PEOPLE' S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF 8 MAI 1945 GUELMA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF LETTERS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE

OPTION: LINGUISTICS

The Impact of Culture-based Content on EFL Learners' Communicative Competence.

Case Study: Third Year LMD Students at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of Master's Degree in Anglophone Language, Literatures and Civilizations.

Submitted by: **Supervised by:**
Ms. GRAINI Dounya   **Mrs.** LASSOUED Sabrina

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June 2017

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June 2017

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Dedication

This

work is

dedicated

to these people:

the memory of my father "Athmane"

my dearest mother "Houria"

my prince charming "Ramzi"

my cherished sister "Sara"

my lovely sister "Lydia"

my little sweet nephew "Ayoub"

my beloved "Sabrina"

and you

too.

Acknowledgments

"No one walks alone, and when you are walking on the journey of life…you have to start to thank those that joined you, walked beside you, and helped you along the way"
David H. Hooker

Abstract

The present study attempts to inquire into the impact of culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence. This investigation aims at exploring learners' and teachers' perceptions, views, and attitudes vis-à-vis the integration of a culture-based content into EFL classrooms. It thereby hypothesizes that "If a culture-based content is adequately implemented into EFL classrooms, it would have an impact on learners' communicative competence". To achieve the aforementioned aim, the present research adopts the descriptive method. The latter is manifested through the instrumentality of a questionnaire and an interview which, in turn, would allow for the obtainment of quantitative and qualitative data. For which purpose, 108 Third Year LMD students and fourteen (14) English teachers from the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma, are randomly selected as the sample. The derived results unveil a positive relationship between the two main variables which confirms the hypothesis set at the beginning of the research. Therefore, the revision of the status of culture in EFL classrooms becomes one of the primary goals that policymakers should take into serious account.

Keywords: Culture-based Content, Communicative Competence, EFL Learners.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBA: Competency-based Approach

CBC: Culture-based Content

CC: Communicative Competence

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

LMD: License Master Doctorat

LT: Language Teaching

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TV: Television

UK: United Kingdom

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Résumé

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Under the massive spread of globalization along with the outgrowth of the technological explosion and the scientific evolution, people oftentimes come into contact with one another more than ever before. The influence of such a thing embraces various areas of human life and increases the need for learning or mastering a foreign language aside from one's own language so as to survive in today's world. As might be foreseen, the learning of English language becomes essential that the great majority of people choose to learn it to meet their personal and professional needs. However, studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is not as easy as it seems, it is rather a challenging effort and a complex process for EFL learners, especially those whose major goal is effective communication. It is noteworthy that the process of EFL learning is influenced by numerous factors such as age, motivation, learning environment, prior linguistic knowledge…to mention but a few. However, when it comes to EFL learners communicating effectively, culture seems to take the lion's share in the development of their Communicative Competence (CC). In fact, language and culture are said to be two inseparable entities since language without culture would be dead and culture without language would have no shape (Jiang, 2000). Even though the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) has done a superb mission to better accommodate EFL learners' needs, the field may have to do even more to handle the diverse and ever evolving needs of EFL learners. Definitely, this has to do with teaching them the different cultural aspects of the language conjointly with the linguistic elements, which have been the main focus of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) for a long time. Bennett (1997) argues that the one who has a good handle of the language but separates it from its culture risks becoming a "fluent fool" (as cited in

Jackson, 2014, p. 317). Based on the premise that language and culture are intermingled, this current study aims at discovering EFL learners' and teachers' perceptions, views, and attitudes towards the integration of a Culture-Based Content (CBC) and its impact on EFL learners' Communicative Competence (CC).

1. Statement of the Problem

The field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) witnessed a great emphasis on linguistic and grammar forms to reach a full mastery of the language. However, the latter cannot be achieved without an adequate mastery of the culture of the language being learnt/ taught. Generally, culture is defined in terms of two distinct concepts: *Big 'C'* culture and *small 'c'* culture. The former comprises art, music, literature, and institutions…etc., whereas the latter constitutes the cultural features of daily life, beliefs, values, and behaviors…etc. It is important to note, however; that learners at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma are exposed to Big 'C' culture which is only a small fraction of the whole frame (Herron & Dubreil, 2000). The incorporation of a Culture-based Content in EFL classrooms is restricted which in turn limits EFL learners' capability to become communicatively competent. Hence, a low level of communicative competence manifests itself amongst the majority of these learners. Seemingly, the biggest issue of learners finding difficulty to reach a high level of communicative competence is a prevalent phenomenon in EFL context.

2. Aims of the Study and Research Questions

In the process of learning/teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), it is of a pivotal importance to focus attention on learners' communicative competence along with their linguistic competence. It is also significant to place emphasis on exposing EFL learners to the target culture. Accordingly, this current study intends to investigate the impact of culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence. In other respects, it aims at exploring the different perceptions, views, and attitudes of EFL learners and teachers towards the integration of a CBC and its impact on EFL learners' CC.

Hence, this study is two-fold; it attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What perceptions, views, and attitudes do EFL learners have with regards to the impact of culture-based content on their communicative competence?

2. What perceptions, views, and attitudes do EFL teachers have with regards to the impact of culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence?

3. Research Hypotheses

At this stage of the present research, it is presumed that the appropriate implementation of Culture-based Content in EFL classrooms can serve as a potential outlet for EFL learners to improve their Communicative Competence. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H_1: If a Culture-Based Content is adequately implemented in EFL classrooms, it would have an impact on EFL learners' Communicative Competence.

The null hypothesis implies that no relationship exists between Culture-Based Content and EFL learners' Communicative Competence. Hence,

H_0: If a Culture-Based Content is adequately implemented in EFL classrooms, it would not have an impact on EFL learners' Communicative Competence.

4. Research Methodology and Design

4.1. Research Method

The present research is conducted through a descriptive method, both quantitative and qualitative. This method serves as the means through which a questionnaire is administered to learners and an interview is conducted with teachers. The choice of such method is not at random; it is rather related to the fact that it is appropriate for looking into learners' and teachers' opinions, views, and attitudes. The latter would allow for the confirmation or the rejection of the research hypothesis.

4.2. Population of the Study

The population under study consists of third year LMD students and teachers at 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma. The selected sample comprises (108) Third-Year LMD students and fourteen (14) teachers (both males and females) at the Department of English. To assure the representativeness of the sample, it is chosen randomly following Krejcie' and Morgan's (1970) sampling table (as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p. 94). The reason behind opting to work with Third Year LMD students is that their linguistic competence and mastery of language seem to be more developed than those of First and Second Year LMD students.

4.3. Data Gathering Tools

Based on the descriptive method, data is gathered through a questionnaire and an interview. These tools are used to compile data which will aid testing the hypothesis. They are directed to EFL learners and teachers respectively so as to assay their perceptions, opinions, and stances towards the incorporation of culture into EFL classrooms and the potential impact the latter may have on EFL learners' communicative competence.

4.4. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of three basic chapters. The first two chapters deal with the two variables, and the third chapter is devoted to the analysis of the responses and discussions of the results obtained. Chapter one is entirely devoted to Communicative Competence. It traces the development of CC, its definition and different components, in addition to the approaches to developing it. Chapter two provides insights of the role of culture in Language Teaching (LT). It presents culture characteristics and teaching goals. It also discusses the various approaches and techniques to teaching culture

concurrent with the effect of integrating culture on EFL learners' Communicative Competence. Chapter three is entirely practical; it deals with data analysis. It provides a presentation of the full results together with the necessary comments and interpretations. It helps us to see whether the results go hand in hand with our hypothesis. This chapter also deals with pedagogical implications and offers some recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER ONE

Communicative Competence

Introduction

The domain of language teaching and learning has witnessed significant changes concerning the techniques, tools, and methods of instruction. Despite the fact that the latter were so diverse, they shared -most of the time- one goal which is developing learners' linguistic competence. Hence, a great emphasis has been placed on the correct production and/or the accurate usage of language. It is important to note that from 1970s onwards, this aim has been reconsidered. Therefore, linguists and language instructors became interested in achieving accuracy as well as appropriateness of language. For this reason, a new concept has been introduced into the field of language learning/teaching, which is communicative competence.

1.1. Origins of Communicative Competence

In 1916, De Saussure introduced his famous yet debatable dichotomy *langue/parole*. In this context, he (1983, p. 16) indicates that "by distinguishing between the language itself (langue) and speech (parole), we distinguish at the same time what is social from what is individual". Also, Lyons asserts that, while *langue* is the sum of the language's aspects and traits as a whole, *parole* is "... the usage of the system but not the system" (1996, p. 14). All in all, it is assumed that, "the product of the use of a langue is language, and, if it is the product of speech, it is parole" (p. 14).

Chomsky's reaction to De Saussure's dichotomy *langue/parole* resulted in a conscious reframing of the latter (Selinker, 1996) through which Chomsky offered another dichotomy, that of *competence/performance*. *Competence*, Chomsky (1965) argues, is the person's underlying knowledge of the language and its different rules; he claims that it varies from one person to another. Lyons (1996, p. 15) asserts that Chomsky's *competence* pertains to the individual's mental capacity. In Chomsky's words, performance is "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (1965, p.4);

hence, it is the process through which speakers/hearers make use of their competence so as to produce and comprehend assorted utterances (Howard, 2004, p.73). In other words, competence is defined by one's performance.

It is interesting to note that because De Saussure's parole and Chomsky's performance are both -in a general way- seen as the speech's actual representation, they can be equated as such. However, there should be no association between De Saussure's langue and Chomsky's competence since the former (langue) is defined as a pure social notion, "[language] is the social side of speech, outside the individual" (De Saussure, 1983, p. 66); whereas, the latter (competence) is rather defined as an individual property (Lyons, 1996). Furthermore, Chomsky states that it is "... necessary to reject [De Saussure's] concept of langue as merely a systematic inventory of items and to return rather to a conception of underlying competence as a system of generative processes" (1965, p.31).

In few words, Chomsky disallows that his *competence* corresponds to De Saussure's *langue*. As such, he dismisses the latter (langue) and offers instead his notion of *linguistic competence* as a reaction rather than an alternate to it. Moreover, he assumes that the incipient concern of his theory of linguistic (or grammatical) competence is with:

An ideal speaker and listener, in a completely homogenous speech community who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of language in actual performance. (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3)

Chomsky's theory of linguistic competence received huge criticism. Lyons was dissatisfied with what Chomsky called "an ideal speaker and listener" (p. 3) and the

"completely homogenous speech community" (p. 3). He elucidates that the former is "held to know his/her language perfectly" (Lyons, 1996) which makes Chomsky's theory an idealistic one.

This criticism amongst others acted as a strong incentive for scholars and language practitioners. Hence, attempts started to take place for a more convenient concept which is to comprise other elements that were not included by Chomsky. This novel concept further meant to consider the socio-linguistic aspects of competence and came to be known as *communicative competence*.

1.2. Definition of Communicative Competence

Chomsky's linguistic (or grammatical) competence was criticized by many theoreticians and language practitioners. It was rejected by Hymes (1972) who first introduced the term *Communicative Competence*. Since then, the latter received great attention; it became a subject of discussion and it was redefined by several authors. The following are some of the most eminent definitions of communicative competence.

In Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1983), Communicative Competence is defined as "the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom" (p. 49). In other words, CC is used to refer to "that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings" between each other in given contexts (Brown, 1987, p. 199). These two definitions of the term maintain that to be communicatively competent, one needs not only to be aware of the language's structural system, but also to be able to convey the intended message(s) by putting these rules into practice. Put somewhat differently, CC implies that the language's *information rules* are not enough, what

Hymes calls the *speaking rules* should also be taken into consideration (Corder, 1973, p. 93).

Saville-Troike (2003) goes further to discuss communicative competence as follows:

> Communicative competence entails knowing not only the language code or the form of language, but also what to say and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. It deals with the social and cultural knowledge that speakers are presumed to have which enables them to use and interpret linguistic forms. It also includes knowledge of who may speak or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, how to talk to persons in different statuses and roles, what non-verbal behaviours are appropriate in various contexts, what the routines for turn taking in conversation, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands and the like. (p. 18)

Acar (2005) defines communicative competence in terms of the effects this notion has on language teaching, particularly second and foreign language teaching. He asserts that "the theory of communicative competence has been taken as an aim within the communicative approach, an aim of making a non-native communicatively competent in the target language" (p. 59). Accordingly, Yule (2010, p. 194) assumes that CC can be seen as "the general ability to use language accurately, appropriately, and flexibly". Simply put, it is the capacity to accurately utilize different words and structures of the language, to know when to appropriately use them in distinct social contexts, and to flexibly prevail over potential communication obstacles by using diverse speaking strategies when transmitting the message.

1.3. Models of Communicative Competence

1.3.1. Hymes' Model

Hymes (1972), the social anthropologist, criticized Chomsky's linguistic theory for disregarding some elements of language use, particularly the social ones. In Hymes words, "Chomsky's theoretical distinction between competence and performance did not include any reference to aspects of language use in social practice" (cited in Usó-Juan and Alicia, 2006, p. 10). Being interested in both the linguistic theory and the socio-cultural aspects of language, Hymes introduced what he calls *communicative competence* which he defines as "the most general term for the speaking and hearing capabilities of a person -competence is understood to be dependent on two things: (tacit) knowledge and (ability for) use" (1972, p. 16).

It is noteworthy that while Chomsky's theory concerns itself with the *grammaticality* and *acceptability* of language which are manifested through *competence* and *performance* respectively, Hymes' theory of communicative competence comprises four distinct parameters: *Possibility*, *Feasibility*, *Appropriateness*, and *Occurrence* which are presented by Hymes as follows:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible.

2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible.

3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate.

4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done. (1972, pp. 284-286).

Hymes contends that his model of communicative competence incorporates grammatical and sociolinguistic competences as well as the *ability for use*. Whilst he acknowledges the importance of actual performance, he claims that, in real life situations, CC and actual performance should be detached from each other. The following figure clearly illustrates Hymes' model:
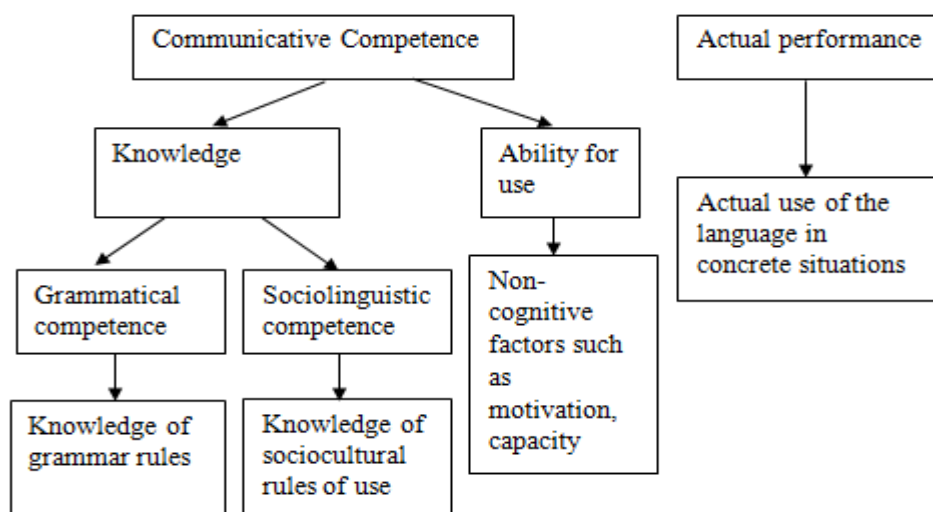
Figure 1.1. Hymes' Communicative Competence Model

(Retrieved from Sun, 2014, p. 1063)

This model makes it clear that there is a relationship between grammatical (or linguistic) competence and communicative competence in the sense that the former is a sub-section of the latter. Allwright (1979) reinforces Hymes' claim by saying that though "some areas of linguistic competence are essentially irrelevant to communicative competence", grammatical (or linguistic) competence is "a part of communicative competence" (as cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979, p. 168).

1.3.2. Canale' and Swain's Model

Inspired by Hymes' model of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) and after that Canale (1983) proposed another model mainly to "serve as a set of guidelines in terms of which communicative approaches to second language teaching methodologies and assessment instruments may be organized and developed' (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 1). They contend that CC is a fundamental system that brings together what is prerequisite for communication, be it knowledge, skills, and so on. In this context, Canale and Swain refer to CC as "a synthesis of knowledge of basic

grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social contexts to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principle of discourse" (1980, p. 20).

Although Canale' and Swain's communicative competence model received criticism as any other model, it is acknowledged as a starting point for almost all of the subsequent attempts that sought to further develop the term (CC). Their model subsumes four distinct components; each component represents one competence. These are: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. Grammatical competence relates to one's understanding of the language's code: phonology, syntax, morphology, and semantics. Sociolinguistic competence concerns one's knowledge of the language's socio-cultural rules. Discourse competence covers the ability to "connect sentences in stretches of discourse" (Brown, 1987, p. 199); hence, it deals mainly with relationships of coherence and cohesion between and among sentences. Strategic competence represents one's ability "to make repairs, to cope with imperfect knowledge, and to sustain communication" (Savignon, 1997, p. 45)

Communicative competence is viewed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) as per the following figure:
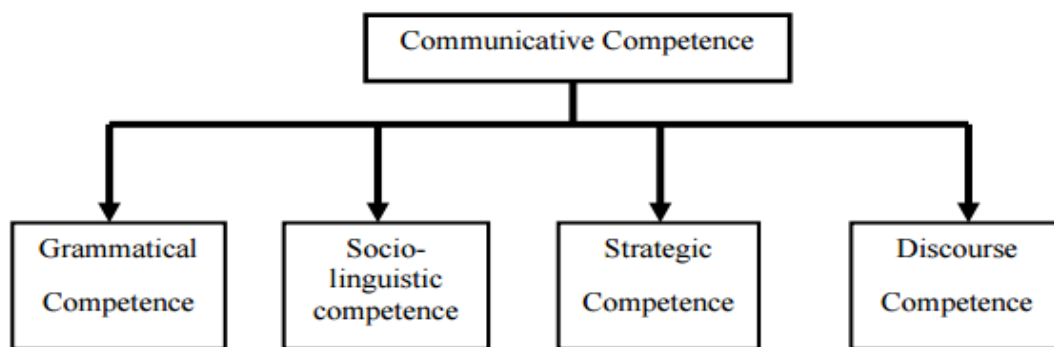
Figure 1.2. Canale' and Swain's Communicative Competence Model (1980)

1.3.3. Bachman's Model

Being interested in language testing and assessment, Bachman (1990) introduced another model of communicative competence. He used the term *communicative language ability* to refer to "both knowledge of, or competence in the language, and the capacity of implementing or using this competence" (Bachman, 1990, p. 14). Within this model, he claims that *language competence* is divided into organizational and pragmatic competences (p. 87) which concern the grammaticality and appropriateness of language respectively. The former comprises both grammatical and textual competences, while the latter incorporates illocutionary and sociolinguistic competences. It is worth mentioning that pragmatic competence in Bachman's model (1990) is said to be similar, if not equal, to *discourse competence* in Canale's model (1983). Components of language competence can be illustrated as follows:
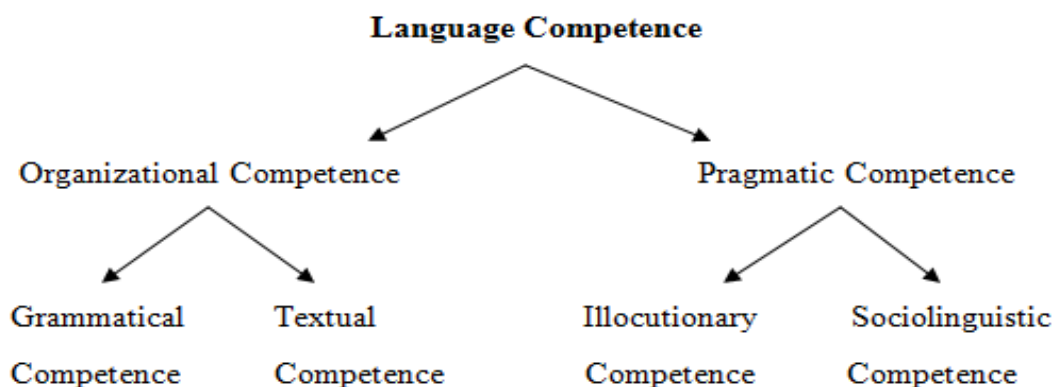
Figure 1.3. Components of Language Competence

(Retrieved from Bachman, 1990, p. 87)

1.3.4. Celce-Murcia', Dörnyei', and Thurrell's Model

Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1995) developed a model of CC which aim is not to test the language proficiency, as is the case with the other models, but rather to ameliorate language teaching and instruction (p. 6). Their model is said to be

an extension of Canale' and Swain's CC model (1980). It encompasses five inter-connected components: discourse competence, linguistic competence, actional competence, socio-cultural competence, and strategic competence (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p. 9). Discourse competence, which is placed at the heart of the model, deals with the understanding of and the ability to appropriately use various discourse constituents so as to create different written and oral texts. Both linguistic and strategic competences have already been presented in Canale' and Swain's model (1980). The two remaining components are: a) actional competence which concerns the ability to achieve communication through the use of language functions, speech acts, and so on, and b) socio-cultural competence which refers to the contextual knowledge of participants of a particular communicative activity.

