing.”
- “It can be improved with experiences and life lessons.”
- “By being kind.”
- “Dealing with people and working to develop yourself more will make you an effective emotional intelligent person.”
- “Learned with experiences.”
- “Talking with others to expand your point of view.”
- “It is related to personality of each person but all people develop it with life experiences and social interactions.”
- “It can be improved with self awareness.”
- “By focusing on what the person in front of you is saying.”
- “Experiences that a person faces in his life.”
- “It is a skill you can practice like understanding feelings and reacting better.”
- “By exposing ourselves to situations where we require EI.”
- “See a therapist.”
- “If you are a critical thinker, a person who mostly likes to analyze and interpret human behaviors and actions the one who listens more than talk, you would definitely understand human psychology.”
- “It can be improved when you realize that you don’t have to use emotions in some logical situations.”
- “It comes naturally when needed.”
- “Depends on everyone’s personality.”
- “Through social interactions and dealing more with different mentalities.”

- “By exchanging ideas outside your comfort zone.”
- “Dealing with people as much as you can.”
- “Past experiences are a main tool.”
- “Making efforts to understand others.”
- “Improved through experiences because it is a skill we can practice.”

Students view emotional intelligence as a developable skill, shaped by life experiences, social engagement, self-awareness or even cognitive reflection. Their responses suggest a mature understanding that EI is not fixed, as well as proposing some strategies from personal to social ones as interacting with diverse individuals which can foster its growth. This reinforces the study findings, where a combined 85% of students believe EI is either learnable or a mix of innate and learnable qualities.

Q9- How often do you acknowledge your feelings before responding to a challenging situation?

Table 4.9

Frequency of Student's Self-awareness before Reacting to Challenging Situations

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Always	26	35%
Sometimes	43	57%
Never	06	08%
Total	75	100%

As presented in table 4.9, the majority of students are aware of their emotions when facing difficult situations. More than half the participants (57%) take time to acknowledge their feelings sometimes; whereas 35% of them do this consistently. Only a small group (08%) said they never stop to reflect before reacting. This explicitly implies that the majority of students are conscious, which may help them interact better with others.

Table 4.11

Student's Perception of the Impact of Emotional Management on Stress Coping Ability

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	74	99%
No	01	01%
Total	75	100%

The answers to this question as reflected in table 4.11 show that 99% of respondents believe that managing emotions helps them cope better in stressful settings. This strong agreement shows it all, it suggests that students are fully aware of the practical benefits of EI in daily life, particularly in handling stress related to different reasons. In the other hand, only one student disagreed to this idea.

Q12- When you have to make an important decision, are you the kind of person who:

(Choosing more than one option)

- a- Let emotions completely take over, and decide impulsively
- b- take time and think twice before making the decision
- c- Ask someone for advice or support
- d- Pray or seek spiritual/religious guidance before deciding
- e- Delay or avoid the decision due to emotional stress

Table 4.12*Student's Preferred Strategy for Handling Emotions during Important Decision-making*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
b	31	41%
c+ e	01	01%
a+ d	03	04%
d	05	07%
b + d	17	23%
c + d	01	01%
b +c	05	07%
b + e	02	03%
c	03	04%
a + c	04	05%
a	03	04%
Total	75	100%

In table 4.12, the majority of students (41%) prefer to think carefully before making important decisions, showing a tendency toward emotional control and reflection; that shows clearly its relevance to self-regulated decision making which is a key component of EI. When combining that with students who pair taking time and reflection with spiritual guidance (23%), showing that while they are emotionally careful, their decisions are also affected by religious values. 07% ‘b+c’ paired rational thinking with seeking advice, which also reflects emotional maturity and willingness to deal with others and involve them as well. A small group (7%) relied on religious guidance ‘d’. The rest of the students used combinations involving impulsivity,

- 5% (a + c) mixed impulsive decisions with advice-seeking,

- 4% (a + d) made impulsive decisions supported by spiritual faith,
- 4% (a) relied solely on emotions and impulsiveness.

A few students preferred to rely on other for advice (4%, option c), while a small number seemed to avoid making decisions because of emotional stress (3% for b + e, 1% for c + e), which might mean they sometimes feel overwhelmed by their emotions.

Q13- Someone is acting cold or distant, what do you usually assume?

- a- They're probably going through something
- b- They're being rude
- c- I try not to care
- d- It must be about me

Table 4.13

Student's Typical Interpretation of others' Distant or Cold Behavior

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
a	38	51%
b	00	00%
c	33	44%
d	04	05%
Total	75	100%

The results of table 4.13 show that 51% tend to interpret cold or distant behavior from others with empathy, making sure to understand what the person is going through like experiencing something difficult. This actually reflects one of emotional intelligence's core skill which is emotional awareness that focuses on taking other people's emotions and circumstances into account. Besides, 44% chose to emotionally distance themselves from the whole situation by trying not to care which may indicate that their decision to stay away means avoiding

misunderstanding and problematic situations. As it can be partially considered as another EI's component: self-regulation. However, 05% of the students believed that the behavior was directed at them personally and considered themselves as the problem instead of looking from different perspectives. No student chose (option b) which assume that the other person is just being rude.

Q14- In your opinion, a successful person is someone who:

(You can choose more than one option)

- a- Builds trust and respect in personal and professional relationships.
- b- Gains power, status, or recognition from society.
- c- Can motivate themselves and stay focused on long-term goals.
- d- Understands and manages their emotions effectively.
- e- Managing emotional responses during new or uncertain situations, being adaptive.

Table 4.14

Student's Opinion on the Qualities that Define a Successful Person

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
a + d	22	29%
b + c + d	4	5%
a + b + e	3	4%
a + c	11	15%
b + d + e	3	4%
b + c + e	3	4%
c + e	15	20%
d + e	9	12%
a + e	5	7%
Total	75	100%

Among the whole sample and as indicated in the Table 4.14, 29% of students associate success with building trusting relationships as well as being able to manage emotions effectively which shows two main dimensions of EI. 20% believe that a successful person is someone who keeps himself motivated and capable to adapt and adjust emotions to new situations. Meanwhile, 15% linked success to trust as well as staying focused on long term goals. 07% chose relationship-building and emotional adaptability as the core of success, further highlighting the role of EI in social contexts. Some students prefer three options at once highlighting different aspects that can really make someone a successful individual, as it is displayed:

- Some (5%) believe success involves a mix of recognition, focus, and emotional control.
- A small number (4%) view success as a combination of relationships, recognition, and adaptability, blending external achievement with emotional flexibility.
- Another 4% decided to choose 'b + d + e' options, linking success to recognition, emotional management, and adaptability.
- While 4% chose 'b + c + e' combining success with the seeking of recognition, staying focused, and being emotionally adaptable which is presented as a mix of external ambition and internal strength.

Q15- According to you, which of the following behaviors or traits indicate that a person is emotionally intelligent?

(You can select more than one option)

- a- Remains calm and composed in stressful situations.
- b- Listens actively and understands others' emotions.
- c- Recognizes their own emotional state and its impact on others.
- d- Responds to feedback without defensiveness.

e- Is open-minded and adaptable to change.