The authors of this model offer a detailed explanation of their framework. They divide each of the competences presented in the model into other constituents. Perhaps the best example is their introduction of *cross-cultural awareness* as a sub-component of socio-cultural competence (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p. 24). Celce-Murcia et al.'s model of CC and its different sub-competences can be illustrated as follows:
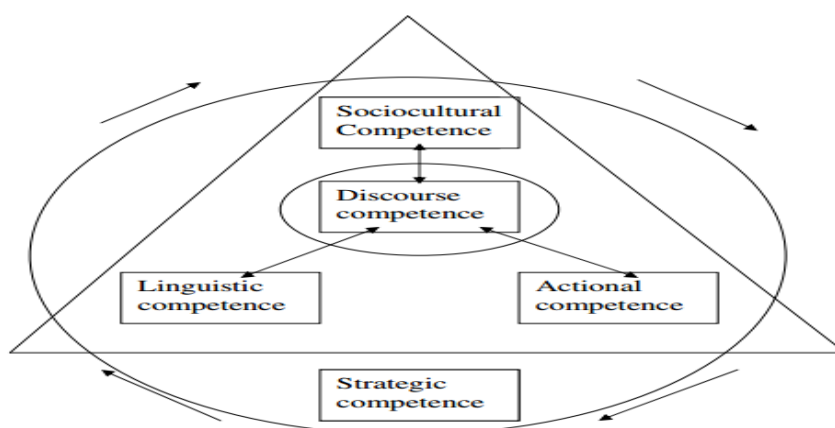
Figure 1.4. Celce-Murcia', Dörnyei', and Thurrell's Communicative Competence

Model

(Retrieved from Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p.10)

1.3.5. Celce-Murcia's Model

Celce-Murcia's model of communicative competence (2007) is a more comprehensive and elaborate framework. It has its roots in Celce-Murcia', Dörnyei', and Thurrell's model (1995). Celce-Murcia asserts that this developed model provides a "central role to formulaic language [...] and to the paralinguistic aspects of face-to-face oral communication" (2007, p. 45). The model has discourse competence at its centre in addition to other five competences: linguistic competence, formulaic competence, socio-cultural competence, interactional competence, and strategic competence. These are best presented in the following figure:
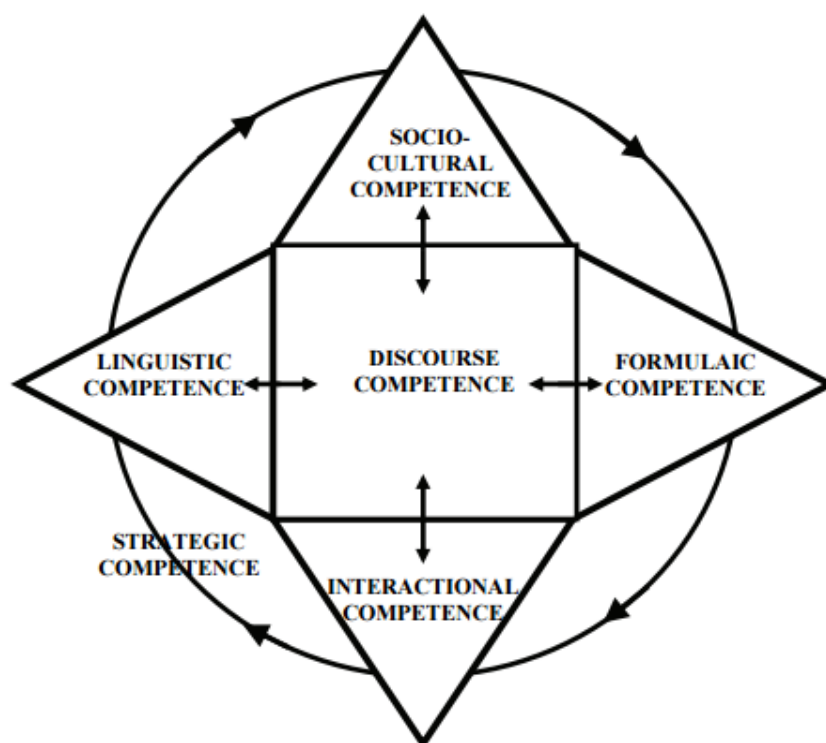
Figure 1.5. Celce-Murcia's Communicative Competence Model

(Retrieved from Celce-Murcia, 2007, p.45)

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1995, pp. 13-15), discourse competence has cohesion, deixis, coherence, and generic structure as its sub-parts. These are of no less importance in relation to the current model (2007). Celce-Murcia defines discourse competence as "the selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, and

utterances to achieve a unified spoken message" (2007, p. 46). Knowledge of phonology, lexis, morphology, and syntax is what constitute linguistic competence. The counterpart of the latter is formulaic competence which is the use of "those fixed and prefabricated chunks of language" such as routines, collocations, idioms, and lexical frames when communicating (p. 46). Socio-cultural competence deals mainly with the pragmatic knowledge of the speakers, with how these speakers vary their speech according to the socio-cultural norms of the speech community with which they are communicating. The counterpart of socio-cultural competence is interactional competence which is considered as a mesh network involving three sub-competences: actional, conversational, and paralinguistic competences. Strategic competence, according to Celce-Murcia, comprises both learning and communication strategies. The former includes cognitive, metacognitive, and memory-related strategies while the latter includes achievement, stalling and/or time gaining, self-monitoring, interacting, and social strategies (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 50).

1.4. Components of Communicative Competence

1.4.1. Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence or grammatical competence, as it is called by Canale and Swain, is "knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology" (Shohamy, 1996, p. 143). Riggenbach (1998) argues that it concerns both the correctness of grammar and pronunciation and the appropriateness of vocabulary. Linguistic competence should be considered as the fundamental constituent of communicative competence, according to Hedge (2000). It is of a paramount importance for speakers to be communicatively competent. It is worth mentioning that linguistic competence assists speakers to "use and understand English language structures accurately and unhesitatingly" (Shumin, 2002, p. 207).

1.4.2. Discourse Competence

Discourse competence or *textual competence*, as it is called by Bachman, is "the ability to use various information routines [...] including their sequential stages in conversations" (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994, p. 40). It comprises, they add, the ability to make the best use of interactional elements including openings, closings, interrupting, sequential organizations …etc. Otherwise, Martínez-Flor, Esther, and Eva claim that discourse competence involves:

> knowledge of discourse markers (e.g., well, oh, I see, okay), the management of various conversational rules (e.g., turn-taking mechanisms, how to open and close a conversation), cohesion and coherence, as well as formal schemata (e.g., knowledge of how different discourse types, or genres, are organized) (2006, p. 147).

All in all, discourse competence concerns the formation of a meaningful and unified whole from words, phrases, and utterances and the diverse relationships existing between them.

1.4.3. Pragmatic Competence

According to Usó-Juan and Alicia (2006), pragmatic competence is the ability to appropriately use the language while respecting the relevant register. It deals with the connection between and among the subject matter, its style (formal or informal), and its mode (oral or written). Pohl (2004) assumes that pragmatic competence is divided into two sub-competences: illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence.

1.4.3.1. Illocutionary Competence

Illocutionary competence stands for the speaker's ability to "use language in order to achieve certain communicative goals or intentions" (Hedge, 2000, p. 48). It

entails knowledge and understanding of the different functions of language so as to understand the intended message that lies beyond what is said or written.

1.4.3.2. Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic competence, also known as socio-cultural competence, is the ability to "perform a particular function or express an intention clearly" (Hedge, 2000, p.49). Furthermore, it is to know what is and what is not appropriate to say to different people and in different contexts; that is to say, to know how to be "contextually appropriate" (p. 50).

1.4.4. Strategic Competence

Canale and Swain view strategic competence as "the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (1980, p. 30). Simply put, strategic competence is the ability to use communication strategies such as achievement and reduction strategies. This competence comes into play whenever there is a communication gap or deficiency so as to overcome these and improve communication. Bygate affirms that the aim behind being strategically competent is "to overcome limitations due to a lack of competence in any of the other components integrating the proposed communicative competence framework" (2006, p. 151).

1.5. Sectors of Communicative Competence

1.5.1. Formal Possibility

Hymes claims that there are several sectors of communicative competence, the first of which is formal possibility, or in his words "whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible" (1972, p. 284). He contends that "something possible

within a formal system is grammatical, cultural, or, on occasion communicative" (p.285). Some scholars, including Brumfit and Johnson (1979, p. 14) tend to equate this sector with Chomsky's grammatical competence. Similar to Hymes' definition is Rickheit', Hans', and Constanze's view of formal possibility as "the grammatical and cultural rules of an utterance or another communicative action" (2008, p. 18). In other words, unless something, be it an utterance or a communicative behaviour, abides by the rules of grammar and culture, it cannot be considered as formally possible.

1.5.2. Feasibility

Feasibility or as Hymes calls it "whether (and to what degree) something is feasible" (1972, p. 285) is not restricted to linguistics. It (feasibility) takes into account other factors such as "memory limitation, perceptual device, effects of properties such as nesting, embedding, branching, and the like" (p, 285) which are purely psycholinguistic. Hence, even if a certain sentence is grammatically possible, it does not necessarily mean that it is feasible. To illustrate this point, Brumfit and Johnson proffer this sentence: "the mouse the cat the dog the man the woman married beat chased ate had a white tail" which they argue not to be feasible though grammatically possible (1979, p. 14). This sentence, they aver, "cannot in any real sense be said to form part of our competence" (p, 14).

1.5.3. Appropriateness

According to Hymes (1972, p. 285), this sector of communicative competence called appropriateness or "whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate" "seems to suggest readily the required sense of relation to contextual features". Brumfit and Johnson further argue that a sentence can be inappropriate even if it is both grammatically possible and feasible (1979, p. 14). In sum, appropriateness demands

behaving in different ways according to different contexts, or trying to act "in ways suitable to the norms and expectations of contexts and situations you encounter", as Morreale, Brian, and Kevin (2007, p. 4) put it.

1.5.4. Actual Performance

Actual performance is related to what Brumfit and Johnson call *accepted usage* (1979, p. 14). This sector mainly deals with whether or not something is actually done or performed. Hymes indicates that something may not occur even if it is formally possible, feasible, and appropriate. The aim of the notion of competence, he adds, is "to show the ways in which the systemically possible, the feasible, and the appropriate are linked to produce and interpret actually occurring cultural behaviour" (1972, p. 286). Furthermore, actual performance is said to be "pointed to the necessity of empirical observation of a certain communicative event" (Rickheit et al., 2008, p.18).

1.6. Approaches to Developing Communicative Competence

1.6.1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

1.6.1.1. Definition of CLT

According to Al-Mutawa and Kailani (1989), Communicative Language Teaching, also known as the communicative approach, was affected for the most part by what Hymes terms *communicative competence* which roots are in Chomsky's two notions: *competence* and *performance*. In England, CLT emerged in the 1960s to meet the linguists' needs to focus on "communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastery of structures" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 64). In the United States; however, it came in the mid-1970s as a reaction against the prevalent audio-lingual theories at that time. Since its inception, CLT has gained massive popularity in LT and has been defined and redefined by several scholars.

CLT is said to be of two distinct versions. Howatt provides a detailed explanation of the latter as follows:

There is, in a sense, a *strong* version of the communicative approach and a *weak* version. The *weak* version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching…The *strong* version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as *learning to use* English, the latter entails using English to learn it. (1984, p. 279)

Based on Richards' and Rogers' (1986) definition of the term 'approach', they view CLT as an approach not as a method. Nunan (1991) shares the same viewpoint; he states that "CLT is usually characterized as a broad approach to teaching, rather than as a teaching method with a clearly defined set of classroom practices". Richards and Schmidt define CLT in terms of the aims it seeks to achieve. They claim that CLT is "an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language teaching is communicative competence and which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities" (2002, p. 90).

According to Savignon (2002), CLT goes beyond the mere knowledge of the target language's grammatical rules. She explains this and more as follows:

CLT derives from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology and educational research .The

focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learners' participation in communicative events. (p. 4)

Savignon (2005) further relates CLT to communicative competence (CC) as well as intercultural communicative competence (ICC). In this context, she believes that developing learners' communicative competence by involving them in communication is CLT's main aim (p. 206). Also, Savignon sees CLT as being useful in the sense that it can be used to develop learning materials, tasks, activities and the like (p. 213). Jin defines CLT as "a set of principles about teaching including recommendations about method and syllabus where the focus is on meaningful communication not structure, use not usage" (2008, p. 81).

In sum, CLT is an approach to language teaching which aim is to enhance learners' capacities to become effective users and fluent speakers of the language. In addition, it asserts the importance of communicative competence in LT.

1.6.1.2. Principles of CLT

Berns (1990, p. 103) argues that CLT can realize its goals only if it is looked upon in terms of these eight principles:

1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.

2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.

3. A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.

4. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.

5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers' communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.

6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.

7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners' competence in each.

8. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language - that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning.

According to Brown (2007, pp. 46-47), CLT has six principles. These can be summarized as follows:

1. All components of CC are emphasized; i.e. mastery of grammar rules and vocabulary is not enough, knowing how to put these into practice is also essential.

2. Materials to be used in the classroom aid learners to be involved in "the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes".

3. Since the main aim is communication, fluency receives more importance than accuracy. Also, learners' errors are tolerated because they are seen as a proof that these learners are improving their communication skills.

4. Learners need to be given the appropriate materials that will enable them to promote their skills so as to communicate effectively in real life situations.

5. Learners' autonomy is emphasized; i.e. learners are active and not passive recipients of the materials given in the language classroom.

6. Facilitating and guiding learners throughout the language learning process is the role the teacher occupies.

1.6.1.3. Role of the Teacher

The main aim of using Communicative Language Teaching is developing learners' communicative competence. To this end, the teacher needs to fulfill whole new roles as opposed to the traditional one, which is *teacher as instructor*. According to Widdowson, the teacher's emphasis should be "on communication and meaning rather than accuracy" (1978, p. 19). In this sense, the teacher does not have to correct all of his/her learners' errors, especially if the latter are only errors of form and not of communication. Even if the teacher finds him/herself obliged to correct such errors, Widdowson adds, he/she may do it when learners finish their speech in order not to interrupt them.

Larsen-Freeman contends that, in CLT, "the teacher is required to take a less dominant role" (1986, p. 131). Hence, the teacher can initiate an activity and then steps back, observing his/her learners communicating and learning. This way, the teacher is, for the most part, fulfilling the role of an *observer*. If the teacher feels the need of participating in such an activity, he/she can become a participant through communicating with his/her learners. All in all, the teacher in CLT is a *facilitator* as Larsen-Freeman confirms "teachers in communicative classrooms will find themselves talking less and listening more, becoming active facilitators of their students' learning" (p; 131).

1.6.1.4. Role of the Learner

Savignon (2002, p. 4) affirms that CLT classrooms are learner-centred, objectives and goals are set so as to meet the communicative needs of learners. Accordingly, the latter are to fulfil particular roles in such a classroom. Larsen-Freeman maintains that "learners are encouraged to be more responsible managers of their own learning" (1986, p. 131). They are active participants in classroom pair and/or group

activities and who can take responsibility of their own learning; i.e. they are autonomous learners. Widdowson explains that "the students do most of the speaking, and frequently the scene of a classroom during a communicative exercise is active" (1978, p. 53). In addition, learners need to go beyond the classroom; they need to create chances of communication such as communicating with native speakers so as to boost their communication skills.

1.6.1.5. Role of the Instructional Materials

Materials used in Communicative Language Teaching are said to be of three sorts, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986). The first type is labelled text-based materials which include textbooks. The second type is called task-based materials; this type includes those communication activities such as games, simulations, role plays...etc. The last type, which meets the need of those who call for the incorporation of real-life materials in the communicative classroom, is called *realia*. The latter comprises signs, newspapers, magazines...etc, and even visual sources such as pictures, maps, graphs...etc. These materials are said to assist language teaching and learning processes; therefore, their major role in CLT is to enhance *communicative language use*.

1.6.1.6. Criticism of CLT

Like any other approach to language teaching, CLT was not spared from criticism. Swan (1985) confirms that from the mid 1980s onwards, some of what CLT is about started to be questioned by several researchers. One of the criticisms CLT received is that of Batstone (1995) who claims that CLT can block learners from enhancing their language skills due to the approach's unbalance (p. 229). This point is further explained by Skehan (1996) who argues that CLT's emphasis on fluency over

accuracy "runs the risk of learners becoming confined to the strategic solutions they develop, without sufficient focus for structural change or accuracy" (p. 30); i.e. it leads learners to develop their strategic competence at the expense of other competences and skills which they feel to be unnecessary. Another point of criticism concerns the ambiguity of the term itself which opened up the door for many other approaches to be considered as *communicative* such as the Silent Way, the Task-based Learning, the Notional-Functional to mention but a few (Shortall, 1996, p. 31). Bax (2003) offers the most recent criticism of CLT, but he goes beyond criticising it by suggesting a whole new approach to LT. He claims that it should not be denied that CLT proved to be successful, in a way, in remedying defects of its precedents; however,

> CLT is now having a negative effect, and needs to be replaced [...] CLT has always neglected one key aspect of language teaching—namely the context in which it takes place—and that the consequences of this are serious, to the extent that we need to demote CLT as our main paradigm, and adopt something more similar to what I term a Context Approach. (p. 278)

As far as Bax's *context approach* is concerned, methodology alone is not enough in language teaching, contextual factors should also be taken into consideration for the pivotal and positive effect they have on learners.

1.6.2. Competency Based Approach (CBA)

1.6.2.1. Definition of CBA

Competency-based Approach (CBA) appeared during 1970s in the United States in the military domain, and then it expanded to cover other fields. This approach came out of the necessity to connect learning in schools to real life situations. Although a plethora of definitions are provided for the term, the majority of which -not to say all-relate to each other in one way or another. Schaffer and Van Duzer (1984) define CBA

as a "performance-based process leading to a demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society" (p. 35). Similar to this is Funnel' and Owen's description of the term as "an approach focused on developing the ability to perform activities" (1992, p. 135). From these two definitions, it can be concluded that Competency-based Approach focuses, above all, on learners' performance.

According to Docking (1994), Competency-based Approach is "designed not around the notion of subject knowledge but around the notion of competency" (p. 16). The emphasis, he adds, "moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it" (p. 16). To this end, CBA attempts to "teach students the basic skills they need in order to prepare them for situations they commonly encounter in everyday life" (Richards, 2006, p. 41). In short, CBA is an approach to language teaching which aims at developing the necessary competencies of learners, according to their needs, so that they can put into practice what they have learned in schools. It stresses the importance of learners' performance in real life situations and pays more attention to outcomes over input.