Table 4.15

Student's Perception of Characteristics that Demonstrate Emotional Intelligence Individuals

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
b + c	20	27%
a + c	17	23%
a + b	12	16%
b + d	6	8%
a+ e	5	7%
b+ c + e	4	5%
a + b + d	4	5%
c + d + e	4	5%
a +b + c + d	3	4%
Total	75	100%

The statistics present that the top selected combinations are: 'b + c' (27%), 'a + c' (23%) and 'a+b' (16%). They show that students mainly associate emotional intelligence with understanding one's own emotions and their effect on others. Students opting for listening actively and empathizing with others (option b), staying calm and composed in difficult or stressful situations (option a) indicate that they strongly recognize **self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation** as major components of EI, and suggest that many of them believe that managing emotions starts with recognizing them. Fewer students who present 4% to 8% of the population chose traits like openness to feedback 'd' or adaptability to change 'e' on their own. The dominance of self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation in students' responses indicates that they already possess or value the intrapersonal and interpersonal skills

- “Linguistic + social + emotional understanding are all equally important”
- “Because of many cultural beliefs”
- “Language is not enough, communication requires understanding the target country’s culture”
- “It is sufficient to an extent, you need to be aware of social queues and multicultural differences”
- “There are other factors to deal with”
- “You also need to understand the culture of the country ”
- “Culture is needed”
- “Knowing the culture is also needed”

The justification given by students who believe that linguistic competence is enough indicate a narrow and just functional view of communication, centered on message clarity and verbal proficiency. These students clearly link successful interaction with the ability to speak and be understood, often overlooking the importance of cultural understanding, pragmatics, and emotional sensitivity that may influence how messages are interpreted. However, the “No” justifications reflect a more comprehensive and intercultural awareness of communication’s requirements. Students recognize that while linguistic skills are necessary, they must be completed by cultural competence, emotional intelligence and social awareness. This view aligns with modern communication theories, which emphasize that true communicative success involves not only language, but also the ability to navigate diverse cultural and emotional contexts.

Q17- Do you appreciate lessons that incorporate aspects of different cultures?

- a- Yes
- b- No

Table 4.17*Student's Appreciation of Culturally Inclusive Lessons*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	72	96%
No	03	04%
Total	75	100%

As indicated in table 4.17, 96% of students expressed appreciation for lessons that include elements of different cultures. Only 04% of respondents said they do not appreciate culturally different lessons. This implies that the majority reveal a strong openness to cultural exposure. It shows students valuing cultural knowledge and diversity as it is relevant to both language learning settings and real life communication.

Q18- According to you, which of these abilities makes someone interculturally competent?

(You can select more than one option.)

- a- Someone who adjusts the communication style and behavior when speaking with someone from a different culture.
- b- Someone who respects people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- c- Someone who understands your personal culture.
- d- Someone who understands his personal culture.
- e- Someone who identifies when a cultural misunderstanding happens in conversation.
- f- Someone who is curious to discover new cultures
- g- Someone who stops people when they talk about something that is unaccepted in his religion.
- h- Someone who understands how cultural norms shape social interactions in different countries.

- i- Someone who stereotypes other cultures.
- j- Someone who recognizes how cultural background can influence someone's opinions.
- k- Someone who expresses appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives in group discussions.
- l- Someone who assumes that his own culture is superior.

Table 4.18

Student's Perception of the Abilities that Contribute to Intercultural Competence

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
b + f	05	07%
a + c + j + l	02	03%
b	11	15%
a + f	01	01%
a + c + g	01	01%
b + f + h + k	01	01%
f + j	01	01%
a + b + e + f	02	03%
c + e + k	01	01%
a + d + j + g	01	01%
a + b + c + d + f + j	02	03%
a + d + k	01	01%
a + b + c + f + j	01	01%
b + h	02	03%
b + f + h	02	03%
a + b + e + f + h + j + k	05	07%
a + b + j + l	01	01%

$a + b + c + f + h + j$	01	01%
$c + d$	01	01%
A	04	05%
$a + b + f + k$	01	01%
$a + c + f + j$	01	01%
$a + b + d + f + j + k$	02	03%
$a + d$	01	01%
$a + b + c + h + k + j$	02	03%
$a + b + f$	01	01%
$a + d + g$	01	01%
$b + c + f$	01	01%
$a + c + j$	01	01%
$a + b + c + f$	03	04%
$a + b + e + k$	01	01%
$a + b + h + k$	01	01%
$b + k$	01	01%
$a + b + k$	01	01%
$a + c + i$	01	01%
$a + b + d + g + i$	01	01%
$b + c + g + j$	01	01%
$b + c + h$	01	01%
$b + c + d + e + f + g + j$	01	01%
$a + b + f + h$	02	03%
$a + c$	02	03%
$a + b + d + h$	02	03%
$a + b + c + d + j$	01	01%

Total	75	100%
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Table 4.18, represents a wide range of understandings of intercultural competence, because students selected different combinations of traits. 15% of students chose ‘b’ option alone, which is the most selected individual trait. 05% chose option ‘a’ alone, that indicates a focus on behavioral flexibility in intercultural interactions. The rest preferred choosing more than one option like ‘b + f’ showing student’s views about respect and openness as an intercultural traits; ‘a + b + c + f’ referring to adjusting communication, respecting others, understanding one’s own culture, curiosity. Meanwhile, 7% showed the most comprehensive and accurate view of intercultural competence, suggesting a deep understanding from their answers by choosing these options ‘a + b + e + f + h + j + k’ (adjusting style, respecting, identifying misunderstandings, curiosity, understanding social norms, recognizing cultural influence, appreciating diversity). Whereas, there are other students who took 3% to 4%, they selected:

- a + b + c + d + f + j

- a + b + c + h + k + j

- a + b + d + f + j + k

03% to 04%

These combinations show an understanding that intercultural competence includes: emotional openness cognitive awareness, communication flexibility.

Additionally, a few number of the sample selected the ‘i’ and ‘l’ options which included traits that contradict intercultural competence. In essence, most students associate respect, curiosity, and adaptability with intercultural competence. The wide variety of answer combinations reveal that students view intercultural competence as multifaceted and affect different aspects of communication, yet not all of them have a complete understanding of intercultural communication. As soon as the majority show that they generally have a positive perception of what it means to be interculturally competent, they can also have the potential to develop to be effective interculturally competent communicators.

Q19- Do your teachers use different teaching techniques in teaching culture? (Role-play, debates, presentations and other techniques...)

a- Yes

b- No

If yes, name some techniques.....

Table 4.19

Student's Observation of whether Teachers Apply Varied Techniques for Teaching Culture

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	57	76%
No	18	20%
Total	75	100%

The results obtained from table 4.19 reveal that 76% of students reported that their teachers use a variety of teaching techniques while teaching cultural content. This suggests that many teachers are embracing interactive activities about cultural content pushing students to develop their ICC. Meanwhile, 20% of students said their teachers do not use varied teaching techniques for teaching culture. This implies that this amount of students are not learning much about culture. Alternatively, it can be due to lack of awareness among some students regarding indirect or implicit cultural teaching methods. Some teachers may embed cultural elements subtly, without explicitly labeling them as "culture-focused activities," leading certain students to believe no cultural instruction is occurring.

The techniques used in EFL classrooms selected by students who agreed with 'yes':

- “Role- play”
- “Presentations”
- “Opening debates in classroom”

- “In literature we see some different cultural aspects, some teachers use examples and give them to us”
- “In oral expression we do different activities some of them show cultural differences ”
- “Some teachers sometimes interrupt the lesson and talk a little bit about other countries’ different culture ”

According to students’ answers, many teachers are actively incorporating varied techniques to teach culture in the EFL classroom. Through role-plays, debates, presentations, literature, and discussions, teachers provide rich cultural contents that go beyond language learning. These techniques do not only enhance students’ engagement but also contribute to developing ICC.

Q20- Do your teachers use tools like social media platforms, memes, and movies while teaching? a- Yes b-No

If yes, name the tools that they use.....

Table 4.20

Student’s Perception of Teachers’ Use of Digital and Media Tools in Classrooms

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	42	56%
No	33	44%
Total	75	100%

Table 4.20 reveals that majority 56% of students reported that their teachers do use digital and media tools in their teaching, suggesting that more than half of the respondents are exposed to modern materials. On the other hand, 44% of participants said their teachers do not use media in their classrooms, showing that they might not consider these materials significant or structured enough to qualify.

Q21- How often do you discuss diverse cultural perspectives in the classroom?

Always

sometimes

rarely

Table 4.21*Students Perceptions about Frequency of Cultural Classroom Discussions*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Always	12	16%
Sometimes	50	67%
Rarely	13	17%
Total	75	100%

As indicated in the table 4.21, the majority of students (67%) reported that discussions about diverse cultural perspectives take place sometimes. However, Only 16% of students claimed they always discuss diverse cultural perspectives, indicating that few classrooms actively engage in intercultural dialogues in class. 17% of students rarely encounter these discussions in their classrooms. It shows that for a minority of students, cultural perspectives are mostly absent from classroom discourse. The fact that 84% of participants (67% sometimes + 17% rarely) do not regularly engage with cultural discussions shows that intercultural elements are underrepresented in the curriculum.

Q22- Do you enjoy discussing cultural topics in the classroom? a- Yes b-No

Table 4.22*Student's Interest in Discussing Cultural Topics in the Classroom*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	49	65%
No	06	08%
Total	75	100%

Table 4.22 shows that the majority of students (65%) enjoy engaging with cultural topics in the classroom, indicating a positive attitude toward intercultural learning and openness to exploring diverse perspectives. This can be considered as a suggestion for future curriculum enrichment, where students would likely respond well to this kind of cultural content. Only 8% of students said they do not enjoy discussing cultural topics. This minor number suggests that their resistance to cultural content is not a major barrier, it might be because of their unfamiliarity, or they may prefer more traditional, language-based lessons.

Q23- Do you know certain gestures or behaviors that have different meanings in other cultures?

a- Yes

b- No

If you do, explain one

Table 4.23

Student's Recognition of Cultural Variations in Gestures and Behaviors

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	31	41%
No	44	59%
Total	75	100%

According to table 4.23, 41% reported that they know some gestures or behaviors that carry different meanings across cultures. This indicates a good level of cultural awareness, especially when related to non-verbal communication, which is a crucial aspect of intercultural competence. A majority (59%) of students answered "No", indicating they lack awareness about the cultural specificity of gestures, this may signal a gap in intercultural knowledge.

From the 41% of students who reported yes, 14 students illustrated their answers:

- “Touching someone’s head is normal in some places, but it is very disrespectful in other countries, while in India if an older person touches your head it means that it is an action of a great respect.”
- “For acceptance most cultures nod up and down, while Indians nod sideways.”
- “Bowing down is a sign of welcoming and respect also being sorry in Japan.”
- “In china there are many gestures and behaviors that have different meanings, in other cultures like the number 6 they hate it and never use it or talk about it.”
- “Giving a tip in Japan is considered offensive because they think they are actually getting paid enough for their job.”
- “Using facial expressions to communicate an idea or a feeling without speaking”
- “When you rise your thumb up that means OK but in Germany if you do that in a restaurant that means you want one beer (alcohol).”
- “Italians use their hands too much while speaking ”
- “In Germany, eye contact is considered powerful and refer to honesty and confidence”
- “Indians touch elders feet to show respect”
- “In Japan, especially women, most of them cover their mouths when laughing”
- “In turkey they kiss elders hand and bring it to their head”
- “There are some words that are used normally in some countries but that can be considered unacceptable in other countries”
- “The owl stands for bad luck in Algerian culture but in Chinese one it stands for wisdom”

The students' justifications reflect a promising level of awareness about cross-cultural differences in gestures, behaviors, and non-verbal communication.

Q24- Which cultural aspects (e.g., history, literature, food, music, events) are presented to you in the EFL classroom?

Table 4.24

Student's Choice of Cultural Aspects Presented in EFL Classroom

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Literary and historical aspects	52	69%
Food and music	23	31%
Total	75	100%

According to answers of this question, 69% are exposed to literary and historical aspects of culture in the EFL classroom. While there is less focus on popular or social cultural elements like food and music 31%. This may imply that it could limit students' ability to connect with the lived experiences and everyday expressions of the target culture.

Q25- If there are other aspects that you study in the EFL classroom, please name them.

Table 4.25

Other Cultural Aspects

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
vocabulary related to culture	05	07%
Religion	02	03%
No response	68	90%
Total	75	100%

In this question, 7% of students mentioned that vocabulary related to culture were emphasized. 3% brought up the topic of religion, though this is a sensitive and less commonly explored theme in secular or public EFL classrooms. While the rest (90%) of students did not mention any other cultural aspects beyond those already covered in the previous question (literature, history, food, music).

Q26- What aspects of the foreign culture do you think are ignored in the EFL classroom?

Table 4.26

Students' Suggestions of the Ignored Aspects of the Foreign Culture

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Lifestyle	07	09%
Other culture's perspective about the Algerian culture	02	03%
Music	10	13%
No response	56	75%
Total	75	100%

Answers to this question indicate that 75% of students did not state any specific cultural aspect they feel ignored. Only 13% said music, this suggests that students are interested in learning about foreign music as a form of cultural expression, yet feel it is underrepresented. Moreover, 9% of students mentioned lifestyle, referring to daily cultural practices in other country's culture such as how people interact, celebrate, or spend their time. A few students 3% expressed a deeper awareness by noting that the way other cultures view Algerian culture is ignored, revealing a gap in exchanging perspectives.

Q27- What aspects of the foreign culture you do not want to see in the EFL classroom?

(Tiktok trends, life of celebrities or other aspects ...)

Table 4.27*Students' Discomfort with Certain Cultural Content*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Life of celebrities.	20	27%
Tiktok trends	17	23%
No response	38	75%
Total	75	100%

From student's perspective, 27% preferred not to engage with content related to life of celebrities. This may stem from the belief that such topics are superficial, irrelevant to language & intercultural learning goals, or conflicting to their values & educational expectations. Meanwhile, 23% of students indicated discomfort with "Tiktok trends" topics' in the EFL classroom. This response may come from cultural & religious belonging of most of the respondents; as such topics are taboo or controversial to Algerian cultural norms.

Q28- Describe a time you felt challenged by a cultural difference.

- ☐ "I don't have any challenge by cultural difference because I have never travelled."
- "Never"
- "I really like talking to people with different perspectives because I want to always learn about the way they think."
- "Wearing hijab and being bullied because of it."
- "Learning different traditions."

- “I usually speak with people from different countries online, I felt challenged when I tried to convince a girl who was making fun of my religion.”
- “In my home country and I felt challenged by traditions of my country that I don’t like to apply in my future wedding.”
- “I think the problem does not occur only in cultural differences but also about religious principles.”
- “I met some Jordan people in my cousin’s wedding and it went great.”
- “In Covid-19 time, I made a lot of friendships online from different countries and all of us tolerated the other.”
- “I had a problem with my online friend when he celebrated holidays (Halloween) in which I do not see any reason to celebrate it so we had a small debate about it.”

The responses reveal varying degrees of cultural exposure and awareness. While some students experienced real or perceived cultural challenges, others had positive or neutral experiences, or no encounters at all due to limited intercultural contact. This variety reflects differing levels of ICC. A notable number of students showed a positive and curious attitude toward cultural differences, while a few expressed struggles with discrimination or internal cultural conflicts.

Q29- Do you think emotions can be expressed the same way in all cultures?

a- Yes

b-No

Table 4.28*Student's Opinions about Emotional Expression across Cultures*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	07	09%
No	68	91%
Total	75	100%

According to the findings presented in Table 4.28, 91% of students said “No”, indicating that different cultures express emotions differently. This suggests a high level of intercultural awareness among the majority of students; they understand that facial expressions, gestures, tones of voice differ across cultural contexts. This supports the idea that developing ICC includes recognizing both, what is explicitly said and how feelings are conveyed in different cultural settings. On the other hand, Only 9% believe that emotions are expressed the same way in all cultures, possibly due to the belief that basic human emotions (like happiness, sadness or anger) are universally felt and similarly shown or something else personal, it all depends on how they perceive it.