1.6.2.2. Components of CBA

Weddel (2006) discusses the components of CBA as per the following figure:
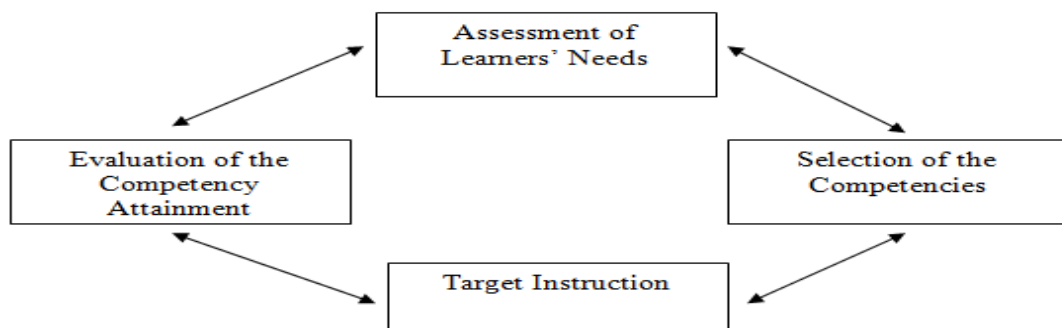
Figure 1.6. Components of the Competency Based Approach

(Retrieved from Weddel, 2006, p. 3)

The CBA's components are interrelated and they imply that the process through which this approach functions is cyclical. The first step to do is to assess the needs of the learners in order to be able to select the appropriate competencies, which is the second step. Then, after the target instruction, the level of attainment of the competency is to be checked and evaluated. After that, assessment of the needs is to take place again and so on.

1.6.2.3. Role of the Teacher

In the Competency-based Approach, the teacher is to fulfil a variety of additional new roles. The teacher has the role of *facilitator*; i.e. s/he is the one responsible for choosing the appropriate tasks and activities, engaging his/her learners in the latter, and aiding them to enhance their skills and strategies. Besides, the teacher is a *counsellor*; i.e. s/he helps his/her learners while communicating by "seeking to maximize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation, through the use of paraphrase, confirmation and feedback" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 78). Another role the teacher has is *researcher*; i.e. s/he needs to be aware of how things can and should be done such as projects, in order to achieve the best out of these. It is important to mention that the teacher in CBA acts in a way that makes learners feel that s/he is responsible for them, but at the same time they are responsible for their own learning.

1.6.2.4. Role of the Learner

Similar to CLT, CBA is learner-centred. The role of the learner is no longer confined to the one who passively receives knowledge, but rather it extends beyond this. The learner has now an active role; s/he identifies "exactly what needs to be learned" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 147) for s/he is expected to be aware of what is beneficial for him/her, as far as competencies are concerned. It is essential to note that

the learner needs to negotiate the different information and interact with his/her teacher and classmates so as to create a collaborative learning atmosphere. This approach helps learners to take charge of their own learning by enabling them to become self-assessors. In sum, since the main goal of the Competency-based Approach is to give learners the means to apply what they learn in class in "life role situations" as Schneck (1978, p. 141) puts it, learners have to take responsibility in the learning process by developing the needed skills and strategies for the sake of realizing that goal.

1.6.2.5. Role of the Instructional Materials

Materials have great importance in any language teaching settings, especially in the EFL ones, since "they may be the only contact that learners have with English and offer the only opportunities for them to study target texts" (Hyland, 2003, p. 86). Richards and Rodgers argue that in order for learners to have "the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours required for effective performance of a real-world task or activity" (2001, p. 144), the CBA offers a variety of instructional materials to be used. The latter constitute different texts, passages, and dialogues that are, and should be, authentic ones, in addition to other task-based activities. The aim of such materials is to allow learners to communicate easily and proficiently, to exchange knowledge while interacting with one another, and to ameliorate the writing, reading, as well as the oral competencies (p. 147). Much attention is given to meaning and less attention is given to structure.

1.6.2.6. Criticism of CBA

Despite the fact that the Competency-based Approach received great attention in the first waves of its appearance, it was not immune from criticism. Many scholars found fault with some of its claims, and the work of Auerbach (1986) contains almost

all of these critiques. Auerbach contends that, in CBA, "there is a structure of socially prescribed knowledge to be mastered by students" (p. 416); i.e. students are taught in such a way that makes them comply with the existing state of affairs without any intention to question or defy it. Another criticism of CBA is that it places great emphasis on both performance and behaviour which allows no room for the cognitive skills, such as critical thinking skills, to be developed. Another point of criticism that is worth mentioning concerns CBA's claim of learner-centeredness. Critics argue that while CBA is based on, and even starts with, assessing learners' needs so as to design a curriculum that will meet these needs, the procedure of needs assessment itself means that learners do not have control over the learning process. (Auerbach, 1986)

Conclusion

As a conclusion and in light of what has been presented in this chapter, it is interesting to note that for people in general, and for learners in particular, communicative competence is of a paramount importance. In point of fact, the indispensable nature of the latter is due to the different changes taking place in the world such as globalization, technological innovations...etc. For this reason, it is undoubtedly significant for learners to develop their communicative competences so that they can easily interact with the world around them. Therefore, great emphasis needs to be placed on such a competence and on the various approaches and techniques of instruction that will contribute to its promotion.

CHAPTER TWO

Culture

Introduction

The connection between language and culture has always attracted the attention of different scholars and researchers. There is no doubt that language mirrors culture and that it affects the ways in which culture is constituted due to the fact that each of the two concepts is considered to be part of the other. This relationship becomes more evident when relating it to the field of language teaching and learning. Many scholars do acknowledge the fact that teaching/learning a foreign language without integrating the cultural element is defective. More to the point, it is not sufficient to focus only on learners' linguistic competences; their cultural knowledge has to be taken into consideration as well. In this way, foreign language learners will have the chance to develop their knowledge and understanding about the target culture in addition to their native one. This will be of paramount benefit for them in their current as well as their future life.

2.1. Definition of Culture

Culture is presumed to be originated from the Latin word *cultura* which, according to Nababan, means "being cultivated" (1974, p. 18). He argues that *cultura* came to refer to "the study of *civilization* or *society*" (p. 18) due to certain changes and developments of the Latin language. Throughout history, the term 'culture' referred to different things in different contexts and disciplines. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that because the word culture has rather a long and intricate history; it is very hard to determine what culture is, or what it is not. Culture is, Moran confirms, "multifaceted and complex and there is no consensus on what [it] is" (2001, p. 13). The following are some of the most important definitions of the term culture.

Tylor defines culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a

member of a society" (1873, p. 1). Hence, Tylor views culture as what a member of a certain society learns and becomes aware of in terms of habits, abilities, and standards. According to Goodenough (1957); however, these qualities and beliefs are not only to be learned but to be obeyed and respected as well (cited in Hudson, 1996, p. 71). Chastain (1976) claims that culture is divided into two different yet related concepts, which are big 'C' Culture and small 'c' culture. The former is related to civilization, literature, works of art …etc., and to how a certain society contributes to the whole world. Small 'c'; however, is concerned with a society's beliefs, values, customs, lifestyles…etc. Byram perceives culture roughly the same way as he defines it as a certain group's lifestyle that encompasses artistic and philosophical output along with high culture. He further asserts that the scope of culture is not exclusively confined to the previously mentioned components (1989, p. 15).

Hofstede views culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (1994, p. 5). It is apparent from this definition that Hofstede is stressing the power of culture in assorting people into distinct categories or strata based on different qualities and characteristics that they embody. Matsumoto contends that culture is "the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next" (1996, p. 16). Hence, Matsumoto believes that culture is the possession of one group of people which is passed from one generation to another. Samovar and Porter provide a more detailed definition of culture as follows:

> Culture is ubiquitous, multidimensional, complex, and pervasive. Because culture is so broad, there is no single definition or central theory of what it is. Definitions range from the all - encompassing ('it is everything') to the narrow

('it is opera, art, and ballet')… we define culture as the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving (2003, p. 8).

This definition is threefold in the sense that it displays a) how culture is such a complex concept, b) how it is vague to the point that it is not limited to only one definition, and c) how it is related -in one way or another- to members of a group or a society. It is important to mention that Spencer-Oatey insists, while defining culture, that it (culture) affects how members of a certain society behave but it does not ultimately determine their behavior (2008, p. 3).

2.2. Characteristics of Culture

Culture can better be understood if it is looked at in terms of the different features that characterize it. Although the latter are many, only the most common ones are to be discussed in the following:

1. Culture, in the most essential respects, belongs exclusively to humans.

2. Culture is learned by means of socialization; it is not inborn. In this respect, Benedict (1943) says that culture is " the sociological term for learned behavior, behavior which in man is not given at birth… but must be learned anew from grown people by each generation" (cited in Shaules, 2007, p. 26).

3. Culture is shared by a social group, a community, and/or a nation. The sharing of the different cultural aspects such as attitudes, norms, and values is what makes it clear enough for a certain group of people to be identified as different.

4. Culture is integrated in the sense that all of its aspects are connected to each other in one way or another. This interconnectedness means that it is indispensable to know about all aspects of culture in order to reach a full understanding of the latter.

5. Culture is dynamic which means that it is constantly changing into something new whether by adding, modifying, or omitting some of its aspects. In this, Corbett claims:

The norms, beliefs, practices and language of any group are not static but dynamic – the group is forever negotiating and renegotiating its norms and values among its membership. Therefore, the core beliefs – and the language that articulates them – will necessarily change over time (2003, p. 20).

It is significant to note that even though cultures are divergent in several aspects; this does not necessarily mean that some of them are good while others are bad. Hofstede, Pederson, and Hofstede confirm by arguing that "no culture is objectively better or worse, superior or inferior to another" (2002, p. 34).

2.3. Models of Culture

2.3.1. The Onion Model

Being interested in visualizing culture in terms of layers, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) proposed a model of culture, called the onion model. The latter is made up of three different layers; the outer layer, the middle layer, and the core. The first layer consists of artifacts and products, referred to by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner as *explicit products*. These are, in Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner words, "the observable reality of the language, food, buildings, houses, monuments, agriculture, shrines, markets, fashions and art" (p. 21). The second layer includes

norms, which can be defined as "the mutual sense a group has of what is *right* or *wrong*" (pp. 21-22), and values which are "closely related to the ideals shared by a group" (p. 22) and which decide on what is good and what is bad. The third layer (the core) constitutes basic assumptions about existence which are believed to be evident by people sharing the same culture. These basic assumptions are said to have an impact on the middle layer. Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's onion model of culture can be illustrated as follows:

Artifacts and products

Norms and values

Basic assumptions -- Implicit

--- Explicit
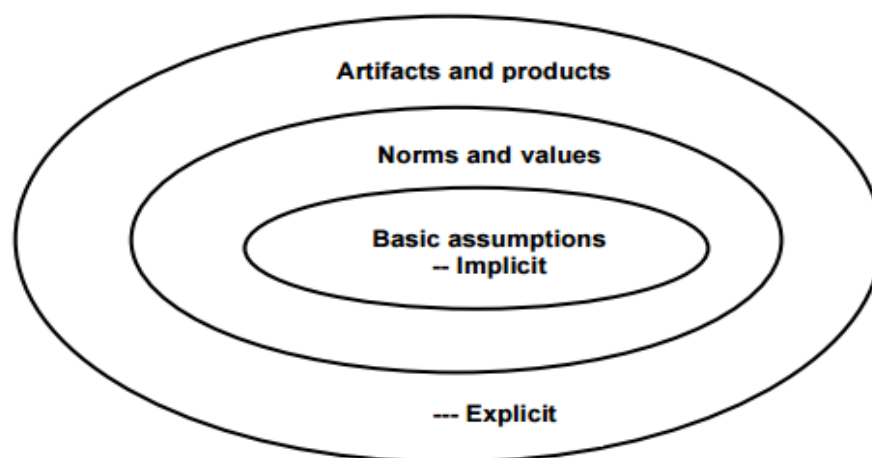
Figure 2.1. Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's Onion Model of Culture

(Retrieved from Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, p. 22)

Sharing the same point of view, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) believe that culture can best be represented by layers. In this context, they developed the onion model of culture that is similar but not identical to Trompenaars' and Hampden-Turner's as it offers a set of four rather than three layers. According to this model, symbols constitute the outer layer; values represent the core while heroes and rituals stand between the two. Keeping values out of the equation, symbols, heroes, and rituals fall under the big term *practices*. The model's five components can be briefly explained as follows:

1. **Symbols:** are graphic and/or visual items in addition to objects that hold a specific meaning. This meaning; however, is and can be recognized only by those sharing the same culture. Symbols are subject to change since they can easily either appear or disappear over time.

2. **Heroes:** are people who have a considerable esteem amongst their cultural group to the point that they become role models.

3. **Rituals:** are shared activities that are significant at the societal level so as to achieve a particular aim.

4. **Practices:** are, as aforementioned, the embodiments of the previous three layers through which they (symbols, heroes, and rituals) can be seen by outsiders.

5. **Values:** are the group's inclinations to prioritize certain things over others. These are what decide on the normal from the abnormal, the permitted from the forbidden…etc. (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp. 7-8)

The following figure clearly illustrates Hofstede' and Hofstede's onion model of culture:
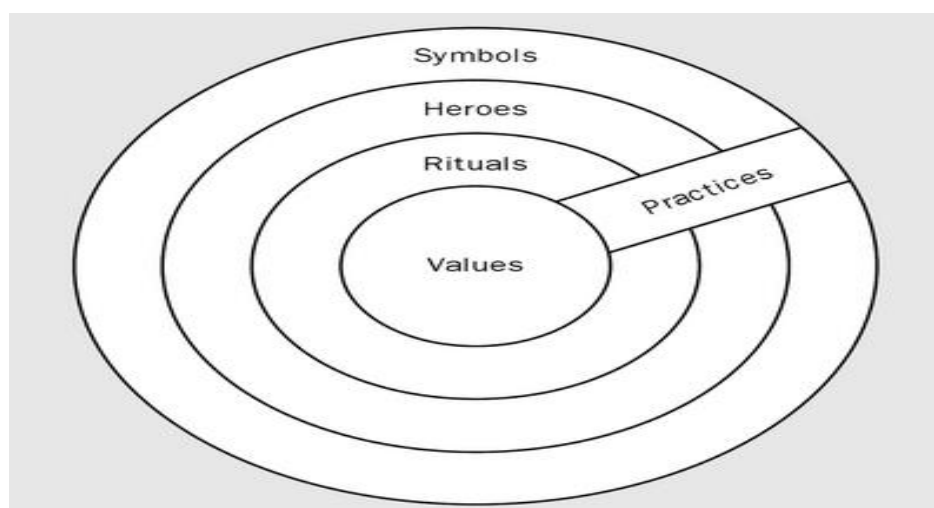
Figure 2.2. Hofstede' and Hofstede's Onion Model of Culture

(Retrieved from Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 7)

2.3.2. The Iceberg Model

Ting Toomey and Chung (2005) put forward a model where culture can be thought of as an iceberg with distinct levels. Accordingly, the surface level of the iceberg represents popular culture constituting artifacts such as artworks and customs. The reason they are put into the outermost level is because they can be straightway noticed in everyday life. Beneath comes the intermediate level, which is comprised of symbols, meanings, and norms. Meanings are linked to symbols which can take the form of signs, words, and para-lingual behaviours. Norms; however, determine what accounts for an appropriate or an inappropriate behaviour. Consisting of traditions, beliefs, and values which are common to all members of the same culture is the deep level. It is worth noting that all of the previously mentioned levels rest upon another invisible part, called 'universal human needs' incorporating love for one another, passion, and respect…etc. These are not specific to any particular culture, they are 'universal'. Hence, culture is viewed by Ting Toomey and Chung (2005) as per the following figure:
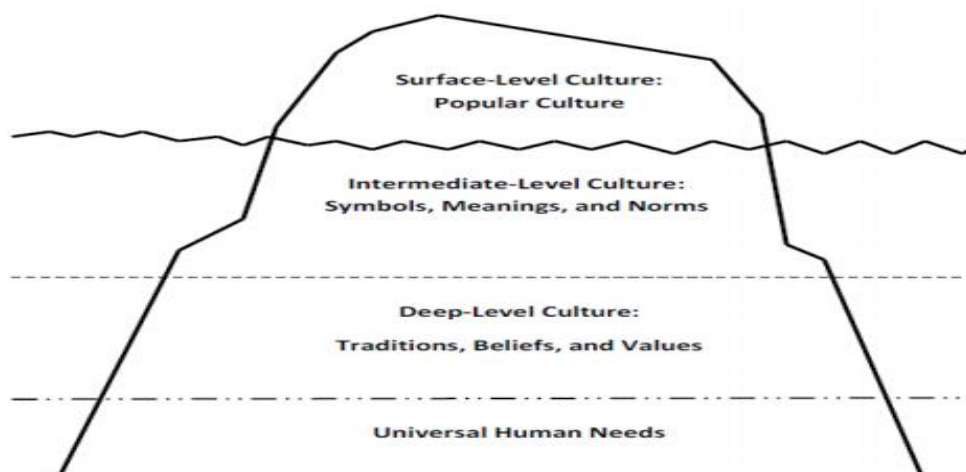
Figure 2.3. Ting-Toomey' and Chung's Iceberg Model of Culture

(Retrieved from Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, p. 28)

2.3.3. The Atom Model

Whereas the preceding models of culture approach culture in terms of its elements and components, Hecht', Baldwin', and Faulkner's (2006) atom model concerns itself with different themes of interest. They contend that it is a "two-dimensional" model incorporating two sets of themes (2006, p. 69). The first set (process, function, and structure) is positioned in the middle; it is the nucleus of the atom around which the second set (group, power, refinement, and products) revolves. It is necessary to mention that the first set is highly important owing to the fact that the themes of process, function, and structure portray how culture is formed, what it does, and what it is respectively.

Hecht et al.'s (2006) atom model of culture is best presented in the following figure:
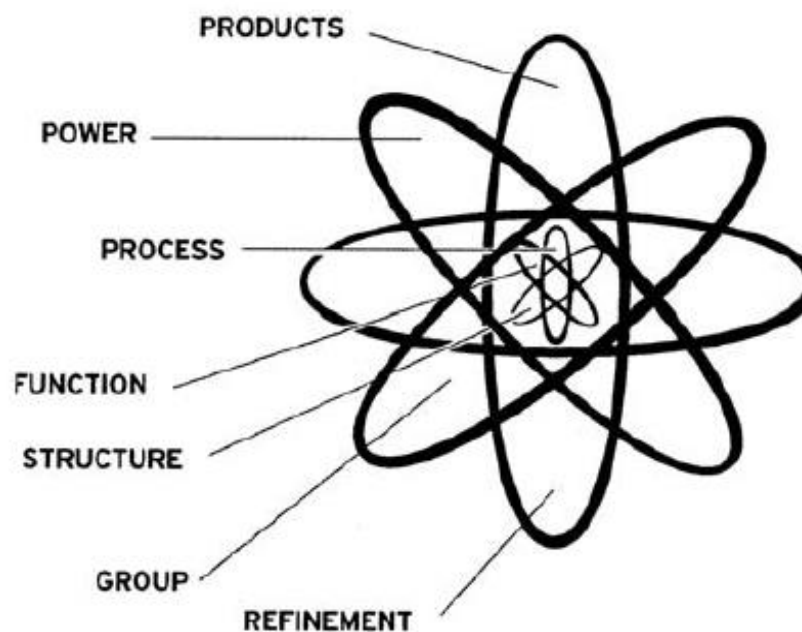
Figure 2.3. Hecht', Baldwin', and Faulkner's Atom Model of Culture

(Retrieved from Hecht et al., 2006, p. 69)

2.4. Culture and Language Teaching

2.4.1. Relationship between Language and Culture

The relationship between language and culture has always been an area of interest for scholars who approach the issue from different perspectives. Sapir and Mandelbaum believe that culture has many aspects, one of which is language. The latter, they claim, is not only "a prerequisite to the development of culture as a whole" (1949, p. 7), but it is also a tool that serves the role of preserving culture (p. 17). Furthermore, Byram (1989) affirms that language "pre-eminently embodies the values of the meaning of a culture, refers to cultural artifacts, and signals people cultural identity" (p. 41). It is apparent that Byram considers language a reflection of people's cultural aspects; be it values, concepts, identity… etc. Hence, in order to learn a particular language, one has to learn its culture as well since the two (language and culture) are inseparable (Seelye, 1993, p. 21).

According to Kramsch (1998), language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality. These relationships of language and culture can be put forward as follows:

1. Language, which is in the form of words, phrases, and utterances, is used to express both: a) experiences and events that are common to individuals belonging to the same social group, b) as well as attitudes and assumptions of those individuals.

2. The way in which people speak to each other give sense to the experiences they share.

3. "Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value"; that is, individuals speaking the same language believe themselves to be sharing the same culture (p. 3).

Additionally, Brown (2000) asserts the interconnectedness of language and culture. In that, he says "language is a part of culture, and culture is a part of language, the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture" (p. 177). He goes on to stress the importance of incorporating culture into language teaching since teaching language implies teaching its culture (p. 64). In the same vein, Fishman (2006) emphasizes the inseparability of language and culture in the links he establishes between the two. Seemingly, this inseparability is best manifested in the first link which he calls *Language as Part of Culture*. The two other relations are, in his words, *Language as an Index of Culture* and *Language as Symbolic of Culture* elucidating how language reveals various thoughts, beliefs, and feelings…etc. of people sharing a particular culture and how it (language) stands as a symbol of the latter respectively (pp. 13-14).

2.4.2. Goals of Teaching Culture

2.4.2.1. Nostrand's Goals

Nostrand (1967) contends that there are nine goals for teaching culture which are to enable learners to:

1. Act fittingly in different social events and situations.

2. Depict a certain cultural pattern to a particular group of people.

3. Discern a pattern when it is unraveled.

4. Give a clear explanation of a pattern.

5. Anticipate the way in which a particular pattern is to be put into practical use in a certain situation.

6. Demonstrate the qualities that a person should possess for him/her to be convenient in a society that is not his/hers.

7. Assess the statement's configuration of a cultural pattern.

8. Portray plausible techniques of scrutinizing a sociocultural phenomenon.

9. Pinpoint the objectives underlying the things being taught. (Cited in Lafayette & Schulz, 1997, pp. 578-579)

2.4.2.2. Seelye's Goals

Seelye's goals of culture teaching are an extended version of Nostrand's goals. Seelye claims that cultural activities can only be meaningful and purposeful when they are related to these seven goals:

1. Attitudes towards other societies: enabling learners to understand and empathize with other cultures.

2. The sense, or functionality, of culturally conditioned behavior: enabling learners to be aware of the reasons behind their own ways of behaving as well as the others' ways of behaving.

3. The interaction of language and social variables: enabling learners to realize how the language use is affected by the different social variables such as age, gender, occupation, social class … etc.

4. Cultural connotations of words and phrases: enabling learners to know how a certain word or phrase is linked to a particular cultural image.

5. Conventional behavior in common situations: enabling learners to understand how people are governed by certain conventions that make them act in common situations.

6. Evaluating statements about a society: enabling learners to appraise the general rather than the specific principles of the target culture.

7. Researching another culture: enabling learners to promote the necessary skills that allow them to gather information, statistics, and details concerning the target culture. (Seelye, 1974, pp. 38-48).

2.4.2.3. Lafayette' and Schulz's Goals

Lafayette and Schulz suggest three different goals arguing that they are genuine in nature and can be successfully piloted in language classrooms. These goals are as follows:

1. Knowledge: "the ability to recognize cultural information or patterns. The goal focuses on factual information about selected patterns of the target culture, the student's ability to recall, recognize, and describe cultural information" (Lafayette & Schulz, 1997, p. 581).

2. Understanding: "the ability to explain cultural information or pattern(s). The student needs to comprehend a cultural pattern in terms of its meaning, origin, and interrelationships within the larger cultural context. This goal presupposes not only factual knowledge, but also implies reasoning ability. Students should see the *logic* of a pattern in its own cultural context" (p. 581)

3. Behavior: "the ability to use cultural information or pattern(s). This objective refers to behavioral skills such as the ability to act meaningfully, unobtrusively, and inoffensively in real or simulated cultural situations" (p. 582).

2.4.3. Approaches to Teaching Culture

2.4.3.1. The Comparative Approach

Byram and Morgan contend that "learners cannot simply shake off their own culture and step into another", they add, "to deny any part of it [their culture] is to deny something within their own being" (1994, p. 43). Accordingly, the comparative approach focuses attention on the target culture as well as the learners' own culture. As its name suggests, this approach seeks to compare both cultures in order to have insights into the similarities and differences existing between them. Byram and Planet argue that despite the fact that the aim of the comparative approach is to compare both

cultures, it does not work toward placing one culture above the other or saying that one culture is better than the other. In this, they say:

> So the comparative approach does involve evaluation but not in terms of comparison with something which is better, but in term of improving what is all too familiar. The comparison makes the strange. The other, familiar and makes the familiar, therefore, easier to re-consider (Byram & Planet, 2000, p. 189).

2.4.3.2. The Intercultural Approach

The target culture is the focal point of the intercultural approach. Nevertheless, this is not to say that learners' native culture is totally ignored. In this sense, the relations, between the target culture and the learners' own culture, are presented through comparison of the two which is believed to be the preeminent way of teaching culture. Although the aim of this approach is to make learners communicatively competent, it is oblivious to "the actual multicultural character of almost all existing countries or states" (Risager, 1998, p. 246). Due to the approach's inadequacies, it is recommended to use another approach, which is the multicultural approach.

2.4.3.3. The Multicultural Approach

The multicultural approach draws upon the idea that one culture incorporates various cultures. Though the emphasis is on the variations and diversities existing within the target culture, the multicultural approach seems not to neglect the learners' native culture. It is significant to note that this approach is claimed to inculcate in learners a sense of empathy towards the target culture which in turn eliminates any categorization, bias, and/or racism. The multicultural approach resembles the intercultural approach in two ways. First, it makes use of comparison in its teaching of

the target and the native cultures. Second, it aims to enhance learners' communicative competence (Risager, 1998, pp. 246-247).

2.4.3.4. The Trans-cultural Approach

The trans-cultural approach is displayed by Risager who postulates that due to globalization, mass migration, economic and industrial boom…etc.; cultures are intertwined with each other. The idea is that when people do not speak the same language, usually they use foreign languages as lingua-francas so as to communicate with each other. Based on this idea, this approach "deals with the foreign language as an international language" (1998, p. 12). In other words, since the aim is to enable learners to communicate using the foreign language, it is not a prerequisite to associate that language with any particular culture. The trans-cultural approach; however, has not escaped criticism mainly because it does not offer culture-specific themes.

2.4.3.5. The Mono-cultural Approach

The mono-cultural approach is best typified by the *foreign cultural approach* propounded by Risager (1998). The prime focus of such an approach is nothing else but the target culture. Put somewhat differently, the mono-cultural approach does not take into account the learners' own culture and does not even make any analogy between the two. For these reasons, this approach received huge criticism from different scholars.

2.4.3.6. The Theme-based Approach

The theme-based approach, also called the thematic approach, falls under the category of a mono-cultural approach. It attempts to exhibit ethics, standards, and moral values of the target culture so that learners can get a deep understanding of it. The thematic approach is shaped upon the notion of themes that are quintessential of a particular culture (usually the target culture) such as education, family, and religion to

mention but a few. Something of a pitfall in this approach is that it presents fragmented visions of the target culture which may cause learners to create stereotypical images about it (Saluveer, 2004).

2.4.3.7. The Topic-based Approach

The topic-based approach to teaching culture centers on thorough and complete subjects which tackle different cultural matters. In relation to British culture, Wisniewska-Brogowska argues that a topic-based approach can deal with "key elements of current British life, such classes as, education and health, not in isolation but within a series of unifying contexts" (2004, p. 35). Thus, this approach offers an integral insight into the target culture. This is particularly important because it "increases cultural awareness and promotes greater personal interest both in the language and the culture" (p. 86).

2.4.3.8. The Problem-oriented Approach

As its name indicates, the problem-oriented approach is grounded on the idea that once learners are faced with a certain issue, concerning the target culture, which is put forward by the teacher; they will be interested in doing some investigations for the sake of getting to know that culture. It is important; however, that the teacher chooses issues that are not obscure to facilitate the job for his/her learners. Therefore, "rather than be told to read a book on the general topic chosen, students can be taught to skim and to read carefully only limited sections to their specific area of interest" (Seelye, 1993, p. 47).

2.4.3.9. The Task-oriented Approach

The task-oriented approach is similar to the problem-oriented approach in the sense that they both encourage learners to do their own research concerning the target

culture. What makes the task-oriented approach distinct from the previous one is the fact that learners do not work individually but rather in groups of two or more learners. It is claimed that group work makes it possible for learners to research, discuss, and share with their colleagues different facets of the target culture. They can also analyze and compare what they have found regarding the target culture to their own culture (Saluveer, 2004; Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993).

2.4.4. Techniques for Teaching Culture

2.4.4.1. Culture Capsules

A culture capsule is a technique for teaching culture which is first introduced by Taylor and Sorenson (1961). It is an activity that is intended to be presented in the classroom within few minutes but it is usually prepared by learners outside the classroom. Culture capsules allow learners to discuss the possible differences between the target culture and their native culture. Topics discussed in culture capsules are diverse including ceremonies, customs, greetings, cuisines …etc. The oral presentation of learners is generally followed by a short lecture by the teacher on the already presented aspect (Seelye, 1993, p. 174). The aim; however, is not to provide a full picture of the target culture but to "pick out those key cultural differences which are especially difficult for the outsider to understand on the basis of his own life experiences" (Taylor & Sorenson, 1961, p. 350).

2.4.4.2. Culture Clusters

In 1973, Meade and Morain developed a technique for teaching culture which they call a culture cluster. The latter consists of a series of culture capsules that are conceptually and/or thematically related to each other. This class activity usually does not exceed half an hour with the teacher playing the role of a narrator to lead and direct

his/her learners. It is worth mentioning that culture clusters do not stand on their own; rather, they need to be accompanied with other activities such as role plays. Culture clusters, as culture capsules, are of paramount importance for learners to develop their awareness and understanding of both similarities and differences between their native culture and the target culture. Fortunately, culture clusters can easily be developed by teachers themselves (Seelye, 1993, p. 178).

2.4.4.3. Genuine Materials

Authentic materials are considered as an effective way of teaching culture. Photographs, magazines, web sites, TV shows, movies, and news are all different sources of genuine materials that can be used by teachers in the classroom to help their learners to partake in real/authentic cultural situations (Herron, Dubreil, Cole, & Corrie, 2002, p. 4). Authentic materials do not only provide authentic information about culture but also give the opportunity for learners to be creative and to develop their critical thinking. Bacon and Finneman recommend the use of authentic materials for they view them as "motivators and as a means to overcome the cultural barrier to language learning" (1990, p. 461).

2.4.4.4. Cultural Assimilators

Cultural assimilators are one good technique for teaching culture which is introduced by Fiedler, Mitchell, and Triandis (1971). It is believed that since this technique is based on real life experiences, it aids learners not only to know about other cultures but to value and respect them as well. Using cultural assimilators, learners are supposed to read a sort of a dialogue between two or more people. Usually, one of them is from the target culture while the other(s) is/are from the native culture. Then, each learner is asked to choose one answer from the multiple options (generally four options)

based on his/her interpretation and analysis of the dialogue. After that, learners can confer with their teacher about the correctness or incorrectness of their responses (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993, pp. 89-99).

2.4.4.5. Cultural Asides

Cultural asides serve as an efficient technique for teaching culture. Stern defines cultural asides as "items of cultural information offered by the teacher as they present themselves in the course of language work" (1992, p. 224). Accordingly, the teacher orally presents different aspects of the target culture, one at a time, and learners are expected to learn them by heart. Cultural asides include magazine pictures, maps, and brochures to mention but a few. Breninger and Kaltenbacher argue that in order for learners to be familiar with various aspects of the target culture "it is highly recommended to use the same cultural material several times throughout the course" (2012, p. 63).

2.4.4.6. Role-plays

A role-play is one of the many different techniques used to teach culture. This technique is used so as to make learners interact with one another. In this context, role playing is "an individual's spontaneous reacting to others in a hypothetical situation" (Revell, 1979, p. 60). By using role-plays, learners will be able to enhance their self-confidence in the sense that they will not be afraid to perform in front of other people, develop their communication strategies, and learn how to deal with different people in different situations. Therefore, through role-plays, learners can acquire a strong knowledge of the target culture which they can adopt and properly put into practice whenever they face a situation similar to the one they have already practiced (Herron et al., 2002, p. 4).

2.4.4.7. Mini-dramas

Mini-dramas are one of the most known techniques for teaching culture. Their main aim is to elucidate some possible cross-cultural misconceptions. Hence, a mini-drama is commonly made up of a number of scenes whose topics and themes center around thrilling matters of everyday life. After the play is performed, a debate between the learners and the teacher takes place. The latter asks some open-ended questions so that learners start making some interpretations and analyses about the characters and the actions they made. In sum, mini-dramas seek to display some misunderstandings and their potential causes of occurrence in order to make learners not only know about the target culture but also develop a sense of empathy towards that culture (Seelye, 1993, p. 71).

2.4.4.8. Quizzes

Quizzes are an entertaining technique for teaching culture. They are used to check what the learners already know about the target culture as well as to teach them new things and information about it. Quizzes are definitely a funny way that allows learners to make various guesses. This in turn will make them curious to know whether what they have guessed is right or wrong. All in all, this technique ensures that learners will be fully engaged in the classroom activities with all the needed enthusiasm without neglecting its main aim which is teaching them diverse things about culture (Clouet, 2006, p. 59).

2.5. The Impact of Culture-based Content on EFL Learners' Communicative Competence

For the time being, one might think of language teaching as culture teaching since language and culture cannot be detached from each other (see Title 2.4.1). With

this in mind, it is appropriate to say that learners who need English as a communication tool are expected to be aware of its culture. In this sense, Saville-Troike pinpoints that "the concept of communicative competence must be embedded in the notion of cultural competence" (2003, p. 18). This is particularly true because, he adds; one cannot understand what is meant by a certain linguistic behaviour unless s/he is aware of the cultural meaning of its context of occurrence. In the same vein, Pulverness (1995) confirms the importance of culture in the context where English is taught for the sake of communication. More to the point, he claims, that the absence of culture in such a context equals poor levels of learners' communicative competences. This is to say that learners will be able to communicate but they will not be understood by native speakers since they will lack what is called in his words "the cultural resonance" (p. 8). Thanassoulas affirms this by overtly saying that awareness of culture leads to an enhanced communicative competence (2001, p. 3). At this point, it is important to refer to some previous studies that have approached roughly the same issue but from different angles.

Kelley (2006), for instance, conducted a study which purpose is to explore the influence of hip-hop culture on students' communication skills at three different high schools. The sample consisted of thirty (30) teachers who were given surveys to answer in addition to two (02) other teachers who were interviewed. The findings of this research asserted that students' communication skills can be considerably enhanced if they are introduced to the hip-hop culture.

Doganay and Yergaliyeva (2013), conducting an experiment with Turkish students at Süleyman Demirel University in Preparatory Course of Language School, investigated the effects of cultural-based activities in foreign language teaching at intermediate (B1) level. The participants, eighty two (82) students, were divided into

four groups. Two groups acted as the experimental group while the other two groups were dealt with as the control group. The researchers exposed both groups to culture-based activities and exercises for a period of two months and a half. After that, they were given a post-experiment exam to compare their results to those of the pre-exam. The results obtained emphasized the significance of culture-based activities in boosting students' self-confidence, communicative skills, as well as their awareness of intercultural matters.

In another study, the efficacy of culture-based syllabus in teaching the target culture was examined by Çakir (2015). For this purpose, the researcher suggested a culture-based syllabus containing three different instructional activities. Sixty seven (67) students were the sample of this study. The latter were asked to give their views concerning the provided syllabus and the pre-designed activities. The results indicated that there is a clear connection between culture and students' skills. In this sense, this research proved that culture-based syllabi improve students' speaking, writing, and communication skills.

Conclusion

In view of the fact that language and culture are two inseparable entities, teaching a foreign language implies teaching the culture of the people who speak that language. As a matter of fact, the content of foreign language teaching should be a culture-based one. The integration of the latter leads not only to a more relevant and contextualized teaching activity, but also to a more efficient learning experience where learners can possess a well developed competency which affects their communicative skills and mastery of the target language. Put in a nutshell, the delicate relationship between language and culture strongly suggests that if cultural knowledge is

insufficient or non-existent, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to adequately learn or use a language.

CHAPTER THREE

Field Work

Introduction

This third chapter is the field work of the present research. It seeks to reveal the views and attitudes of EFL learners and teachers with regards to the integration of CBC and its impact on EFL learners' CC. To do that, data are collected using two different tools. A questionnaire is administered to (108) students at the Department of English, 8 Mai University-Guelma. A semi-structured interview is conducted with fourteen (14) teachers at the same department. Thereafter, analyses and interpretations of data from both instruments are presented so as to confirm or reject the research hypothesis. Furthermore, some pedagogical implications are dealt with together with limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

3.1. Students' Questionnaire

3.1.1. Sample

The population of the present research consists of Third (3rd) Year LMD students and teachers at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma. The questionnaire is meant for students to fill in. Accordingly, following Krejcie' and Morgan's (1970) sampling table (as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p. 94), 108 third year LMD students are chosen randomly as the sample of this research since the entire population consists of 154 students. It is believed that such a sample is suitable for the current study based on the consideration that third year LMD students' linguistic competence and mastery of English language seem to be more developed in comparison to those of first and second year LMD students. Therefore, 108 copies of the questionnaire are handed out to five groups of third year LMD students.

3.1.2. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire (see Appendix A) consists of twenty (20) questions that are arranged from general to specific. In terms of questions, the questionnaire is an

amalgamation of different types of questions ranging from dichotomous questions (Question 05, 09, 12, 14b, 14c, and 19), multiple-choice questions (Question 02, 04, 08, and 15), scale items questions (Question 03, 06, 07, 13, 14a, 17, and 18), rank ordering questions (Question 10 and 16), and open-ended questions (Question 01, 11, and 20). The questionnaire is composed of four main sections which can be described as follows:

Section One: General Information (Q_1 to Q_4).

This section includes four (04) questions aiming at obtaining general information about students such as their aim behind learning English, their level of English…etc.

Section Two: Communicative Competence (Q_5 to Q_{10}).

This section seeks to investigate students' awareness of the significance of communicative competence along with linguistic competence as well as the importance of CC in the development of their level of English. It also aims at eliciting information concerning students' level of CC in addition to the places where they usually engage in interactional events.

Section Three: The Impact of Culture-based Content on Learners' Communicative Competence (Q_{11} to Q_{19}).

The ultimate aim of this section is to gather students' views, opinions, and attitudes towards the integration of culture into EFL classrooms and its impact on their CC. More to the point, it describes what students perceive as culture, what they think the relationship is between English and its culture, and whether the adequate implementation of a culture-based content would have an effect on their CC.

Section Four: Further Suggestions (Q_{20}).

This section looks for further comments and/or recommendations in regard to

the implementation of a culture-based content and its impact on learners' CC.

3.1.3. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the informants on April 19th and 20th, 2017 at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma. 108 questionnaire copies were handed out to the participants in five (05) groups and were responded to forthwith. The students were informed that their responses will be dealt with confidentially and will be used only for research purposes. For the sake of eliminating any possibility that these students will find difficulty understanding some technical terms, a separate paper containing short yet clear definitions was provided for them. Hence, due attention was paid to each and every detail of the questionnaire so as to avoid ambiguities. Consequently, the students answered the questionnaire without any potential difficulty. As a matter of fact, many students showed interest in the topic itself.