Q30- When you have a misunderstanding with someone from a different cultural perspective , how do you typically react?

(You ay select more than one option)

- a- I tend to withdraw from the situation and avoid future communication.
- b- I get frustrated and don't know how to handle it.
- c- I try to understand the misunderstanding and clarify it openly.
- d- I apologize, even if I don't think I'm at fault.

Table 4.29*Student's Typical Reaction to Intercultural Misunderstandings*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
c + d	24	32%
c	16	21%
d	9	12%
a + b + d	4	05%
c + d + a	6	08%
a + b + c	4	05%
b + c	5	07%
a + d	4	05%
B	3	04%
Total	75	100%

Table 4.29 shows that 32% of the respondents indicated they would try to recognize the misunderstanding and clarify it openly while also apologizing (even if not at fault). 21% reported they would simply try to clarify the issue. 12% chose to apologize alone, which may suggest a desire to preserve harmony even when they are not necessarily responsible. However, several responses reflected emotional strain and uncertainty: 8% chose to clarify, apologize, and withdraw, while others combined clarification with frustration or avoidance. 7% selected 'b + c', indicating they feel frustrated and uncertain, but still attempt to clarify the misunderstanding. This reflects an emotional struggle paired with an effort to resolve. A smaller percentage showed more reactive tendencies, such as frustration without thinking rationally (4%) or withdrawing entirely. These results suggest that over half the students display strong intercultural communication strategies, including empathy and willingness to resolve conflicts.

To sum up, this question demonstrated that a majority of 53% show positive, constructive behaviors 'c, c + d', suggesting high emotional and intercultural competence. About 24% show

mixed responses, blending positive actions with emotional discomfort ('c + d + a', 'b + c', 'a + b + c', 'a + d', etc.). A very small percentage (4%) shows participants with difficulty handling these situations (option b), indicating a need for more support in emotional regulation and IC training.

Q31- How do you think emotional intelligence contributes to effective intercultural communication?

(You can select more than one option.)

- a. Helps in understanding emotions behind different communication styles.
- b. Reduces misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.
- c. Encourages respectful and empathetic interactions with people from other cultures.
- d. Improves the ability to manage emotions in unfamiliar or challenging cultural situations.
- e. Allows better handling of conflicts arising from cultural misunderstandings.

Table 4.30

Student's Perception of how Emotional Intelligence Supports Intercultural Communication

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
a + b + c	6	08%
a + c	13	17%
a + c + d	4	05%
a + d	10	13%
c + e	8	11%
c + d	19	25%
b + d + e	5	07%

b + c + e	3	04%
b + e	3	04%
D	2	03%
B	2	03%
Total	75	100%

25% of the respondents selected 'c + d' believing EI encourages respectful and empathetic interactions and improves the ability to manage emotions in unfamiliar or challenging cultural contexts. This indicates strong recognition of EI as a key to both emotional control and relationship building in intercultural settings. 17% recognize that EI helps in understanding emotions behind different communication styles and promotes empathetic interactions as well. Meanwhile, 13% chose 'a + d', according to these options, students focus on EI's role in interpreting emotional cues and managing one's emotions. Suggesting a positive view of EI as a tool for navigating emotional discomfort in cross-cultural scenarios. 11% chose 'c + e'; they see EI as helpful for empathetic interaction and handling conflicts. While others form a smaller percentage opting for broader combinations:

- 8% selected 'a + b + c': EI as useful for interpreting emotional context, reducing misunderstandings, and promoting respect and empathy.
- 7% chose 'b + d + e': Focused on reducing misunderstandings as well as emotional management, and making sure to handle conflict.
- 4%, 3 students for each choice, selected 'b + c + e': Stressing reducing misunderstandings, showing empathy, and handling conflict. In addition 'b + e' that focused on preventing misunderstandings and resolving conflicts.

- 3% (2 students each) selected 'd' alone: Only emphasized emotional regulation, perhaps indicating an internal view of EI. While others chose 'b' alone to only see EI as a tool to reduce misunderstandings, showing a narrower focus.

Considering all these factors, it is evident to notice that a combined 63% of responses (those that include options c and/or d) link EI with respect, empathy, and managing emotions which are core traits of intercultural competence. This data reveals that students hold an accurate understanding of how emotional intelligence can lead to effective intercultural communication. The highest percentages point to a higher appreciation for empathetic interactions and emotional self-management, while many respondents acknowledge its role in reducing misunderstandings and managing conflict.

Q32- What factors do you think are most important for successful intercultural communication?

(You can select more than one option.)

- a- Avoiding stereotypes and generalizations about other cultures.
- b- Listening carefully and showing empathy toward different perspectives.
- c- Being flexible and adjusting your communication when needed.
- d- Being open to even changing your own views after understanding others better.
- e- Being curious and showing interest in learning about other cultures.

Table 4.31*Student's Opinion on Key Factors Contributing to Successful IC*

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
b + d	10	13%
a + c + d	9	12%
b + c + e	6	08%
a + b + c	5	07%
b + c	18	24%
E	3	04%
d + e	5	07%
a + d + e	4	05%
a + b	12	16%
c + e	3	04%
Total	75	100%

As pointed out in Table 4.31, the top combination 'b + c' gained 24% of votes; this indicates that the most accepted factors are empathy and communication adaptability. When dealing with option 'b', Over 50% of students included it in their answers even with different other options, highlighting its central importance. Avoiding stereotypes (option a) also appears frequently, showing that bias awareness is well understood by many. Following this idea and dealing with other options, 16% preferred to avoid stereotypes and empathic listening indicating the danger of cultural bias and the importance of understanding others' viewpoints. Additionally, 13% of respondents think empathy and openness to changing one's views are crucial. This suggests an appreciation for growth from intercultural interactions. Others selected more than two options having broader vision:

- 8% chose empathy, adaptability, and curiosity, showing their desire to engage and learn which is crucial for making an effective communicative setting.
- 7% valued avoiding stereotypes, empathetic listening, and flexibility.
- 7% focused on open-mindedness and curiosity
- 5% believed that rejecting stereotypes, being open to change, and having interest in learning form the foundation for successful interactions, showing high intercultural sensitivity.
- 4% chose option 'e' alone or 'e + c' preferring flexibility combined with curiosity.

Q33- What do you think is the best way to improve both emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence?

- a- Through education and training
- b- By interacting more with people from different cultures
- c- I don't believe both can be improved

Table 4.32

Student's View on Effective Approaches to Develop EI & and ICC

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
a	12	16%
b	62	83%
c	01	01%
Total	75	100%

As displayed in table 4.32, 83% of students embrace a strong belief that talking and interacting with people from different cultures are the best ways to improve both EI & ICC. They think real life experiences help them understand emotions and communicate better across cultures. However, 16% think these skills can be improved through education and training, like classroom lessons or workshops. While only 1% of students think that these skills cannot be

improved, which means almost everyone believes that emotional intelligence and intercultural competence can grow with effort and the right experiences.

Q34- When you communicate with people from different cultures (especially through social media or online platforms), how do you manage your emotions to fit the cultural context? (Choose the option that best describes you.)

- a- I consciously manage my emotions to show respect for cultural differences.
- b- I try to control my emotional expressions and be empathetic during communication.
- c- I adjust my emotional reactions only when I feel it is necessary.
- d- I express emotions naturally without focusing on cultural expectations.
- e- I believe emotional adjustment is not important in intercultural communication.