3.1.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.1.4.1. Analysis of Results and Findings from the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information.

Question One: How long have you been studying English?

Table 3.1

Period of English Instruction

Years	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
10	94	87.04 %
More than 10	14	12.96 %
Total	108	100 %

According to the results displayed in Table 3.1, the majority of students (87.04 %) state that they have been studying English for ten (10) years. This indicates that they were successful in their academic career. Fourteen (14) students (12.96 %) claim that they have been studying English for more than ten (10) years. This implies that they have dropped a year or two and/or failed in their studies once or more.

Question Two: What is your aim behind learning English?

Table 3.2

Aim Behind Learning English

Aim	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Develop communicative abilities	88	81.48 %
Develop cultural knowledge	59	54.63 %
Develop linguistic abilities	45	41.66 %
Other(s)	14	12.96 %

Concerning the aim behind learning English(Table 3.2), students had to choose one or more answers from the three choices. They could select 'other' if they have other aims that are not mentioned. The vast majority of students (81.48 %) point out that their aim is to develop their communicative abilities. This suggests that they are interested in learning English mainly for communication purposes. More than half of the students (54.63 %) choose the second choice which is learning English to develop cultural knowledge. This implies that by learning English, these students aim at knowing more about the target culture and its constituents. Less than half students (41.66 %) assert that developing their linguistic abilities is their main aim. This indicates that they are more interested in mastering the basic structural commands of

the target language. Fourteen (14) students (12.96 %) opt for 'other' indicating that they learn English for further professional purposes, be it an English teacher, a translator, a tourist guide…etc.

Question Three: How would you describe your level of English?

Table 3.3

Appreciation of English Level

Level	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Very good	0	0 %
Good	55	50.93 %
Average	52	48.15 %
Bad	1	0.92 %
Very bad	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is displayed in Table 3.3, half of the students (50.93 %) assume that they have a good level of English. This denotes that they have developed some language skills that enable them to pursue their academic career. Less than half of the students (48.15 %) declare that their level of English is average. This hints that they are yet to master the language. Only one student (0.92 %) asserts that her/his level is bad. This suggests that s/he has some deficiencies due to certain difficulties that s/he faces throughout the learning process. No student (0 %) opts for very good or very bad. This implies that students are yet to reach a full mastery of English but at the same time it means that they are not confronted with severe obstacles while learning the language.

Question Four: If bad or very bad, does the deficiency lie in?

Table 3.4

Reason of Deficiency

Aspect	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Accuracy	0	0 %
Clarity	0	0 %
Appropriateness	1	0.92 %
Flexibility	0	0 %
Other(s)	0	0 %

As indicated in Table 3.3, only one student (0.92 %) declares that her/his level is bad. Therefore, this student (Table 3.4) states that the deficiency lies in appropriateness. This implies that s/he has difficulty in deciding on what is suitable for a specific purpose, audience and context. That is, s/he has an underdeveloped CC.

Section Two: Communicative Competence.

Question Five: Do you think that mastering English structural system is sufficient to communicate effectively through this language?

Table 3.5

Linguistic Competence and Communication

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	6	5.56 %
No	102	94.44 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is shown in Table 3.5, the vast majority of students (94.44 %) state that mastering English structural system is not sufficient to communicate effectively. They justify their answers by saying that mastering language structure is only one step towards effective communication; other things need to be taken into consideration. They add that developing communicative abilities is also essential along with cultural knowledge. This implies that they acknowledge the importance of linguistic and communicative competences as well as cultural knowledge and understanding. Six (06) students (5.56 %) assume that the mastery of the structural system is enough for effective communication. As a justification for their responses, they say that accuracy leads to clarity which makes the message understood. Others say that the correct use of English ensures self-confidence which is necessary for communication. This might suggest that they are not aware of the role that culture and communicative competence play in communication.

Question Six: How important do you consider the role of communicative competence in the development of your level of English?

Table 3.6

Importance of Communicative Competence

Importance	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Very important	92	85.19 %
Somehow important	14	12.96 %
Neutral	2	1.85 %
Not really important	0	0 %
Not important at all	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

According to the findings presented in Table 3.6, the majority of students (85.19 %) admit that communicative competence is very important in the development of their English level while few students (12.96 %) choose somehow important. This implies that these students are aware of the significance of communicative competence. Only two students (1.85 %) are neutral which might suggest that they do not possess sufficient knowledge concerning communicative competence that allows them to make a judgment about its importance. No student (0 %) opts for 'not really important' and so is the case with 'not important at all'.

Question Seven: How would you describe your level of communicative competence?

Table 3.7

Level of Communicative Competence

Level	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Very good	0	0 %
Good	0	0 %
Average	50	46.30 %
Bad	49	45.37 %
Very bad	09	8.33 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is displayed in Table 3.7, less than half of the students (46.30 %) claim that their level of communicative competence is average. This indicates that they know or believe that they know how to communicate using English; however, their communicative abilities need to be improved. A significant percentage of students (45.37 %) assume that their level of communicative competence is bad while nine (09)

students (8.33 %) declare that it is very bad. This might hint that these students face serious difficulties when it comes to using English as a tool for communication. No student (0 %) chooses good or very good which means that all students need to develop their communicative competence.

Question Eight: If it is neither good nor very good, does the deficiency lie in your?

Table 3.8

Deficiency in Communicative Competence

Aspects	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Discourse competence	58	53.70 %
Pragmatic competence	49	45.37 %
Strategic competence	49	45.37 %
Linguistic competence	28	25.93 %
Other(s)	1	0.93 %

Concerning deficiencies in communicative competence (Table 3.8), students had to choose one or more answers from the four choices. They could select 'other' if they think of other deficiencies which are not mentioned. More than half of the students (53.70 %) opt for the first choice which is discourse competence. This indicates that they have problems concerning the formation of coherent and cohesive sentences. Less than half of the students (47.37 %) choose pragmatic competence. This suggests that they face difficulties in regard to the appropriate use of language. Likewise, 47.37 % of students pick out strategic competence which implies that they lack the strategies that enable them to overcome communication gaps. Few students (25.93 %) indicate

linguistic competence. This hints that they struggle with grammar rules and lexical items. Only one student opts for 'other' stating that s/he lacks self-confidence.

Question Nine: Is communication given due attention within classrooms?

Table 3.9

Attention to Communication

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	17.59 %
No	89	82.41 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is shown in Table 3.9, the vast majority of students (82.41 %) agree that communication is not emphasized in the classroom. They justify their answers by saying that their classrooms are teacher-centred and that their teachers do not allow for much communication. This implies that there is a lack of awareness concerning the importance of communication within classrooms. Hence, more emphasis needs to be placed on it. A low percentage of students (17.59 %) indicate that communication is emphasized in the classroom. This might suggest that they belong to those brilliant students who always participate in the classroom. As a justification for their answers they state that some of their teachers give them opportunities to make oral presentations so as to communicate with each other. They add that most of the time they are pushed to speak and discuss topics as well.

Question Ten: Indicate your priorities by placing numbers from 1 to 4.

- I usually engage in interactional events through:

Table 3.10

Engagement in Interactional Events

Situation	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Social media networks	41	37.96 %
Random conversations outside the classroom	26	24.07 %
In-class discussions with the teacher	25	23.15 %
Collaborative activities with classmates	16	14.81 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is shown in Table 3.10, a significant percentage of students (37.96 %) opt for the first choice which is engaging in interactional events through social media networks. This indicates that the latter provide opportunities for students to communicate with each other and with others. A low percentage of students (24.07 %) choose random conversations outside the classroom. This implies that they have different chances of interacting with and among each other outside the classroom. A lower percentage of students (23.15 %) state that they engage in interactional events through in-class discussions with the teacher. This suggests that there are limited instances where students interact with their teacher(s) in the classrooms. Sixteen students (14.81 %) indicate collaborative activities with classmates as their first choice. This denotes that they are not always allowed to interact with each other in the classroom. Put in a nutshell, students find more opportunities to engage in interactional events outside rather than inside the classroom. This might be explained by the fact that communication and interaction are not given due attention within classrooms which obliges students to look for other places where communication is possible.

Section Three: The Impact of Culture-based Content on Learners' Communicative Competence.

Question Eleven: In your opinion, what is culture?

According to the vast majority of students (92.59 %), culture refers to language, identity, beliefs, customs, traditions, norms, values and works of art of a particular group or society. They add that it is a way of life; the way people think, behave, communicate and/or work. They state further that history, religion and ideology are what constitute culture. This indicates that students are really aware of the concept of culture. Few students (7.41 %) did not provide any answer to this question.

Question Twelve: Do you think that learning English implies learning its culture?

Table 3.11

Language and Culture

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	105	97.22 %
No	3	2.78 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is displayed in Table 3.11, almost all students (97.22 %) state that learning English implies learning its culture. As a justification for their answer they say that language and culture are inseparable. They add that cultural knowledge is essential for it is the key to effective communication. Only three (03) students (2.78 %) declare that learning English does not imply learning its culture. They justify their answers by indicating that students who do not communicate with native speakers of English do not need to learn about its culture. This implies that these three students are aware of the

importance of learning culture; however, they find it useless in case there is no interaction with English native speakers.

Question Thirteen: To what extent is learning about English culture interesting for you?

Table 3.12

Interest in English Culture

Extent	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Very interesting	95	87.96 %
Somehow interesting	13	12.03 %
Neutral	0	0 %
Not really interesting	0	0 %
Not interesting at all	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

According to the findings displayed in Table 3.12, the majority of students (87.96 %) assert that it is very interesting to learn about English culture while few students (12.03 %) indicate 'somehow interesting' as their choice. The justifications for their answers can be summarized as follows:

- I like to learn about other's cultures especially English.

- I have always been fascinated by the richness of British and American cultures.

- I am interested in being able to communicate effectively through this language. This would not be possible unless I learn about its culture.

- My dream is to have a job in an English speaking country. I need to learn about English culture so that I can manage to interact with people there.

No student (0 %) is neutral, not really interested or not interested at all in learning about English culture. This implies that all students acknowledge the significance of the target culture and strive to learn about it.

Question Fourteen:

a) How important do you consider the integration of the target culture in the classroom?

Table 3.13a

Importance of the Target Culture

Importance	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Very important	79	73.15 %
Somehow important	25	23.15 %
Neutral	4	3.70 %
Not really important	0	0 %
Not important at all	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

Concerning the integration of the target culture in the classroom, the vast majority of students (73.15 %) state that it is very important while 23.15 % of students indicate that it is somehow important. This implies that they discern the importance and advantages of incorporating culture into their classrooms. Only four students (3.70 %) are neutral which might suggest that they are not aware of the importance of the target culture in their learning process or they simply do not want to share their opinions concerning the matter.

b) Are you exposed to English culture in the classroom?

Table 3.13b

Exposure to the Target Culture

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	96	88.89 %
No	12	11.11 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is noticed in Table 3.13b, the majority of students (88.89 %) declare that they are exposed to the target culture in the classroom. This implies that they are aware of the presence of the cultural content in their classrooms. Few students (11.11 %) state that there is no exposure to the target culture in the classroom. This might indicate that they are unaware of its existence.

c) Is this exposure to English culture satisfying for you?

Table 3.13c

Satisfaction with the Exposure to the Target Culture

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	16.67 %
No	90	83.33 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is shown in Table 3.13c, the vast majority of students (83.33 %) assert that they are not satisfied with this exposure to the target culture. They justify their answer by indicating that they are learning only generalities since many cultural aspects are not

tackled. Also, they say that they need to know about more details such as features of daily life, behaviours...etc., that is small 'c' culture. 18 students (16.67 %); however, declare that this exposure to the target culture is satisfactory for them. As a justification for their answer, they say: "modules such as literature and civilization provide us with key information about English culture, and that is enough for us".

Question Fifteen: In your opinion, what is/are the most suitable technique(s) that your teachers can use to teach you the target culture?

Table 3.14

Techniques for Teaching Culture

Technique	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Role plays	59	54.63 %
Genuine materials	50	46.30 %
Mini dramas	41	37.96 %
Quizzes	40	37.04 %
Culture clusters	36	33.33 %
Culture capsules	31	28.70 %
Cultural assimilators	29	26.85 %
Cultural asides	20	18.52 %
Other(s)	0	0 %

Concerning techniques of teaching culture (Table 3.14), students had to choose one or more answers from the eight choices. They could select 'other' if they prefer other techniques that are not mentioned. The simple majority of students (54.63%) opt

for the first choice which is teaching culture by using role plays while less than half of the students (46.30%) choose genuine materials. So, students acknowledge the importance of role plays and authentic materials in presenting the cultural content. A significant percentage of students (37.96%) indicate mini-dramas. Approximately the same percentage of students (37.04%) pick out quizzes as their preferred technique. This suggests that mini dramas and quizzes are good techniques that help students know about English culture. Culture clusters attract 36 students (33.33%) which means that they prefer to deal with culture based on different yet related themes. Few students (28.70%) consider culture capsules as the most suitable technique for teaching culture. A low percentage of students (26.85%) choose cultural assimilators while a very low percentage of students (18.52%) opt for cultural asides. This might suggest that the majority ignore the importance of using cultural assimilators and asides as the means through which the cultural content can be presented for them.

Question Sixteen: Indicate your priorities by placing numbers from 1 to 5.

- To develop communicative abilities in the target language, students need to:

Table 3.15

Development of Communicative Abilities

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Learn about English culture	46	42.59 %
Listen to native speakers	35	32.41 %
Speak English on a daily basis	16	14.81 %
Engage in group conversations and discussions	6	5.56 %
Rely on social media applications	5	4.63 %
Total	108	100 %

As it is shown in Table 3.15, the simple majority of students (42.59 %) opt for the first choice which is learning about the target culture. So, students acknowledge the importance of cultural knowledge for the improvement of their communicative competences. A significant percentage of students (32.41 %) agree on the necessity of listening to native speakers to enhance communicative abilities. Few students (14.81 %) choose to speak English on a daily basis. This implies that they neglect the importance of knowing about culture to develop their communicative capacities. A low percentage of students (5.56 %) indicate engaging in group conversations and discussions as their option while a very low percentage of students (4.63 %) consider relying on social media applications. This might suggest that these students are not aware of the significance of learning about the target culture. Therefore, they might not relate communication to cultural knowledge.

Question Seventeen: How often do you communicate with people from the target culture?

Table 3.16

Frequency of Communication

Frequency	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Always	0	0 %
Usually	36	33.33 %
Often	31	28.70 %
Sometimes	28	25.93 %
Rarely	13	12.04 %
Never	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

According to the results displayed in Table 3.16, a significant percentage of students (33.33 %) choose usually. This implies that they strive to master the English language which pushes them to engage in communicative events with native speakers. 28.70% of students point out that they oftentimes communicate with them while twenty eight (28) students (25.93 %) pick sometimes. This might indicate that they engage in conversations with native speakers from time to time through social media networks for instance or other means of interaction. A low percentage of students (12.04 %) agree that they rarely interact with them. This might suggest that they do not find the opportunities to do so and/or they unaware of the significance of communicating with native speakers of English. No student (0 %) opts for always or never. The former is explained by the fact that all respondents do not intensively interact with natives whereas the latter pinpoints that they are aware of the importance of being exposed to the target culture through its native speakers.

Question Eighteen: Do you agree that by being knowledgeable about the target culture, your communicative capacities will be enhanced?

Table 3.17

Cultural Knowledge and Communicative Competence

Extent	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	69	63.89 %
Agree	33	30.56 %
Neither agree nor disagree	4	3.70 %
Disagree	2	1.85 %
Strongly disagree	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

According to the findings displayed in Table 3.17, the majority of students (63.89 %) answer by strongly agree while a significant percentage of students (30.56 %) opt for agree. This denotes that the majority of students acknowledge the significance of English culture for the development of their communicative abilities. More to the point, it implies that cultural knowledge would positively impact learners' communicative competences. A very low percentage of students (3.70 %) choose neither agree nor disagree. This denotes that they do not want to give their point of view and/or they do not have an idea about the impact of cultural knowledge on communicative capacities. Only two (02) students (1.85 %) state that they disagree. This might suggest that they are not aware of the importance of culture for the enhancement of communicative capacities and/or they might not see any relation between culture and communication.

Question Nineteen: Do you think that the absence of a culture-based content leads to poor communicative capacities?

Table 3.18

Absence of Culture and Communication

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	103	95.37 %
No	5	4.63 %
Total	108	100%

As it is indicated in Table 3.18, the vast majority of students (95.37 %) agree that the absence of a culture-based content leads to poor communicative capacities. Their justifications can be summarized as follows:

- If we do not know how others think or behave, we will not be able to communicate with them easily.

- Knowing about English culture pushes us to improve our level of communicative competence.

- Learning about the English culture makes us self-confident when communicating with native speakers.

- The cultural content plays a crucial role in developing our communicative competence because if we are culturally aware, we will be able to avoid culturally-biased expressions and any kind of misunderstandings.

Only five (05) students (4.63 %) state that the absence of culture-based content does not lead to poor communicative capacities. They justify their answer by indicating that the mastery of the structural system of English is sufficient to effectively communicate through this language. This might denote that they are interested in the accurate rather than the appropriate usage of language.

Section Four: Further Suggestions.

Question Twenty: Do you have any further suggestions?

Only 9 students (8.33%) (from 108) have added further suggestions. The students' suggestions can be summed up as follows:

- Teaching English culture is very important as it allows us to discover new things about other people and helps us to appropriately communicate with them.

- Learning about English culture is interesting; however, its teaching should be done by natives. Hence, there will be a direct contact with the latter which will enable us to develop our communicative competences.

- Communication needs to be emphasized in the classroom.

- Teachers should give more opportunities for students to discuss different topics so as to develop their communicative capacities.

- Teachers should focus more on cultural topics and on new, creative ways of teaching them.

- Teachers should explain the importance of teaching culture so that students can acknowledge its significance in enriching their knowledge and enhancing their communicative abilities.

From these suggestions, it seems that students are aware of the importance of integrating culture into EFL classrooms and its impact on their communicative competence. However, they point out that more emphasis needs to be placed on communication as well as on culture within classrooms.

3.1.4.2. Summary of Results and Findings from the Students' Questionnaire

Section one which is about students' general information reveals that the respondents have been studying English for at least ten years (see Table 3.1) which indicates their familiarity with learning English as a foreign language. Furthermore, the majority of students state that their main aim behind studying English is to develop their communicative abilities (see Table 3.2), which implies the importance they place on communication. Moreover, the results show that students' level of English varies from good, average, to bad and that the main deficiency lies in appropriateness (see Table 3.3).

Section two which is about communicative competence indicates that students are aware of the importance of communicative competence in the development of their level of English (see Table 3.6). They admit the insufficiency of English structural system for an effective communication (see Table 3.5). Additionally, they clearly declare that their communicative competence level varies from average; bad to very

bad (see Table 3.7). They also claim that their deficiencies lie in discourse, pragmatic, strategic, and linguistic competences as well as some self-confidence issues (see Table 3.8). This suggests that they face serious difficulties when communicating through the English language which, in turn, implies that their communicative abilities need to be improved. Moreover, the majority of students state that they usually engage in interactional events through social media networks and/or through informal discussions outside the classroom (see Table 3.10). This is mainly because, they assume, communication and interaction are not given due attention within classrooms (see Table 3.9).