Table 4.33

Student's Approaches to managing Emotional Expression in IC via Digital Platforms

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
a	49	65%
b	20	27%
c	18	24%
d	15	20%
E	04	05%
Total	75	100%

As mentioned in the table above, 65% stated that they consciously manage their emotions to show respect for cultural differences when communicating online with people from different cultures. This suggests that most students are aware of how emotions can be interpreted differently in various cultures. A smaller but still significant group (27%) try to control their emotional expressions and be empathetic, showing that they aim to maintain understanding and harmony in intercultural conversations. Another 24% adjust their emotional reactions only

between answers of this question and question number 34. Comparing questions in Q35, 53% of students said they do not adjust their behavior in intercultural interactions, while in Q34, a significant 65% stated they consciously manage emotions to show respect for cultural differences. The main difference between the interpretation of those answers appears in context, in Q34 there is a focus on digital communication, where emotional expression is more controlled, while Q35 referred to behavior in general interaction, which might include deeper cultural identity.

Explanation of those who answered 'YES' to adjusting behavior while interacting with someone from a different culture (most students repeated the same answers):

- "I try to take other's emotions into account."
- "I have to do it because I do not want to cause any misunderstanding from my part."
- "To understand others clearly."
- "If the other is doing his best to understand me and engage with what I say I would do the same why not."
- "I try to understand more and give them excuses."
- "I am just such a tolerant person."
- "It depends on the person I am talking to."
- "People who really learn are those who tolerate and do their best to understand others."

From 53% of students who answered 'NO' there are few justifications for not adjusting their behavior while interacting with someone from a different culture saying:

- "I don't change my self for others."
- "Why not the other person adjusts their behavior while dealing with me?"
- "I just do not care about what others think."
- "I do not want to lose my personality. It is me accept it or just leave."

- “If I am going to adjust my behavior with everyone I think I will lose my personality and who truly I am.”

These suggestions show a negative result especially while dealing with individuals from different cultural background, emphasizing that if they do adjust their attitudes they would change themselves or even lose their personality. Some of them do not have social awareness and always link it with changing their personality instead of having different views and learning something new. While it is not necessarily related to fully losing one’s personality as just sharing a part of it to adapt others’ perspective.

Q36- Feel free to add any further suggestions or comments.

Concerning the last question about further comments and suggestions related to the topic, out of 75 students, only 7% answered this question. Their comments are summarized as follows:

- “Culture and emotional intelligence are literally nothing, people are just too sensitive.”
- “Good luck!”
- “I really engaged with you guys in the observation and the questionnaire made me think twice before dealing with people especially those who share different ideas.”
- “I actually want to see this again and I truly want to deal with lessons that deal inclusively with culture.”
- “Culture is too broad.”
- “I have never thought that emotional intelligence matters this much, I realised that I have it in my personality without my awareness.”
- “I like the topic and am very interested.”

4.4. Summary of Results from Students' Questionnaire

Based on the information acquired and the analysis of learners' responses, we have gathered some evidence to show whether there is a link between EI & ICC. This questionnaire reveals valuable conclusions.

First, section one gathered general background information displaying gender imbalance among students, the majority were females. Meanwhile, a good number of them possess a moderate to a high level of self-awareness and emotional regulation. In section two, mainly 'Q6', students described EI as "being smart in relationships" and "handling relationships well." Additionally, over 84% identified "managing emotions" as staying calm in difficult situations (Q10). 99% acknowledged that managing emotions helps them cope with stress (Q11). Furthermore, 85% of the participants believed that EI is either learnable or a mix of innate and developable traits (Q8); this reflects an understanding that EI is not fixed but can evolve through experience and effort. With Q12, many claimed they tend to reflect before taking decisions. These results align directly with the first aim of the study which is explores how EI contributes to the development of ICC.

Third section was more focused on student's understanding and experiences with intercultural communication. Q17 showed that 96% of students appreciated culturally inclusive lessons, while Q18 revealed a high value placed on traits like adaptability, respect, and curiosity as key features of intercultural competence. Interestingly, with Q23, only 41% of participants reported knowing that gestures and behaviors may differ across cultures, suggesting a need for more focus on non-verbal and subtle cultural cues in classroom practices. Many students expressed interest in learning more about foreign traditions, behaviors, and perspectives, especially those often overlooked in formal instruction (e.g., music, lifestyle, cultural beliefs about Algerians etc..).

The final section directly targeted the relationship between EI & ICC. Students connected emotional skills directly to intercultural situations. With Q31, they revealed that they believe EI may help reducing misunderstandings and enhance respectful communication across cultures. Similarly, with Q34, 65% reported that they consciously manage their emotions when interacting with someone from different cultural background or even who shares different perspectives, showing real life applications of emotional regulation in communicative settings. In Q35, nearly half the respondents (45%) acknowledged having adjusted their behavior in an intercultural interaction. Their detailed justifications were strongly linked to empathy, being careful with words or at least choosing not to respond aggressively and those are clear indicators of emotional awareness and cultural adaptability, which are at the heart of both EI and ICC. That is to say, students' responses reflect that they do not view emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competences as isolated traits. Instead, they appear to recognize that the ability to manage one's own emotions and understand others is critical when navigating cultural differences.

Conclusion

Students demonstrated an understanding that empathy, self regulation and openness do not only help them manage emotional situations in general but are also essential in developing successful intercultural relationships. At the end, this chapter outlined the sample and the questionnaire then analyzed student responses by examining their background information as well as their understanding and experience of EI and collecting perceptions of ICC. All of this helped identifying the link between the variables.

General Conclusion

The current study was conducted in order to investigate the link between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competences. The chapters focused on both the

theoretical side and the practical side. The two variables were examined in the first and second chapters, with explanation of some concepts related to EI and ICC. Then with a more practical investigation in the third and fourth chapters to analyze research data. The results revealed that students have a working understanding of both EI as well as ICC and are able to reflect on how these variables play out in real life situations. Most importantly, while the study did not aim to establish a causal relationship, the finding suggests that there is a perceived connection between the two variables.

According to the data gathered from the classroom observation, students demonstrated a high degree of emotional regulation, empathy, and awareness. As the majority of students were able to identify and articulate their feelings with clarity. For instance, students demonstrated emotional maturity by sharing their personal ideas during talks about intercultural marriage without getting nervous or unsecure when speaking.

They also showed intercultural competence by being open to different opinions and curious about other cultures. Some students were able to avoid or gently challenge stereotypes. They also showed signs of thinking critically and being respectful of cultural differences. Overall, the observation suggests that students are improving in how they communicate with people from different cultures and how they manage emotions. These two skills together help them become kinder, more respectful, and better at communicating in different situations.

Findings from the questionnaire revealed that most students have high levels of awareness in both emotional and intercultural dimensions of communication. Many participants demonstrated an understanding of EI as the ability to regulate emotions, show empathy, and even manage relationships which are considered also affective for in intercultural contexts. For instance, a majority reported consciously managing their emotions during interactions with people from different cultures, particularly in online communications, in order to avoid

misunderstandings and show respect. These behaviors reflect a real-life application of EI that directly supports intercultural sensitivity and adaptability. On the other hand, students viewed intercultural competence not simply as knowing about other cultures, but as being able to adjust behaviors and show open-minded traits that can be linked with emotional intelligence. Moreover, many students described some of their personal experiences where emotional self-awareness helped them navigate cultural challenges, whether through empathy & avoiding judgment, or adjusting communication style. Students expressed a strong interest in developing both their emotional and cultural skills further.

In conclusion, the results affirm the relevance of investigating the link between emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence in EFL classrooms. Based on the classroom observation and student's perceptions from the questionnaire, these two constructs are not separate, but mutually reinforcing aspects of successful communication. The results emphasize the value of integrating both emotional and cultural awareness in order to prepare learners for effective interaction in diverse contexts, as it demonstrates how each one affects the other, highlighting their strong connection.

Pedagogical Implications

This study investigated student's perceptions of emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competences, and explored how these constructs might be linked in the context of EFL learning. The findings collected through the classroom observations and the students' questionnaire contributed to generating a number of pedagogical implications relevant for teachers and students in EFL classrooms.

Firstly, emotional intelligence is still emerging as a focus in education. It is recommended for teachers to raise student's awareness of the concept since awareness is the first step toward development. Teachers can spread it through classroom activities like role-plays, reflective

speaking tasks, and emotion-focused vocabulary. Free tools can support this process. For instance, **Smiling Mind** is a free app that offers short mindfulness sessions designed to help students manage anxiety and improve focus. Teachers can use it as a warm-up before oral tasks to help students speak more confidently, many students feel afraid of judgement to express their ideas and different perspective especially in EFL classrooms where distinct cultural aspects occur, this application is highly recommended for them. Moreover, this is exactly where students can strengthen their empathy by intentionally listening to others without interrupting each other and trying to understand their perspectives especially in disagreements or having different viewpoints.

In terms of developing intercultural competence, students are encouraged to expose themselves to diverse cultural contents through online communication with peers from other countries. This may build both emotional insight and intercultural sensitivity by placing individuals in direct, meaningful cross-cultural interactions. **Empatico**, for example, is a free online platform that connects classrooms around the world through guided cultural exchanges and collaborative projects. By participating in short video exchanges or writing tasks with students from different countries, learners gain first-hand experience with different perspectives, communication norms, and cultural traditions.

Secondly, in order to enhance these skills or even assess them more effectively teachers are encouraged to collaborate with university. These spaces can be excellent platforms for organizing group discussions, film debates, interactive Cultural exchange workshops, and other activities that place students in real communicative situations.

Since university clubs can provide free and accessible opportunities for students to take part in of these events. A valuable suggestion is to invite international students to participate in these activities. Experiences gained through student clubs over several years have shown that when

students interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds, they gain valuable real-life experience that helps them grow emotionally and culturally, such as engaging with people from different cultures, discussing emotional topics, or facing communication challenges they become more skilled at managing their emotions and adapting to cultural differences. These environments naturally promote self-awareness, open-mindedness, and flexibility, which are core components of both emotional intelligence (EI) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC). By combining classroom teaching with active participation in club-based activities, teachers can help create more dynamic and inclusive learning environments. This approach supports language development while also preparing students to engage confidently and respectfully in diverse social and academic contexts.

This is an example of a workshop that can be organized at the level of the university with the collaboration of the clubs, entitled **“Voices of Culture: Sharing, Feeling, Understanding.”**

Through such workshops students can enhance their Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence using cultural presentations, collaborative discussions, and interactive games.

Time	Activity	Description
09:00 – 09:10	Opening	Introducing the workshop's goals and importance of EI & ICC in communication.
09:10 – 09:20	Cultural Speed Meet	Students pair up with others from different backgrounds, ask quick questions: “Where are you from?” “What’s one value your culture holds deeply?”
09:20 – 10:10	Cultural Presentations	Volunteer students give 5-minute presentations on their culture (traditions, emotional expressions, proverbs) using authentic materials.

Time	Activity	Description
09:00 – 09:10	Openning	Introducing the workshop's goals and importance of EI & ICC in communication.
10:10 – 10:20	COFFEE BREAK	Open discussions between Participants and fun games.
10:20 – 10:35	Group Discussion	Mixed-cultural groups discuss: 1. How is emotion expressed differently across cultures? 2. What emotional misunderstandings have you seen? 3. How can we communicate better across cultures?
10:35 – 11:00	Intercultural Games	Emotion in My Language: Say an emotion in native language; others guess and ask about its meaning
11:00 – 11:55	Closing	Thank participants / Encourage continued intercultural dialogue / Distribute certificates.

Another practical pedagogical implication derived from this study is the implementation of a structured lesson plan that integrates both variables within the EFL classroom:

Title: "Understanding Emotions and Cultural Perspectives through Communication"

Duration: 90 minutes

Topic: Expressing emotions and analyzing cultural differences in communication

Part	Objective	Task	Time
Warm up	Help students recognize, name, and share personal emotional experiences	Students write down a feeling and share a situation where they experienced.	10min

Listening Activity	Develop their ability to observe and understand different cultural perspectives, through the use of authentic materials.	listen to part of a TED Talk on emotions across cultures. Take notes on key points.	15min
Group Discussion	Encourage students to compare Emotional norms across cultures and practice open communication while expressing diverse views.	In small groups: “How do people in your culture express emotions like anger, sadness, or joy?” Compare with others.	20min
Role-play	Allow students to apply empathy, emotional regulation, and cultural problem-solving in realistic communication breakdowns.	Each group gets a short case of intercultural miscommunication (e.g., silence interpreted as disrespect). They act it out and suggest solutions.	25min
Open Discussion	Rais awareness of the importance of EI and ICC in global communication, and build student’s ability to articulate abstract concepts.	Open discussion: “Why are EI and ICC essential in a globalized world?” Students share answers and receive feedback	15min

Finally, continuous professional development on EI and ICC should be encouraged for teachers themselves, so they can model emotionally intelligent behavior and guide students through culturally complex interactions. In teaching the facets of the foreign culture, educators should broaden their scope. In other words, because learning a language requires a thorough understanding of its culture, not just a portion of it, it is important to emphasize the underappreciated and overlooked elements, such as religion, lifestyle, and music.

Limitations of the Study

Like many academic endeavors, this research is far from perfection. This study faced its fair share of challenges. One of the limitations that the researchers faced was related to the sample. The population consisted of 256-second year students, taking half the population for both the questionnaire and the observation (three groups out of six) limits the representativeness of the study. The problem with the sample was about availability of students. The questionnaire and the observation were executed two weeks before the end of the Second Semester (2024_2025); at this period, students almost finished covering the syllabus of most of the modules, which made it harder to gather them and work with all of them. Some students skipped open-ended questions, which harms the completeness of the data that serves the investigation.

The second issue was about gender imbalance within the sample. While the total number of participants who answered the questionnaire was sufficient for general analysis, the sample was predominantly female which prevented the researchers from making comparisons or drawing conclusions based on gender. As a result, this limited the depth of interpretation regarding how gender may influence emotional intelligence or intercultural communicative competence.

The difficulty in analyzing the classroom observation data was mainly due to the fact that most of the focus in methodology courses is placed on analyzing questionnaires, while other tools like observation are often overlooked.

Talking back about the subject of research, we encountered a significant challenge in accessing relevant sources, as there were very limited scholarly papers addressing both variables EI and ICC especially in educational fields; we faced a lack of topic-specific local sources, which limited the depth of the literature review.

Suggestions for Future Research

I believe future research should aim to include a more balanced sample in terms of gender. A comparative study between male and female EFL students could provide deeper insights into how emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence may differ based on gender. Moreover, applying experimental data collection tools may provide more quantitative & qualitative evidence for the relationship between EI and ICC. Moreover, longitudinal studies may explore how these competences evolve over time.