Section three is about the impact of culture-based content on learners' communicative competence. This section reveals that students are aware of what culture means for their definitions cover -almost- all aspects of the term. Concerning the relationship between English language and culture, almost all students admit that learning English implies learning its culture (see Table 3.11) coupled with the fact that they find it interesting (somehow to very interesting) to learn about it (see Table 3.12). Equally, the majority of students consider the integration of the target culture in the classroom to be very important (see Table 3.13a). These results indicate that the respondents acknowledge the importance of learning about English culture. Although the cultural content is present in their classrooms (see Table 3.13b), students are not satisfied with it (see Table 3.13c). This is mainly because, they claim, only generalities about English culture are present. However, specificities such as how to behave in everyday situations are what students need more. As for the most suitable technique(s) for teaching culture, it is clear that students are interested in all of them (see Table 3.14). However, they prefer role plays and authentic materials over other ones. This implies that what really matters for students is to be taught culture using creative,

entertaining techniques. Furthermore, the majority of students agree that knowledge about English culture equals enhanced communicative abilities (see Table 3.17). Equally, students' agreements on the idea that the absence of culture-based content leads to poor communicative capacities (see Table 3.18) reveal that they are aware of the significance of the former in the development of the latter. Hence, it is appropriate to conclude that the adequate implementation of culture-based content is of a paramount importance since it affects positively (according to the respondents' answers) students' communicative competences.

3.2. Teachers' Interview

3.2.1. Sample

The population of the present interview consists of English teachers at the department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma. Therefore, fourteen (14) English teachers are chosen in a random manner as the sample of this research. The purpose of the interview is to investigate teachers' opinions, views, and attitudes concerning the impact of culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence.

3.2.2. Description of the Teachers' Interview

The teachers' interview consists of thirteen (13) questions that are ordered from the more general to the more specific. Although it is a combination of two different types of questions, open-ended questions and closed-ended questions, the interview is highly qualitative. The first question (Q_1) seeks to gather data about teachers' experience in teaching English. The following questions (From Q_2 to Q_5) are concerned with communicative competence in general terms. Accordingly, they tackle the importance of developing learners' communicative competence and the factors as well as the techniques that can lead to its development. The remaining questions (From Q_6 to Q_{12}) deal with the significance of implementing a culture-based content in FLL, the challenges as well as the impact of such an implementation on learners' communicative competence. The last question (Q_{13}) is devoted to teachers' comments and/or recommendations concerning the topic under investigation.

3.2.3. Administration of the Teachers' Interview

The interview was conducted with the participants at the department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma. Thirteen (13) teachers were interviewed in about a

fifteen (15) days period which proceeded from April 25th, 2017 to May 9th, 2017. The interviews lasted for a period that varies between twenty (20) minutes to forty five (45) minutes each. Based on the participants' permission, their answers were recorded using an electronic recording device and then transcribed (see Appendix C).

3.2.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.2.4.1. Analysis of Results and Findings from the Teachers' Interview

Question One: For how many years have you been teaching English?

Table 3.19

Teachers' Experience

Category	Number (N)
Less than five years	02
From five to ten years	10
More than ten years	02

The aim of this question is to gauge the respondents' experience as English teachers. According to the results displayed in Table 3.19, ten (10) teachers have from five to ten years experience. This indicates that they have an acceptable experience in English teaching. Two teachers have been teaching English for less than five years which implies that they are beginners. Two respondents have been English teachers for more than ten years. This reveals that they are almost experts when it comes to English teaching. All in all, the difference in the number of years the respondents have served as English teachers is valuable for the present research. More to the point, the amount of teachers' instructional practice would have, in one way or another, an impact on their answers. This would ensure diversity and variation of their replies.

Question Two: Is it important to develop learners' communicative competence? Would you please explain?

This question seeks to identify the informants' views concerning the development of learners' communicative competence and its significance. According to their answers, teachers unanimously agree upon the importance of developing learners' communicative competence. It is noteworthy, however; that the respondents' answers are based on distinct reasonable grounds. Twelve (12) teachers assert that communication is the ultimate goal of language learning. They add that the effective and appropriate expression of one's ideas and engagement in different interactional events necessitate learners to foster their communicative competence. They carry on to say that learners can meet or get in touch with native speakers, and when doing so, they need to know how to appropriately communicate with them. Two (02) teachers argue that "linguistic competence alone is not enough for communication". This can be explained, they claim, by the fact that many sentences are grammatically correct yet they convey no meaning. Therefore, the significance of developing learners' communicative competence is an undeniable fact as per teachers' replies.

Question Three: Do you think that your learners are fully aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence? Would you please explain?

This question deals with teachers' views regarding learners' awareness of the importance of developing their communicative competence. Teachers' answers can be grouped into two different categories. The first category consists of teachers who claim that their learners are aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence. They go on to say that this can be seen in the efforts they put into developing it. For instance, one of these teachers assumes that this is particularly true because "they keep on asking me for books of oral expression, how to develop both

oral and written capacities". Another teacher's argument is that learners "always tend to imitate native speakers, to imitate the British accent for instance, or use particular expressions that are used in colloquial English". This indicates that s/he is aware of the smallest attempts her/his learners make to enhance their communicative competence. The second category comprises those teachers who argue that their learners are far from being aware of this importance. One of them says that this is mainly because "learners emphasize on developing their linguistic competence thinking that it's enough, and ignoring completely that knowing the language requires communicating through this language, it requires transmitting ideas and information". They further add that the majority of learners "do not even know what is meant by communicative competence". In light of teachers' views and opinions, one cannot confirm whether or not learners are aware of the importance of developing their CC for the interviewees provide two contradictory answers. However, students' answers regarding the same question (see Table 3.6) prove that they are highly aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence.

Question Four: According to you, what are the most important factors that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence?

Concerning the factors that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence, it is noticed from the interviewees' answers that they vary significantly. All in all, such factors can be outlined as follows:

- Availability of authentic materials.
- Raising learners' awareness of the importance of developing their communicative competence.
- Emphasizing culture.
- Learners' motivation and self-confidence.

- Communication itself.

- Role-plays and group work.

From the different suggestions provided by the respondents, it is noted that several factors affect the development of learners' communicative competence. Teachers believe that the availability of authentic materials which will in turn enable learners to be exposed to the target culture is one of these factors. For instance teacher 4 maintains that it is important to have materials that allow students to "listen to conversations, to interviews, to watch videos, to get familiar with the American culture and the British culture". Another teacher affirms that "the integration of culture is very important too, so we have to expose learners to the target culture as a way to develop their communicative competence". This indicates the awareness of teachers in regard to the role culture plays in the development of learners' communicative competence. Teachers also assume that other factors include learners' motivation as well as self-confidence. For instance, *teacher 9* asserts that the "factor that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence comes from within the students themselves and their motivation to learn the target language". One teacher believes that learners can improve their communicative competences by allowing themselves to communicate and interact with others as much as possible. This teacher confirms that the more learners engage in interactional events "the more this competence [communicative competence] is deemed to be developed". All in all, teachers seem to reduce the concept of communicative competence into oral interaction though it goes beyond the latter.

Question Five: Do you try to enhance learners' communicative competence inside your classrooms? If yes, what are the means or techniques that you employ in order to achieve this objective?

Given the fact that all the respondents consider the importance of developing learners' communicative competence to be irrefutable; this question deals with the teachers' actual behaviour towards the promotion of their learners' CC inside the classroom. Simply put, the aim is to know whether these teachers do work toward enhancing their learners' communicative competence as well as to inquire into the techniques they utilize to achieve this purpose. According to the respondents' answers, developing learners' CC is amongst their main priorities which further confirms their responses to (Q$_2$). What is significant, however; is that they rely on diverse means and techniques. The latter can be summarised as follows:

- Discussions of topics from real life situations.

- Role-plays.

- Use of authentic materials, audios, videos...etc.

- Oral presentations.

- Collaborative work.

- Integration of some aspects of the target culture.

- Problem-solving activities.

- Turn-taking in conversations.

The respondents' answers clearly show that they depend on a variety of techniques for the sake of developing their learners' communicative competence. It is important to go through details since it is a qualitative analysis. Discussing different topics especially those that are real life-based is a technique that is advocated by six teachers. In fact, the significance of in-class discussions cannot be disregarded, especially when it comes to the enhancement of communicative competence. Four teachers prefer role-plays and authentic materials which, they claim, give learners the freedom to practice the language and to take part in a more relevant learning

experience. Moreover, many respondents put focus on the significance of integrating culture as a way of improving learners' CC. As an example, *teacher 1* argues "I think that culture is at the core of communicative competence, I cannot teach any aspect of communicative competence without mentioning culture". This implies that they are aware, to a certain extent, of the importance of culture in developing learners' communicative competence. Despite the fact that the participants tend to make use of various techniques, some of them do not hesitate to suggest others. Accordingly, *teacher 8* proposes "to add a module of communication, a module devoted only for communication".

Question Six: Do you think that your learners are aware of the importance of learning the target culture? Would you please explain?

The aforementioned question aims at eliciting teachers' views and opinions in regard to learners' awareness of the importance of learning the target culture. When analysing the participants' responses, two main categories prevail. Teachers who argue that their learners are aware form the first category and they comprise the majority. These teachers further state that their learners' "enthusiasm and excitement" are the best proof. Another respondent from this category claims that her/his learners "talk about movies, the wars, politics, all the things that happen in America and Britain, especially in America, the way they wear clothes, the fashion they follow". This statement implies that s/he is aware of the details that indicate her/his learners' awareness of the importance of learning the target culture. Teachers who contend that their learners are not aware of this importance represent the second category. One of these respondents declares that her/his learners "like the target culture, they admire American and English people, their lifestyles, but to be aware of why and how they learn culture through English, they are not aware of this importance". They further

argue that many learners "are not aware of their own culture, how could they be aware of the foreign culture". Pursuant to both categories' answers, it is not possible to assert whether or not learners are aware of the importance of learning the target culture. This is mainly because the provided responses are in opposition. It is worthy of mention that when analysing learners' answers concerning the matter (see Table 3.13a), it appears that they are aware of this importance.

Question Seven: Some authors assume that teaching a particular language implies teaching its culture, what do you think of this?

The previous question endeavours to pinpoint the participants' views in regard to the relationship between language and culture. All of the teachers agree on the validity of the presented theory. In other words, they believe that teaching a particular language implies teaching its culture. It is important to note, however; that even their justifications are unanimous. They all affirm that language and culture are interrelated and they add that one can never "disassociate a language from its culture". They go on to say that teaching a language without making a reference to its culture is not possible. One teacher better illustrates it by saying that "language and culture are like a coin with two facets". This implies that the participants are aware of the strong relationship between language and culture and of the importance of the latter in the teaching of the former.

Question Eight: What do you think of the integration of culture in Foreign Language Learning (FLL)? Would you please explain?

The main aim of this question is to identify teachers' views, opinions, and attitudes concerning the integration of culture in FLL. In view of the teachers' answers, it appears that all of them highly advocate such an implementation. They believe that it is a necessity since it "facilitates the way students learn the foreign language". They

further add that "in order to create inside that future teacher or future user of English empathy towards all cultures and to encourage co-existence"; an integration of culture in EFL classrooms must take place. Actually, *teacher 11* summarizes almost all arguments by saying the following:

> We highly recommend it as it would enable students to better know about the language they are learning, its people and their lifestyles, their traditions and customs, and it would also raise their awareness of cultural differences and may push them to accept and empathize with the other.

It is important to mention that some teachers admit that this integration is not as easy as it seems. *Teacher 13* claims that "teaching the target culture plays an important role in teaching the target language, but I think it is not an easy thing to do as there may be many challenges". The latter are to be dealt with in (Q_{10}).

Question Nine: While presenting your lessons, do you expose your learners to the target culture? If yes, do you take into account the differences between the mother culture and the target culture? Would you please explain?

This question attempts to check whether or not the respondents expose their learners to the target culture. It also aims to find out if the differences between the mother culture and the target culture are taken into consideration. According to their answers, the majority of teachers do introduce their learners to the target culture believing that it is inevitable to do so. Notwithstanding, they argue that this highly depends on the nature of the modules they teach. In this context, *teacher 1* says that "some modules are mainly theoretical and I find myself obliged to stick to the syllabus, to stick to the theoretical things". They insist, however; that whenever they find the opportunity to include the cultural aspect, they do not hesitate to do so. In addition, these teachers claim that they always consider the differences between the target culture

and the learners' mother culture. They add that "even the negative sides" are pointed out, "not only the positive ones". In short, teachers seem to acknowledge the importance of exposing their learners to the target culture as well as of highlighting the differences between the mother culture and the target culture. Only two teachers admit that they do not focus on the target culture. As per their justifications, they argue that they do not have an adequate amount of knowledge about the target culture that is why they do not expose their learners to it. In this sense, *teacher 8* explains: "I cannot expose them to it since myself I ignore it, I have never been in the speech community, I don't know everyday life traditions, habits, and norms of British or American people".

Question Ten: What are the constraints concerning the implementation of a culture-based content?

The aim behind this question is to find out the obstacles and difficulties that teachers believe will accompany the implementation of a culture-based content. All teachers argue that constraints are inevitable when it comes to such an implementation. Although the informants' answers vary, they can be summed up as follows:

- Time constraints.

- Teachers' lack of knowledge about the target culture.

- Lack of materials.

- Learners' attitudes towards the target culture.

The teachers' responses confirm that the integration of a culture-based content in EFL classrooms is not an easy task to do as different obstacles may arise. Many informants claim the limited time to be the main constraint. For instance, *teacher 6* says that "we don't have enough time to include culture in phonology, in oral modules; we have a syllabus so we are limited by the time". Others contend that it is difficult to

implement a culture-based content because teachers themselves might not have the adequate amount of knowledge about the target culture. In this sense, *teacher 3* argues:

> It's hard for me as for other teachers as well since we are not natives, we don't know everything about that culture, so the teacher himself or herself isn't really knowledgeable about it, so that's surely one of the main constraints.

The other frequent obstacle amongst teachers' answers is the lack of materials, especially the authentic ones. Learners who might not be welcoming and/or accepting some aspects of the target culture pose a problem. Hence, *teacher 3* claims that "students may not accept things that are really different from their culture that they may think are harmful to their culture". In addition, the informants account for more constraints such as "ideological, societal, and religious" ones as well as "the fact that the target culture is completely different from the mother culture" which alone "imposes a huge problem". In brief, teachers seem to be aware of the majority, not to say all, of the constraints regarding the implementation of a culture-based content.

Question Eleven: What is the relationship between cultural knowledge and communication?

This question deals with the teachers' opinions with regard to the relationship between cultural knowledge and communication. It is noticed from the respondents' answers that they share the same opinions concerning the matter. All teachers assert on the interconnectedness of cultural knowledge and communication. Given the fact that the wording of their answers differs, it is important to mention some of their arguments. *Teacher 1*, for instance, says that "one aspect of the English culture is that British people start a conversation by asking about the weather, if I'm not aware of this aspect, I would not start a conversation in UK". *Teacher 4* argues that "language should be appropriate to the situation, and for language to be appropriate to the context, to the

situation, you should have cultural knowledge about that context". All in all, teachers seem to be highly aware of the "strong" relationship between cultural knowledge and communication.

Question Twelve: Some authors think that culture-based content enhances learners' communicative competence, what do you think?

The previously mentioned question seeks to discern teachers' views and attitudes towards the impact of a culture-based content on learners' communicative competence. All teachers "totally, perfectly" agree that a culture-based enhances learners' communicative competence. However, the respondents use different arguments so as to further explain their points of view. The majority state that the essence of communicative competence is culture. They further add that one cannot develop the former without being aware of the latter. *Teacher 7* confirms this by saying that for one to have the ability to "communicate with people and to respect the context...the gender, the level, the education, the topic, the tone of your voice, the body language, everything is going to be gained more appropriately if you study culture-based content". They carry on to say that culture is necessary for one to be a good communicator. In this sense, one teacher contends that "if you do not know the culture, you *could* be a good communicator, but you will still lack this easiness and appropriateness when communicating". Another teacher argues that EFL learners are learning and using a language that is not their mother tongue, hence; for them to develop their communicative competence, they need to be knowledgeable about that language's culture. In light of the informants' responses, it can be stated that the adequate implementation of a culture-based content would enhance learners' communicative competence.

Question Thirteen: Do you have any other comments and/or recommendations?

This question gives the opportunity for the respondents to add any comment and/or recommendation in relation to the topic under investigation. However, only seven interviewees have considered answering this question. Their responses can be summarized as follows:

- I strongly recommend taking into consideration integrating culture in all courses.

- Emphasis should be placed on developing learners' communicative competence, and this can be done by making them fully aware of the target culture.

- Chances need to be given to both teachers and students to go abroad to know how others are living, speaking, behaving and communicating with each other.

- Culture in EFL should be taught along with tolerance and acceptance to differences.

From these comments and recommendations, it seems that teachers are aware of the significance of implementing a culture-based content in EFL classrooms. Additionally, their answers show that they are aware of the importance of learners' communicative competence for they suggest more attention to be paid to it. It also appears that they do acknowledge the impact of a culture-based content on learners' communicative competence. This is manifested in their recommendation of developing the latter through the integration of culture. However, teachers tend to be very careful when dealing with the topic of culture. For this reason, they provide some advice such as teaching tolerance and empathy alongside culture teaching.

3.2.4.2. Summary of Results and Findings from the Teachers' Interview

What could be drawn from the analysis of the teachers' interview is that the great majority of teachers' responses are affirmative. This is to say that their answers support the research hypotheses. The results demonstrate that the respondents' experience in English teaching varies in total. This leads to diverse answers which in

turn contribute to the enrichment of the present research. It is noted that the interviewed teachers unanimously agree upon the importance of developing learners' communicative competence. However, teachers' views and opinions with regards to learners' awareness of the importance of developing their communicative competence seem not to be on agreement. Some of them argue that learners' awareness is clearly embodied in the efforts they put into developing their CC. Others believe that learners are unaware in the sense that they tend to value linguistic competence at the expense of communicative competence. The majority of teachers believe that exposure to the target culture, especially through genuine materials, is the key factor that leads to the development of learners' CC. Other factors may contribute to this development as well, such as awareness, motivation, communication itself and so on. It is noticed that teachers' responses to (Q_5) confirm their responses to (Q_2) in the sense that all of them do work toward enhancing their learners' CC. The means through which they seek to achieve this objective, however; vary from one teacher to another.

The interview, then; moves to deal with the second variable. The interviewees' opinions concerning learners' awareness of the importance of learning the target culture fall under two categories: those who believe that learners are aware of this importance and those who believe the opposite. The former argue that it is apparent through their enthusiasm and excitement. The latter, however; contend that learners do admire the target culture yet they are unaware of its significance. Referring to language and culture, all teachers seem to emphasize their strong interrelation which justifies the interviewees' positive stances with regards to the integration of culture in FLL. They believe, however; that several obstacles may accompany such integration. Moreover, the interviewed teachers seem to acknowledge the benefits of exposing their learners to the target culture as the majority of them claim that they do so taking into account the

differences between the target culture and the learners' mother culture. As far as cultural knowledge and communication are concerned, all teachers assert on the strong connection that governs the two. Equally, the interviewees' agreements on the idea that a culture-based content enhances learners' communicative competence reveals that the adequate implementation of the former would have a positive impact on the latter.

Conclusion

Depending on the results obtained from the field work that is put forward in this third chapter, one can assert the interconnectedness of culture and communicative competence. According to both learners' and teachers' views, time needs not to be wasted for a culture-based content to be integrated in EFL classrooms. This integration, they claim, would be beneficial for learners as it would allow them to be acquainted with the necessary cultural knowledge. The latter would enable them to be effective communicators regardless of the context where communication occurs. Therefore, it is confirmed that the adequate implementation of a culture-based content would have a favourable impact on EFL learners' communicative competence.

3.3. Pedagogical Implications

In view of the obtained results, it is proved that EFL learners' communicative competence would be developed if a culture-based content is adequately implemented. Therefore, CBC would have an impact on learners' communicative competence. This confirms the hypothesis that is set at the beginning of the research. Consequently, and by dint of the present study, a number of pedagogical implications come to be directed to policymakers, teachers, and learners.

3.3.1. Policymakers

3.3.1.1. Investment on Teacher Training

Oftentimes, English is not EFL teachers' mother tongue. Besides, the majority of them have never been in the English speech community. This is to say that even though they acknowledge the importance of both culture and communicative competence (as per their answers in the interview, see Appendix B), they cannot contribute much to teaching them. Here comes the role of policymakers who can provide them with the necessary opportunities to develop their knowledge concerning these matters, especially the target culture. This can be done through a teacher-training which can be conducted by native speakers either in the home country or in the target country. This is to maximize the trainees' chances of being exposed to the different cultural aspects and to ensure their understanding of the smallest details of daily-life. The teacher-training, then, would act as a springboard through which teachers can pass their knowledge and understanding to their learners.

3.3.1.2. Provision of Resources

For EFL teachers to be able to operationalize both concepts (culture and communicative competence) in their classes, more pedagogical aids need to be present.

Despite the effort policymakers put into the matter in question, they still have to do even more to providing the needed authentic materials and equipment. The latter are of a pivotal importance since they facilitate the teacher's job when it comes to teaching communicative as well as cultural matters. However, the use of such authentic materials should be gradual in order not to confuse learners. In addition to that, teachers should be given a kind of 'teacher-guide', a textbook for instance, which would help them in their teaching of the aforementioned matters. It is important to consider providing teacher-guides to middle as well as secondary school English teachers. Primary schools are not taken into consideration for the sole reason that there is no English course.

3.3.1.3. Addition of Modules

Based on learners' responses to (Q_2) of the questionnaire, their aim behind learning English is to develop their communicative competences and cultural knowledge (see Table 3.2). Hence, policymakers should take a step further and add two complementary modules. One would be entirely devoted to culture, dealing with aspects of the target culture and even other cultures. The other one would be about communication, which aim is to develop learners' spoken, written, and para-lingual skills and capacities. It is important to note that the module of culture would be half-theoretical and half-practical. This is to enable learners to get to know the different cultural aspects and then to practice them in hypothetical situations. Based on the common idea that practice makes perfect, the other module would be highly practical so as to allow learners to be communicatively competent. In order not to make learners feel stressed, these two modules would be exam-free.

3.3.1.4. Seminars and Workshops

Seminars and workshops can be beneficial for both teachers and learners. Teachers can share their ideas and views, concerning communicative and cultural issues, with each other as well as with learners. At the same time, they can work together to update their knowledge of the ever evolving culture (see Chapter two 2.2). These can be through simple discussions and/or through oral presentations together with follow-up activities. Likewise, learners' can raise their awareness with regards to culture and communication via these seminars and workshops. Therefore, the latter should be taken into serious consideration and should be organized whenever possible.

3.3.2. Teachers

3.3.2.1. Selection of the Appropriate Approach

The inseparability of language and culture makes it relevant to say that language teaching is also culture teaching. That being the case, teachers should adopt a convenient approach which would enable them to bring to the fore aspects and traits of both cultures (the target culture and the mother culture). This would be done by means of comparing the latter. By doing this, learners would be able to expand their horizons in relation to differences and to grow a sense of respect and empathy towards these cultures. What is more, it would be easier for them to interpret the different cultural behaviours and to communicate with others without falling into cultural and/or communication misunderstandings.

3.3.2.2. Diversity of Teaching Techniques and Activities

EFL learners seem to be very interested in learning about the target culture (see Table 3.12) which raises the teachers' responsibilities when it comes to teaching techniques and activities. Due to the fact that these learners appear to prefer being

taught through varied techniques (see Table 3.14), teachers should work towards meeting their needs and preferences. To achieve this objective, new and diverse techniques could be trialled such as cultural asides, mini-dramas, culture clusters…and so on. The teacher, then; can decide on the techniques that best suit his/her learners based on the attitudes they show towards each. With this in mind, the teacher should vary the activities carried out in the classroom no matter what the suitable technique is. It is important, however; that these activities stress communication and incite learners to engage in the learning process. As a result, these learners would not only be equipped with knowledge of the target culture but they would be able to put theory into practice. That is, they would have the chance to develop both their cultural as well as their communicative competences.

3.3.2.3. Openness to Change

Based on teachers' answers in the interview (see Appendix B), the integration of culture in EFL classrooms is unavoidable. However, it is not an easy process for several obstacles may arise, one of which is the teacher him/herself. The latter may not accept to teach all aspects and traits of the target culture because they may contradict with aspects of the learners' mother culture(s). To put it another way, the teacher may feel reluctant to introduce issues that are totally different from the norms and standards of the learners' society. Teachers of this kind usually like to 'play at the safe side', that is; they prefer to stick to the conventional themes that they 'believe' will not negatively affect their learners. One plausible recommendation to these teachers is, simply, to overcome their fear and be adaptable and open-minded. As a matter of fact, learners look forward to their teachers as their role models. If the latter are not open to change, how can their learners be?

3.3.3. Learners

3.3.3.1. Acceptance and Tolerance

Learners need to be 'culturally responsive', that is; they should be open, tolerant, and flexible towards the differences of the target culture. In this respect, they need acknowledge 'Otherness' and avoid 'Othering'. The latter is the process whereby a person employs a set of predetermined ideas and prejudices in order to define a culturally different group.

3.3.3.2. Adapt Never Adopt

Learners should be mature enough to realize that adapting to the target culture does not necessarily imply adopting it. To this end, they need to work towards reinforcing their knowledge of the mother culture. Also, they should not indulge in the other culture to the point that they forget about their own.

3.3.3.3. Development of Competences

Consider the importance of focusing on linguistic, communicative, as well as cultural competences for they complement each other. More to the point, they have to understand that accuracy alone is not sufficient for the message to get across. Therefore, learners need to work hard to improve these competences.

3.3.3.4. Exploitation of Free-time

Not rely only on in-class activities to develop their cultural knowledge and communicative competences. They should rather invest on their free-time to do their own off-class research. This could be done through different ways such as TV shows, movies, music, arts, and online and/or face-to-face discussions with native speakers…etc.

3.4. Limitations of the Study

In spite of the fact that the present research has attained its aims, two limitations were unavoidable. To begin with, the goal of any interview is to obtain spontaneous answers that are relevant to the topic in question. This spontaneity; however, could be achieved only with few teachers. Others asked either to read the interview questions beforehand or to take a copy and answer it at home. An additional limitation is that data, with regards to learners' views and perceptions, were gathered using a questionnaire. One of the main flaws of the latter is the "social desirability bias" (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010, p.8). Even though the participants were informed that the questionnaire is anonymous and that their answers are to be used only for research purposes, bias may have been present. In other words, one may wonder whether they have responded honestly or have attempted instead to give answers that are advantageous to the present topic.

3.5. Suggestions for Further Research

The present study has offered insights into the adequate implementation of a culture-based content and its impact on EFL learners' communicative competence. Whereas we inquired into learners' as well as teachers' views, perceptions, and attitudes concerning the matter, future research can further broaden and improve such insights. On that account, what follows is a list of some possible areas for future research (the following are with no particular order):

- Future empirical studies on the current topic are needed.

- More research to reveal the impact of culture-learning on learners' self-esteem is required.

- Further research is needed to examine the effects of culture on EFL learners' critical thinking.

- Future studies are needed to explore the importance of culture in the development of learners' creativity.

- An important issue to resolve for future studies is the impact of teachers' negative feedback on learners' communicative abilities.

- Further work needs to be done to establish whether the integration of culture into EFL classrooms would increase learners' motivation.

- Other studies need to explore the different sources of difficulties learners face when communicating through English.

- Research is also needed to determine the effects of a multi-cultural content on learners' intercultural communicative competence.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The present research was carried out for the sake of investigating the impact of integrating a culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence. Precisely, the hypothesis states that if culture-based content is adequately implemented in EFL classrooms, it would have an impact on learners' communicative competence. Fundamentally, the study dealt with three main chapters. The first two ones reviewed literature with reference to communicative competence and culture respectively. The third chapter reported the main findings along with their analyses and interpretations. In order to test the above-mentioned hypothesis, a descriptive method, both quantitative and qualitative, was adopted. This practical inquiry obtained findings by means of a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was administered to 108 third year LMD students at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma, and the interview was conducted with fourteen (14) English teachers at the same department. The aim of such data gathering tools was to quantify and qualify learners' and teachers' views and attitudes with regards to the topic in question. Based on the results obtained from both tools, it was indicated that both learners and teachers showed positive attitudes towards the integration of culture-based content in EFL classrooms. Besides, they agreed that such integration would produce communicatively competent learners. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis set at the beginning of our research is confirmed. Depending on the reviewed literature as well as the reported results, we addressed some pedagogical implications to policymakers, teachers, and learners. First, policymakers need to a) invest on teacher training, b) provide the necessary resources, c) add modules of culture and communication, and d) encourage conferences, seminars, and workshops. Second, teachers should a) select the appropriate approach, b) use a variety of techniques and activities, and c) be open to change. Third, learners have to a)

accept and embrace the differences of others, b) adapt to the target culture, c) develop all of their competences, and d) take advantage of their free-time to do some off-class research. Lastly, because the present investigation faced some limitations, we suggested replicating it using an experimental research design. This is to unveil other issues that are relevant to both culture-based content and communicative competence. Thus, future research may be directed to answer such questions as: what are the difficulties that learners face when communicating through English? What are their possible sources? What is the impact of culture-learning on learners' motivation, critical thinking, creativity, self-esteem?

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Appendices

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Student,

This questionnaire aims at investigating the impact of culture-based content on EFL learners' communicative competence. The findings will help to confirm or reject the Master research hypothesis. Hence, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions. Please tick / √ / the appropriate box(es) or make full statements if necessary. Please note that your responses will be dealt with confidentially and used only for research purposes. Thank you for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answer the questionnaire.

Ms. Graini Dounya

Department of English

University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma

Section One: General Information

1. How long have you been studying English?

Years

2. What is your aim behind learning English? (You can choose more than one option)

To develop your communicative abilities	
To develop your cultural knowledge	
To develop your linguistic abilities	
Other(s)	

- If other(s), specify.

....

3. How would you describe your level of English?

Very good	
Good	
Average	
Bad	
Very bad	

4. If bad or very bad, does the deficiency lie in? (You can choose more than one option)

Accuracy	
Clarity	
Appropriateness	
Flexibility	
Exactness	
Other(s)	

- If other(s), please specify.

....

Section Two: Communicative Competence

5. Do you think that mastering English structural system is sufficient to communicate effectively through this language?

Yes	
No	

- Justify your answer.

....

....

6. How important do you consider the role of communicative competence in the development of your level of English?

Very important	
Somehow important	
Neutral	
Not really important	
Not important at all	

7. How would you describe your level of communicative competence?

Very good	
Good	
Average	
Bad	
Very bad	

8. If it is neither good nor very good, does the deficiency lie in your? (You can choose more than one option)

Discourse competence	
Pragmatic competence	
Strategic competence	
Linguistic competence	
Other(s)	

- If other(s), specify.

....

9. Is communication given due attention within classrooms?

Yes	
No	

- Justify your answer.

....

....

10. Indicate your priorities by placing numbers from 1 to 4.

- I usually engage in interactional events through:

Social media networks	
In-class discussions with the teacher	
Random conversations outside the classroom	
Collaborative activities with classmates	

**Section Three: The Impact of Culture-based Content on Learners'
Communicative Competence**

11. In your opinion, what is culture?

....

....

....

....

....

12. Do you think that learning English implies learning its culture?

Yes	
No	

- Justify your answer.

....

....

13. To what extent is learning about English culture interesting for you?

Very interesting	
Somehow interesting	
Neutral	
Not really interesting	
Not interesting at all	

- Justify your answer.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………….…………………………………………

14. a) How important do you consider the integration of the target culture in the classroom?

Very important	
Somehow important	
Neutral	
Not really important	
Not important at all	

b) Are you exposed to English culture in the classroom?

Yes	
No	

c) Is this exposure to English culture satisfying for you?

Yes	
No	

- Justify your answer.

....

....

15. In your opinion, what is/are the most suitable technique(s) that your teachers can use to teach you the target culture? (You can choose more than one option)

Role plays	
Genuine materials	
Mini dramas	
Quizzes	
Culture clusters	
Culture capsules	
Cultural assimilators	
Cultural asides	
Other(s)	

- If other(s), specify.

....

16. Indicate your priorities by placing numbers from 1 to 5.

- To develop communicative abilities in the target language, students need to:

Speak English on a daily basis	
Rely on social media applications	
Learn about English culture	
Listen to native speakers	
Engage in group conversations and discussions	

17. How often do you communicate with people from the target culture?

Always	
Usually	
Often	
Sometimes	
Rarely	
Never	

18. Do you agree that by being knowledgeable about the target culture, your communicative capacities will be enhanced?

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

19. Do you think that the absence of a culture-based content leads to poor communicative capacities?

Yes	
No	

- Justify your answer.

....

....

Section Four: Further Suggestions

20. Do you have any further suggestions?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………..

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix B

Teachers' Interview

Dear teacher,

Our research is about the integration of culture into EFL classrooms and its impact on learners' communicative competence. This interview will be of pivotal importance to our investigation as it will provide us with some answers about the topic in question. You are kindly invited to take part in this short interview which will be recorded based on your permission.

Ms. Graini Dounya

Department of English

University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma

Questions

1. For how many years have you been teaching English?

2. Is it important to develop learners' communicative competence? Would you please explain?

3. Do you think that your learners are fully aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence? Would you please explain?

4. According to you, what are the most important factors that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence?

5. Do you try to enhance learners' communicative competence inside your classrooms? If yes, what are the means or techniques that you employ in order to achieve this objective?

6. Do you think that your learners are aware of the importance of learning the target culture?

7. Some authors assume that teaching a particular language implies teaching its culture, what do you think of this?

8. What do you think of the integration of culture in Foreign Language Learning (FLL)? Would you please explain?

9. While presenting your lessons, do you expose your learners to the target culture? If yes, do you take into account the differences between the mother culture and the target culture? Would you please explain?

10. What do you think will be the constraints concerning the implementation of a culture-based content?

11. What is the relationship between cultural knowledge and communication?

12. Some authors think that culture-based content enhances learners' communicative competence, what do you think of this?

13. Do you have any other comments and/or recommendations?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Teachers' Interview Transcription

Teacher One

1. Seven years.

2. Yes, of course, simply because linguistic competence alone is not enough for communication, a student cannot communicate only by being aware of the grammar of English or the phonology, syntax and so on, so there must be a communicative competence.

3. No [laughing] at all, because for instance I used to tell them "you do not know how to do things", they do not know how to let's say behave in certain situations, that's why I think they do not know what is communicative competence, and they are not aware of the importance of communicative competence.

4. Role playing, emphasizing culture and group work.

5. I do, I use some strategies like integrating examples from real situations, real life situations, I also focus on the English culture, I think that culture is at the core of communicative competence, I cannot teach any aspect of communicative competence without mentioning culture, also by grouping students into a group of four or five students to work together and they interact with each other, I also try to enhance my learners' communicative competence through role playing.

6. I can say yes, but not fully aware, half aware, I can explain through an example, sometimes I give them some examples and I feel that they consider them as weird, I can illustrate for instance, last time, like two weeks ago I gave them the example "she asked him to bring a bottle of wine" and they considered it as weird and funny and they

started laughing, and one of them said "she simply asked him to bring a bottle of soda", then I highlighted the idea of culture, the notion of culture, that this is their culture which is different from ours, so I think that they are not *fully* aware of the target culture.

7. Yes, because you cannot, you can *never* teach a language without mentioning its culture, unless you are just talking about the grammar of that language or the phonology and so on, I mean the basics of the language which is to develop the linguistic competence and the linguistic competence as I have said before is not enough for communication, is not enough to develop a communicator.

8. This is very important actually, if I take the case of Algerian universities for instance, there are some courses related to culture but they give like the civilization, the ancient culture, they only give a general overview of the English culture, and if you do not know how English people think with regard to a certain text, you may not understand the text, and even if you understand, it would not be a clear understanding.

9. Yes, if the nature of the course allows, some modules are mainly theoretical and I find myself obliged to stick to the syllabus, to stick to the theoretical things, and this does not allow me to expose my learners to the English culture. Yes, always, for instance when I expose them to a certain aspect of the English culture, I usually try to find the equivalent in the mother culture, either I expose them to that equivalent or I ask them "what is the equivalent in our mother culture?".

10. Concerning the implementation of a culture-based content, I think there would be time constraints mainly.

11. I can say there is a strong relationship between the two, we have to be culturally cultivated [laughing] which means that we have to possess lots of information with regards to the English culture to be able to communicate, if not, we may say hello, how

are you and that's it, for instance one aspect of the English culture is that British people start a conversation by asking about the weather, if I'm not aware of this aspect, I would not start a conversation in UK.

12. Yes, for sure, it enhances learners' communicative competence because again culture is at the core of communicative competence, I even wonder how I can develop communicative competence without being aware of the culture.

13. Actually, I have many to say with regards to this topic, well, as a recommendation, I strongly recommend taking into consideration integrating culture in all courses, for instance to say that my job is to teach written expression not to teach culture, it is important to give more information to my students not only to limit the session to written expression stuff, we are learning how to write an essay, I can make a relationship between writing an essay and teaching them a certain aspect of culture, how? writing an essay, we give the techniques, we give the steps, then we give a sample of an essay to show the students that this is a well written essay, it would be an essay about a certain aspect of the English culture, emphasis also should be placed on developing learners' communicative competence, and when I say developing communicative competence for me, this is my personal view, it is simply to make them fully aware of the target culture.

Teacher Two

1. For nine years.

2. Yes, it is important, because learners need to get engaged in conversations and need to express themselves, and without communicative competence, the message cannot get across, and of course when we talk about communicative competence, many aspects need to be taken into consideration for instance the learners' pronunciation, whether it is

intelligible or not, it is a very important aspect because if the learners' English is not understood by the listener, this leads to communication breakdowns, second point is that many learners think that it is not important, so they tend to ignore it.

3. Yes, I think they are, I have some enthusiastic learners in grammar and in phonetics courses, they always tend to imitate native speakers, to imitate the British accent for instance, or use particular expressions that are used in colloquial English, and when I ask them, "why are you learning this", they tell me, "for us the formal language is not enough, we need to know also the informal language", and they are right since the natural speech, or the spontaneous speech does not occur in the classroom, the English that we teach in the classroom is academic and formal, but the real English is the one spoken in the streets, I found many students tending to develop their communicative competence.

4. By raising learners' awareness about the importance of developing their communicative competence.

5. Yes, of course, I always try to challenge my students, I have a student whose pronunciation sounds British, and whenever I ask a question and he starts answering, I try to answer him with a British accent, so this makes him feel more confident, and also I would give opportunity to others who want also to develop their British accent to participate in the conversation, I also try to allow them to take part in role plays and turn-taking in conversations.

6. Well yes, I think they are, because now it is no longer a problem to learn about the English culture, because they have access to internet, to movies... etc., so it's not difficult to learn about it.

7. Yes, culture and language cannot be separated, we cannot teach a language without referring to its culture.

8. It is very important, and it is something that should not be avoided by teachers.

9. Yes, of course, I usually do this in grammar and in phonetics courses, I expose my students to the English culture, and there was an example about the man and the woman being responsible for a particular act, so it was in the sentence, "if something happens to the child, we are both responsible", and the students were asked to find the appropriate tense, and I told them, "what do you think? Can we apply this example in our society", the majority of them said, "in western societies, they share the responsibilities, but in Algerian society, the woman, or the mother is the one responsible whether the act is good or bad".

10. We usually focus on the information that should be delivered to the student, the concrete information that is relevant to the module, always because of the large group size and the limited time.

11. Communication is the process of interacting with other people, of getting involved in conversations, and of getting the message across, this is communication, however, cultural knowledge are part of the language, it means, if you are talking to an Afro-American, you have to bear in mind that his culture is different from the white American, so you cannot call Afro-American "Negro" because white Americans used this term back to slavery, and only African Americans can call each other "a Negro", so if you are not aware that this is like a forbidden word to use, you will get yourself into trouble, and fall into miscommunication, so culture and communication are interconnected, there is a very tied relationship between the two, they complete each other, we cannot separate one from the other.