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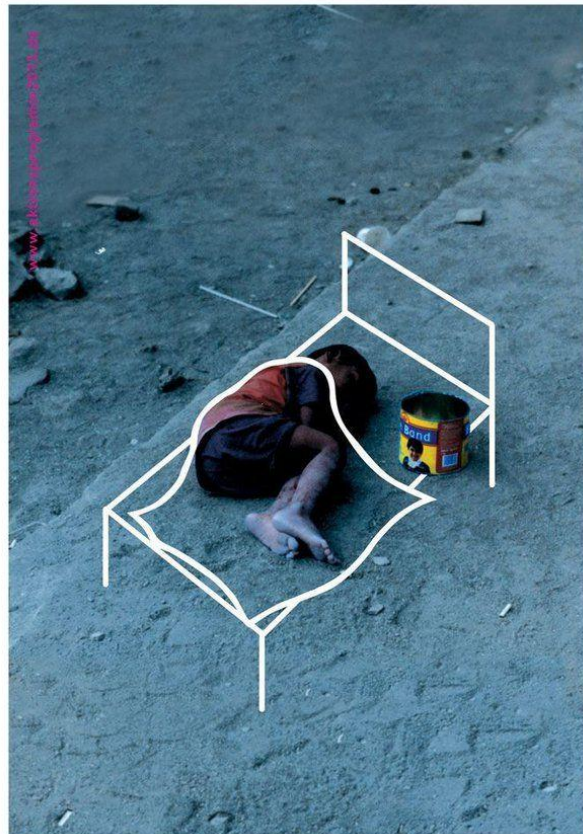
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Material 01: Pictures of Refugees



Mterial 02

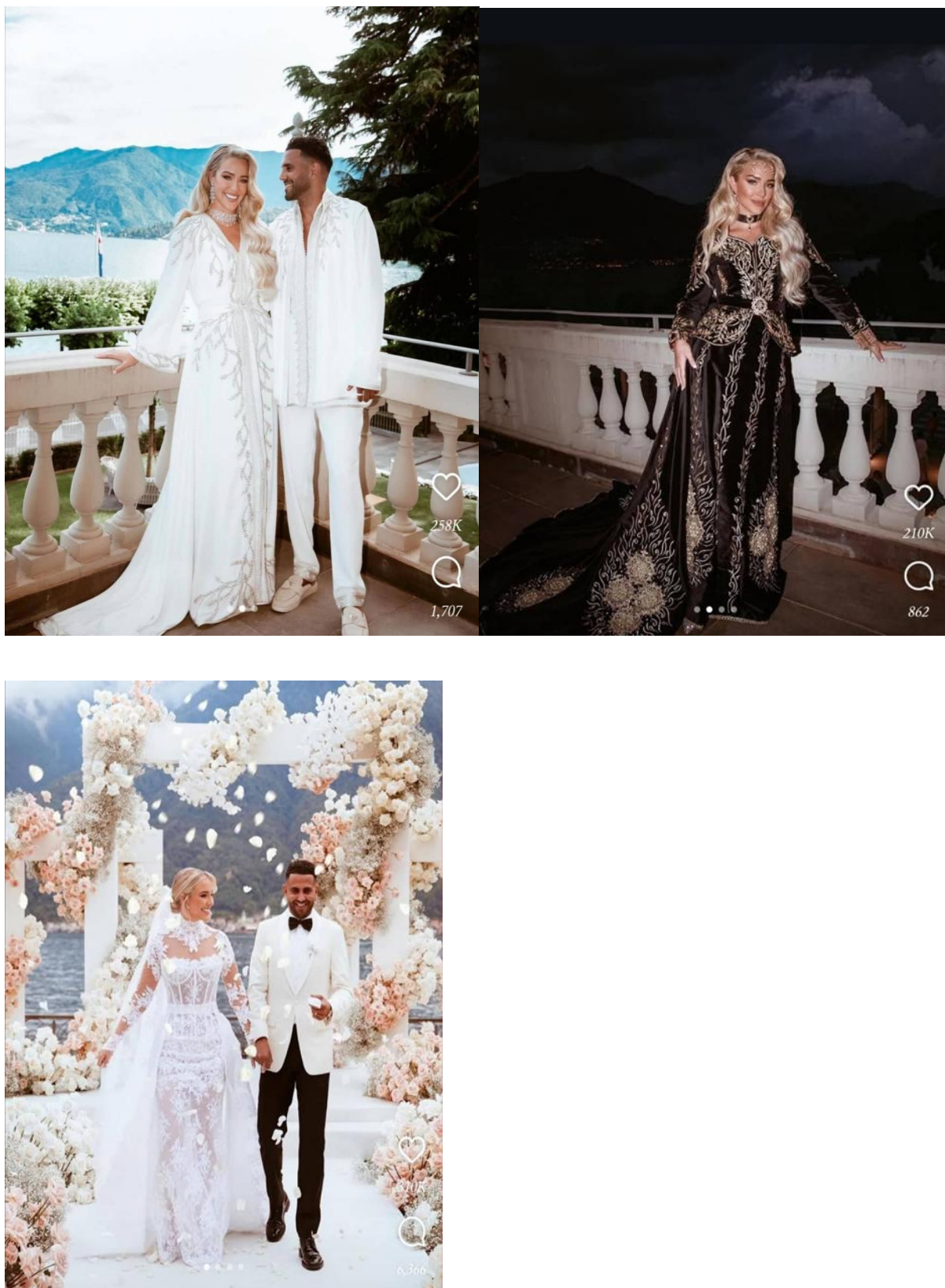
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6eHAAXM9qM>

Material 03

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/18tFfZhCKT/>

APPENDIX B

Material 01



Material 02

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DC7P-aiIMDq/?igsh=MWFqc2locW9qZDE5cg==>

Material 04

← **taylorwardx** ✓


1,050
posts
 2.9M
followers
 1,190
following

TAYLOR WARD
 Co founder - [@astaliaco](#)
 Home acc - [@_house_and_home_](#)
 🇬🇧
 All Enquiries ... kate@thesocialpr.co.uk
 🔗 amzlink.to/az0KMc0If09ZC and 1 more
 © taylorwardx 🔗 Shopping links & bargains 🔗

APPENDIX C

Student's Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly invited to participate in this questionnaire, which is part of a research study aiming to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competences. Your participation is completely voluntary, the questionnaire is anonymous, and the data collected will be used solely for academic research purposes. There are no right or wrong answers, please respond honestly and thoughtfully based on your personal experiences and perceptions. You can answer by putting a tick (✓) in the box that suits most your opinion and providing full answers when required. Your input is highly valuable and will greatly support the success of this study. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. Your help is truly appreciated.

Benaoune Bouchra & Aouamri Malek

Department of Letters & English Language

Faculty of Letters and Language

University 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

2024/ 2025

Section One: General Information

1. What is your gender?

a. Male ☐

b. Female ☐

2. How many years have you been learning English (including this year)?.....years

3. How would you describe your level of English language mastery?

- a. Beginner ☐
- b. Intermediate ☐
- c. Advanced ☐

4. Is studying English your own choice?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

5. To which extent are you satisfied with studying English at the University of Guelma?

Satisfied ☐

Neutral ☐

Not satisfied ☐

Section Two: Emotional intelligence

6. Have you heard of the term emotional intelligence (EI) before?

- a. Yes ☐

If so, what does it mean to you?

.....

- b. No ☐

7. Emotional intelligence is essential for healthy relationships.

Agree ☐

Neutral ☐

Disagree ☐

8. Do you believe emotional intelligence is something you are born with or something that can be developed over time?

- a. Born with it – People either have it or they don't ☐
- b. Learned – You can develop it over time ☐
- c. A little of both – Some people are naturally more emotionally intelligent, but others can improve ☐

If you believe it can be improved say briefly how?

.....

.....

9. How often do you acknowledge your feelings before responding to a challenging situation?

- a. Always ☐
- b. Sometimes ☐
- c. Never ☐

10. How would you describe “managing emotions”?

- a. Being able to stay calm and in control even during difficult times ☐
- b. Ignoring your emotions completely ☐
- d. Hiding emotions so that others don't see them ☐
- e. Letting emotions guide all your actions ☐

11. Do you find that your ability to manage emotions helps you cope better with stressful situations?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

12. When you have to make an important decision, are you the kind of person who:

- a. Let emotions completely take over, and decide impulsively ☐
- b. take time and think twice before making the decision ☐
- c. Ask someone for advice or support ☐
- d. Pray or seek spiritual/religious guidance before deciding ☐
- e. Delay or avoid the decision due to emotional stress ☐

13. If someone is acting cold or distant, what do you usually assume?

- a. They're probably going through something ☐
- b. They're being rude ☐
- c. I try not to care ☐
- d. It must be about me ☐

14. In your opinion, a successful person is someone who:

(You can choose more than one option)

- a. Builds trust and respect in personal and professional relationships. ☐
- b. Gains power, status, or recognition from society. ☐
- c. Can motivate themselves and stay focused on long-term goals. ☐
- d. Understands and manages their emotions effectively. ☐
- e. Managing emotional responses during new or uncertain situations, being adaptive . ☐

15. According to you, which of the following behaviors or traits indicate that a person is emotionally intelligent?

(You can select more than one option)

- a. Remains calm and composed in stressful situations. ☐
- b. Listens actively and understands others' emotions. ☐
- c. Recognizes their own emotional state and its impact on others. ☐
- d. Responds to feedback without defensiveness. ☐
- e. Is open-minded and adaptable to change. ☐

Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence

Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to use your knowledge, curiosity, and open-minded attitude toward cultural differences to interact with individuals from diverse cultures in a straightforward and polite way (Deardorff, 2006).

16. Do you think that linguistic competence alone is a guarantee of success for interacting with native speakers?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Justify

17. Do you appreciate lessons that incorporate aspects of different cultures?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

18. According to you, which of these abilities makes someone interculturally competent?

(You can select more than one option.)

a. Someone who adjusts the communication style and behaviour when speaking with someone from a different culture. ☐

b. Someone who Respects people from diverse cultural backgrounds. ☐

c. Someone who understands your personal culture. ☐

d. Someone who Understands his personal culture. ☐

e. Someone who identifies when a cultural misunderstanding happens in conversation. ☐

f. Someone who is curious to discover new cultures ☐

g. Someone who stops people when they talk about something that is unaccepted in his religion. ☐

- h. Someone who understands how cultural norms shape social interactions in different countries. ☐
- i. Someone who stereotypes other cultures. ☐
- j. Someone who recognizes how cultural background can influence someone's opinions. ☐
- k. Someone who expresses appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives in group discussions. ☐
- l. Someone who assumes that his own culture is superior. ☐

19. Do your teachers use different teaching techniques in teaching culture? (Role-play, debate, presentations...)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

if yes, name some techniques.....

20. Do your teachers use tools like social media platforms, memes, and movies while teaching?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

If yes, name the tools that they use.....

21. How often do you discuss diverse cultural perspectives in the classroom?

Always ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely ☐

22. Do you enjoy discussing cultural topics in the classroom?

- a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

23. Do you know certain gestures or behaviors that have different meanings in other cultures?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

if you do, explain one

.....

24. What aspect of the foreign culture you are introduced to in the EFL classroom? (history, literature, food, music, events...)

.....

25. If there are other aspects that you study in the EFL classroom, please name them

.....

26. What aspects of the foreign culture do you think are ignored in the EFL classroom?

.....

27. What aspects of the foreign culture do you do not want to see in the EFL classroom?

(Tiktok trends, life of celebrities ...)

.....

28. Describe a time you felt challenged by a cultural difference.

.....

Section four : Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Communicative Competence

29. Do you think emotions can be expressed the same way in all cultures?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

30. When you have a misunderstanding with someone with a different cultural perspective, how do you typically react?

- a. I tend to withdraw from the situation and avoid future communication ☐
- b. I get frustrated and don't know how to handle it ☐
- c. I try to understand the misunderstanding and clarify it openly ☐
- d. I apologize, even if I don't think I'm at fault ☐

31. How do you think emotional intelligence contributes to effective intercultural communication?

(You can select more than one option.)

- a. Helps in understanding emotions behind different communication styles. ☐
- b. Reduces misunderstandings caused by cultural differences. ☐
- c. Encourages respectful and empathetic interactions with people from other cultures. ☐
- d. Improves the ability to manage emotions in unfamiliar or challenging cultural situations. ☐
- e. Allows better handling of conflicts arising from cultural misunderstandings. ☐

32. What factors do you think are most important for successful intercultural communication?

(You can select more than one option.)

- a. Avoiding stereotypes and generalizations about other cultures. ☐
- b. Listening carefully and showing empathy toward different perspectives. ☐
- c. Being flexible and adjusting your communication when needed. ☐

d. Being open to even changing your own views after understanding others better. ☐

e. Being curious and showing interest in learning about other cultures. ☐

33. What do you think is the best way to improve both emotional intelligence and intercultural communicative competence?

a. Through education and training ☐

b. By interacting more with people from different cultures ☐

c. I don't believe both can be improved ☐

34. When you communicate with people from different cultures (especially through social media or online platforms), how do you manage your emotions to fit the cultural context?

(Choose the option that best describes you.)

a. I consciously manage my emotions to show respect for cultural differences. ☐

b. I try to control my emotional expressions and be empathetic during communication. ☐

c. I adjust my emotional reactions only when I feel it is necessary. ☐

d. I express emotions naturally without focusing on cultural expectations. ☐

e. I believe emotional adjustment is not important in intercultural communication. ☐

35. Have you ever adjusted your behavior when interacting with someone from a different culture?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

If yes, how?

Please feel free to add any information or suggestion concerning our topic

.....

.....

.....

Résumé

L'objectif principal de cette étude est d'explorer la relation entre l'intelligence émotionnelle (IE) et la compétence communicative interculturelle (CCI) chez les étudiants en Anglais langue étrangère, en examinant la façon dont les individus avec différents niveaux d'IE gèrent les défis de la communication interculturelle. Pour ce faire, une approche mixte a été adoptée. Des observations en classe ont été menées auprès de trois groupes d'étudiants LMD de deuxième année, choisis au hasard, pendant leurs sessions d'expression orale au Département d'Anglais de l'Université 08 Mai 1945 - Guelma, afin d'examiner la manière dont les compétences émotionnelles et interculturelles apparaissent dans des contextes de communication réels. En outre, un questionnaire semi-structuré a été administré à la même population afin de recueillir leurs perceptions et leurs expériences. Tout au long de l'étude, les chercheurs se sont également intéressés à la manière dont les indices émotionnels tels que les expressions faciales, le langage corporel et les points de vue différents sont compris et pris en compte dans les situations interculturelles. Les résultats ont révélé que les étudiants reconnaissaient l'importance de l'empathie, de l'autorégulation et de l'ouverture d'esprit pour établir des relations interculturelles fructueuses, et pas seulement pour gérer les émotions.

Mots-clés : Intelligence émotionnelle, compétence communicative interculturelle, classe d'Anglais langue étrangère.

الملخص

يتمثل الهدف الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة في استكشاف العلاقة بين الذكاء العاطفي (EI) والكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات (ICC) بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) من خلال فحص الطريقة التي يتعامل بها الأفراد الذين يتمتعون بمستويات مختلفة من الذكاء العاطفي مع تحديات التواصل بين الثقافات. أُجريت ملاحظات على ثلاث أقسام مختارة عشوائيًا من طلاب السنة الثانية لغة إنجليزية خلال حصص التعبير الشفوي في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة 08 ماي 1945 - قالمة، وذلك لدراسة كيفية ظهور المهارات العاطفية والمهارات بين الثقافات في سياقات التواصل الحقيقية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم إجراء استبيان على نفس المجموعة من أجل جمع آرائهم وخبراتهم. وخلال الدراسة ركز الباحثان أيضًا على كيفية فهم الإشارات العاطفية مثل تعابير الوجه ولغة الجسد ووجهات النظر المختلفة والاستجابة لها في المواقف التي يظهر فيها الاختلاف بين الثقافات. كشفت النتائج أن الطلاب أدركوا أهمية التعاطف والتنظيم الذاتي والانفتاح لبناء علاقات ناجحة بين الثقافات وليس فقط لإدارة المشاعر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء العاطفي، والكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات، الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.