12. Yes, it does, because one may have a very advanced level in English but he has no idea for instance what is thanksgiving, what is Halloween, so if he is talking with a native speaker of English and he has no idea what these are, this will block the conversation, so if students have knowledge about the English culture, they will get easily involved into conversations.

13. It is important to raise teachers' awareness that it is important for learners to know some cultural aspects even if they are not in accordance with our mother culture.

Teacher Three

1. I have been teaching English for three years.

2. Yes, sure, well, I remember one time when one of my students said something and I told him "it is not grammatically wrong to say that but it is not appropriate to say it", so communicative competence is very important for students because it helps them to use the language in its appropriate context.

3. Fully? Well I am not sure but they are aware, we always tell them this and they seem to know it, but are they doing it? Are they really learning how to become communicatively competent? That's a question that I can't answer, but aware, yes, I think they are.

4. Building the course activities around tasks that help develop learners' communicative competence.

5. Yes, I do try, well I try to look for exercises that are related not only to the correctness but also to the appropriateness of language, and sometimes I do it by directly talking to them , so it's not an exercise, it's not anything, it's just a direct message to my students about a certain structure or something and make them aware that this is not appropriate to use even though it's correct, and most of the time it is

through videos and materials that are conducted, done, and played by natives because we are not native speakers of English after all.

6. They are not especially first year students, well it depends because I taught this year first year students a literature class and I asked them "what do you like in English" and they went like "grammar, phonetics, grammar, phonetics" that's what they said nothing else, not literature, not civilisation, so I opened up the topic and told them "what about the other modules" and they went like "we don't know, they are not things that we are interested in" and I told them "well I know your issue, not really a problem, that most students come to study English because they think they are going to speak English full stop, they don't know that it's a whole specialty you didn't recognise that" and they said "yes, we just want to learn how to speak it fluently", and then I tried to make them aware of the importance of learning English culture along with its language, and concerning more advanced level students I think that they are aware but not fully aware if I can say.

7. Yes, I totally agree because language can never be separated from its culture, they are really interrelated.

8. Oh! I think it's a hard job, it's not an individual teacher's job or responsibility, it's the responsibility of all teachers, I think we should work more on this matter, it is high time to sit down and discuss how we integrate it, it's a hard job, that's what I think about it.

9. Yes, I do. yes I do that, sometimes explicitly so I tell them "this thing might not be ok in our culture, but for their culture it is, and it's ok to accept it" , and then I always try to make my students aware that if they are learning English, it doesn't mean that they have to take everything that is related to that culture, they should understand it,

accept it and respect it, and know when to use what, but it doesn't mean they should transform their own identity into an English one.

10. Well, the context itself because it's not a native environment, it's hard for me as for other teachers as well since we are not natives, we don't know everything about that culture, so the teacher himself or herself isn't really knowledgeable about it, so that's surely one of the main constraints, and then the other one is related to the syllabus that is sometimes too abstract, it doesn't include those culture-based materials, also students may not accept things that are really different from their culture that they may think are harmful to their culture, and that's another constraint.

11. I think that they are interrelated in the sense that you literally cannot communicate with English people unless you are knowledgeable about their culture.

12. Yes, of course it does, since it is culture-based so it enhances their communicative competence, because whenever you are introduced to the target culture, you know what is respectful and what is not, what is polite and what is not, you can communicate effectively and most importantly appropriately.

13. It's an interesting topic and I wish you the best of luck.

Teacher Four

1. I have been teaching English for eight years.

2. It is highly important to develop learners' communicative competence because we enable them to speak like native speakers, to communicate as if in a real situation.

3. I think that the majority, I will not say all of them, but the majority of students focus on the grammatical competence more than the communicative competence because when we ask them to present something, they are so anxious about this and they feel that they cannot express themselves, they cannot express their ideas, even those

excellent students are frustrated when it comes to presentations, so, they do not develop communicative competence maybe because of the lack of awareness, they are more interested in developing their linguistic competence rather than their communicative competence.

4. Mainly the materials that we use inside the classroom because I think that there is a lack of materials, we are all the time using handouts, if we have other materials to make students listen to conversations, to interviews, to watch videos, to get familiar with the American culture and the British culture, if we use these types of materials this will help students to develop their vocabulary, their pronunciation skills, their speaking skills, so that they will develop their communicative competence.

5. Actually the modules that I taught do not allow me to do so, but if I have the chance to teach oral expression for instance, I will make my students discuss topics, make role-plays inside the classroom, bring videos, do conversations and so on.

6. Here, they like the target culture, they admire American and English people, their lifestyles, but to be aware of why and how they learn culture through English, they are not aware of this importance, when we try to ask about the culture of others, they know about it, but how they accept it and how they keep their own culture, here, there is a big confusion, I think that they lost their behaviours because of the lifestyles and behaviours of the other.

7. I agree, because we cannot isolate a language from its culture, can we teach separate sentences?, I mean even when we teach greetings and apologizing, we should teach students how to do so, because they have to do it in a particular way that is appropriate to the context, to the culture of that language.

8. It is important to integrate culture in FLL, and there is a lack in our situation because not all teachers integrate culture in their courses or speak about it in their courses, so there is a necessity to imbed culture within all modules.

9. In my teaching experience, I did not face this; I did not expose my students to the target culture.

10. There will be materials and time constraints mainly.

11. Language should be appropriate to the situation, and for language to be appropriate to the context, to the situation, you should have cultural knowledge about that context such as the street, the administration, the university, maybe the mosque, each time we have a situation, and when we want to communicate with someone in that situation we don't need language only, we should be appropriate to the context so that we can understand each other, not to fall in misunderstanding, so in order to communicate successfully and effectively, we have to be culturally knowledgeable.

12. Of course it enhances learners' communicative competence, if we provide students with lessons that include culture and enhance their knowledge about the culture of others, or the culture of people who speak that language, this would improve, develop their communicative competence, this means that when they will face situations where they need to communicate with native speakers or with someone else who speaks the target language, they will be able to do this.

Teacher Five

1. For fourteen years.

2. Of course, it is important to develop students' communicative competence because they must know how native speakers appropriately use the language.

3. Not yet, at the level of universities, learners are just listening to how non-native speakers are using the language, so they must be put in the full, right, real communicative environment, to know how the language is used in different situations.

4. Mainly to have the necessary equipment, for me, I have been teaching Oral Expression for students and the students found difficulties to really understand what American-English speakers, or English-English speakers are saying when they are listening to different recordings, and why not to have teachers from abroad with whom students are going to interact at least at the level of Oral Expression and Written Expression courses, this is what I think.

5. In Oral Expression module, yes, by choosing different audios in which they are going to listen to everyday English language, so at least they are going to have an idea about the different expressions, the different words and sentences, the way they are going to communicate with everyday language in everyday situations as native speakers do.

6. I think they are aware of this importance, it can be seen in their enthusiasm and excitement.

7. Of course, language is culture, and as a teacher who is specialised in teaching translation also I will say to you that understanding the culture means understanding the language.

8. The integration of culture depends on the courses and their nature.

9. Of course I do, concerning Oral Expression module for instance, I have presented many lessons about everyday English language, the use of English language in everyday with the native speakers' accents, and like that students are going to be exposed to the ways how others are going to speak in real-life situations, and yes it is important to highlight the differences, a learner must know about the differences.

10. The first challenge is for the teacher, how he is going to do so, because it is difficult for us to have the content, this is first, the lack of materials is the second challenge.

11. Communication is language, culture is language, how can a teacher of English teach English without having at least an idea about its culture, so we can't communicate without knowing the culture of the other.

12. Of course yes, it really enhances learners' communicative competence, because by presenting a culture-based content to our students, they are going to be at least aware about the civilisation, the history, the literature of others, and they will be able to find it very easy to communicate with them.

13. We need to give chances to both teachers and students to go abroad to know how others are living, speaking, behaving and communicating with each other, and most importantly culture and communicative competence need to be paid more importance.

Teacher Six

1. Eleven years

2. Yes, of course, definitely, we should do so, even though we use on different media all over the world the written form of the language such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on, but it's very beneficial if you could speak your ideas out, especially in the context of EFL, since English is a foreign language, we tend normally to have really weak communicative competence, and many students are excellent when it comes to writing down and expressing themselves in the written form graphically, but when it comes to the oral expression, they find several difficulties, besides, some languages, linguistically speaking, do not possess at all the written form, so they have only the spoken form, and whenever you meet someone, you are not going to take a pen and express yourself in the written form.

3. Normally they are aware because they keep on asking me for books of oral expression, how to develop both oral and written capacities.

4. The availability of materials might help, the amount of sessions also, the exams also if they become oral, why not?

5. Normally, it's my main objective because in teaching we need interaction, you are obliged to interact with the students, it's not the silent way or reversed silent way, I mean it's not the teacher who is going to talk and the students are always silent, so I need to stimulate them and trigger them in order to respond back to me, so I tend sometimes to use questions only.

6. Well, from my observations, some of them maybe, because they talk about movies, the wars, politics, all the things that happen in America and Britain, especially in America, the way they wear clothes, the fashion they follow, so from these small hints and details, we can say that they are interested in learning the target culture.

7. Yes, of course, I do agree with them because language and culture are like a coin with two facets and they are inseparable, you might maybe learn the language without the culture but you will find lots of, let's say, problems facing you in your future encounter with native speakers or when you go to that society, especially what we call "les faux-pas" in French.

8. I believe it's a must, and it is already integrated I believe, maybe in few modules like literature and civilisation, but there is still a missing ring that links between all the rings in order to make a real chain, so I believe they should add another module for not only the target culture but culture all over the world in order to create inside that future teacher or future user of English empathy towards all cultures and to encourage co-existence.

9. Yes, sometimes I keep on talking about some characteristics of the target culture in my class, and in some cases I do highlight the differences between the mother culture and the target culture, even the negative sides not only the positive ones.

10. I believe the first constraint would be the teachers themselves, some they lack really deep cultural knowledge about the target language, I personally lack deep knowledge about it, other constraints might be the time, we don't have enough time to include culture in phonology, in oral modules, we have a syllabus so we are limited by the time, something else is the materials, we don't have books, and the ones we have they are too generic, they are not specific, maybe these are the constraints.

11. I could say that cultural knowledge is a part of communication, communication is broader than cultural knowledge, so, cultural knowledge is one of the tools you could use in your communication.

12. Honestly, I guess it needs deep research but I could say yes, maybe.

13. This topic is really splendid; I really wish that more attention would be paid to it.

Teacher Seven

1. I have been teaching English for eight years.

2. I believe it is, it is highly important to develop their communicative competence to a very far extent because I believe that gaining the ability to talk and communicate in a language, especially when it is a foreign one entails mastering or having this tool-kit I'd like to call which is communicative competence.

3. What I think is that students should be aware of the importance of this tool-kit as I said before, but whether they are fully aware, partially aware, not aware at all, this depends, like I cannot give you an exact answer about this, but during the first five years of teaching linguistics and language description, and modules which are more related to linguistics, some of the students used to be aware, like at the beginning of the

year when I asked them "why are you here? What do you want to do here? are you here to gain marks and get a diplomat and get a job and get a wife and so on or are you here because you like to study English, are you here because you are fan of their culture, their way of living... etc.", so I find a variety in their answers, some of them are here because they want a regular life, and others are here because they do have passion about language, others are here because they need English as a plus, like it will help them since it is the lingua-franca nowadays, so there is variation, but coming back to your question, I think that they *should* be fully aware because it is helpful.

4. The first and foremost factor I'm aware of and which I always insist on is to be aware at first of its importance because if you are not aware that you have this tool-kit at your disposal and you don't know what you can do with it, I don't think that you will *ever* take advantage of it, other factors, I'm not really sure but a good start could be theory, like this is what it is, this is from where it comes, and then the way they can use it if they want to.

5. I do try to enhance my learners' communicative competence, and usually I do that by pushing them to speak and interact with each other, I also allow them to make oral presentations which are very useful when it comes to communicative competence.

6. I don't think so, the problem, I believe, is that learners are not aware about their own culture, they are not aware about their mother culture, I remember one time I asked my students one question "have you ever heard your dad telling your mom I love you?", they were like hiding their faces and feeling as if I said something forbidden, and then I asked them "is it forbidden? Is it illegal" and they said "no miss it is not, but we were raised this way, and we have seen our siblings, our moms and dads doing this so we are doing it", and I asked "and where is your mind?", if Allah did not forbid it, if by doing

it I'm not harming anyone, so where is the problem?, so this example got them thinking like where are we going?, so they are not aware of their own culture, how could they be aware of the foreign culture.

7. I totally agree, totally agree, to the point that I wished at that time, like when I got aware about their chaos in their minds about their own culture, I was like hoping to integrate cultural materials or modules in the primary school, to help them build awareness about their own mother culture, and then when they open up to different cultures, they will not deviate, they will not feel lost, and they will not have the identity crisis which is really famous nowadays, so I totally agree with this idea.

8. I can say it's inevitable, so whenever you decide to learn a new language like it's obvious, it's explicit that you are going to learn its culture as well, now the problem rises in the way you integrate it, so it's not whether to integrate it or not, it's how to integrate it, and again if the mother culture has been integrated at very primary levels and we came up with a generation that is more aware, more accepting its own culture then there will be no harm when they face different new cultures because they are standing on a solid ground, but if the integration of the mother culture was not done, or was done but in an inappropriate way, here it could be risky to integrate the culture of the foreign language because you will be like building something on moving sands because it will definitely lead to an identity crisis.

9. Yes, whenever I find the occasion I do, because I know it's really important. Yes, I do, and it is inevitable, especially when I teach first year and second year students I find myself obliged to emphasize this line, that we are here and for us it is like this, but now we are using a different language, a different culture, and for them it is ok, so we should accept it.

10. When you see the educational system which so far did not take the move to build a solid ground about the native culture, needless to talk about the implementation of a foreign culture, and of course if the teacher is open to change then there will be no obstacles, if he/she is against change, I think this is the obstacle itself.

11. There is a strong relationship actually, because when you know the culture of the people that means you have the weapon, or let's talk positively, you have the key to them, which means whenever you communicate with them, you will not be afraid that you say something that is against their religion, their beliefs and so on.

12. I totally, perfectly agree, you know communicative competence is the ability to communicate easily and appropriately with people, now let's think the reverse way, let us suppose we do not teach our students communicative competence but we do teach them culture-based content, to what will this lead? the inevitable outcome would be an enhanced communicative competence, because to have the mastery to communicate with people and to respect the context where you are, the gender, the level, the education, the topic, the tone of your voice, the body language, everything is going to be gained more appropriately if you study culture-based content, so I think it does enhance it, it really does, whether implicitly or explicitly but it really does, because communicating with people from different cultures is not easy, and the only way, I think, to overcome this obstacle is to learn about their culture, if you know the culture, you will be a good communicator no doubt, if you do not know the culture, you *could* be a good communicator, but you will still lack this easiness and appropriateness when communicating.

13. Culture in EFL should be taught along with tolerance and acceptance to differences.

Teacher Eight

1. For ten years.

2. Yes, it is very important to develop learners' communicative competence, the main aim of learning a foreign language is to communicate through that language, to communicate effectively at all levels, not only oral communication.

3. No, I don't think so, because learners emphasize on developing their linguistic competence thinking that it's enough, and ignoring completely that knowing the language requires communicating through this language, it requires transmitting ideas and information, and unfortunately learners neglect all these factors, you know we can produce sentences which are grammatically and structurally correct but communicatively they convey no meaning, they are meaningless.

4. To propose, to design a syllabus which takes communication into consideration, which makes the learners understand what communication is, to know the skills that they should acquire in order to develop communicative competence, the integration of culture is very important too, so we have to expose learners to the target culture as a way to develop their communicative competence.

5. Not all the time, honestly, I do not do it systematically because of the nature of the modules I teach, I mainly teach theoretical modules such as linguistics, didactics, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, all these modules are information-based, that is to say what matters is to give learners theories and information, so my unique way to allow them to develop their communicative competence is to allow them to speak, to interact, to present some projects, but I think that these competences can be rather developed in oral modules, in written modules and so on, and we have to add a module of communication, a module devoted only for communication.

6. No, they are not, and you may even find third year learners of English and they ignore who is Harry, who is William, who is Elizabeth, something which is abnormal since we cannot be specialized in the Anglophone world and ignoring the royal family, so they are not aware of the importance of knowing the target culture.

7. Sure, sure, I completely agree with this, we cannot teach a language without teaching its culture, simply because teaching a language without its culture give us learners who know everything about the language except the language itself, because again, the main aim of learning a foreign language is to communicate, if we do not communicate through this language, I think that we do not really know it.

8. It is very important to integrate the target culture in Foreign Language Learning, because a language goes hand in hand with its culture.

9. Not really, here again, the nature of the modules does not give me the opportunity to expose the learners systematically to the target culture, but I try from time to time, especially while giving examples, technical examples, I try to relate them to the target culture, also, when I have taught for two or three years British Civilisation, I really enjoyed teaching this module because it was mainly related to culture, but unfortunately with big 'C', now concerning the culture with small 'c', I cannot expose them to it since myself I ignore it, I have never been in the speech community, I don't know everyday life traditions, habits, and norms of British or American people.

10. The first constraint, I think, is the awareness of the importance of culture, I think that teachers should be aware, this is the first barrier that hinders the implementation of a culture-based content, also, we should overcome problems of stereotypes and prejudices, we should be open-minded in order to allow oneself and consequently others to implement this culture-based content inside the classroom, the other constraint

is the lack of materials, for example we can expose our learners to a video or a movie about some aspects of the English culture but we do not have the necessary means to propose this inside the classroom.

11. It's very important, it's of a paramount importance because knowing the culture leads us to communicate effectively, ignoring the culture, the target culture of the foreign language may hinder the process of communication because we may offend people while communicating, simply because we ignore some aspects of their culture, and vice versa, even learners of Arabic should know the culture of the Arabic language because we cannot disassociate a language from its culture.

12. Yes, I agree, because the learners learn the linguistic items which are very important and at the same time they are exposed to the target culture, so they can select from these linguistic items that they acquire the items that suit their communication taking into consideration the social context, the norms, the traditions, the beliefs, and the habits of the speech community.

13. I think that it is an interesting topic that we have to give importance to culture which, I think, is not totally neglected in the English department, learners are exposed to the target culture but only to a certain degree, and we have to give it more importance.

Teacher Nine

1. I have been teaching English for eight years.

2. Certainly, it is important to develop learners' communicative competence, since students are in the process of learning a new language, it is vital for them to learn how to express themselves in that language, students should learn how to communicate in the foreign language and express themselves in a clear and an effective manner.

3. Yes, I think that learners are fully aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence, now, learners are aware that knowing the foreign language's grammar, vocabulary and so on is not enough because they must be able to use it as well, from my personal experience and compared to previous years, I can say that students feel motivated to interact with each other and the teacher in a positive way.

4. I think the most important factor that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence comes from within the students themselves and their motivation to learn the target language, students' determination to be able to communicate effectively, to understand and to be understood by their classmates, is essential, so, their desire and willingness to participate in the classroom and to speak the language even outside the classroom are key elements which increase their motivation to develop their communicative competence, another factor which is essential in the development of this competence is the teacher, teachers must make the students comfortable and urge them through effective strategies to speak the foreign language in group discussions as an example, the teacher can also explain why it is important for the students to speak the language in real-life situations.

5. Yes, I try to enhance learners' communicative competence inside the classroom by providing a variety of tasks and activities in which they need to interact with each other with the target language, the tasks and activities vary depending on the module.

6. Yes, I think they are aware.

7. I agree that teaching a particular language implies teaching its culture, languages and cultures are inseparable, each one of them carries the other, one cannot teach English without referring to American and British cultures, how can a teacher give a lecture

about English vocabulary without explaining the context in which certain words are used.

8. The integration of culture is necessary in FLL, such a step facilitates the way students learn the foreign language.

9. Yes, and the differences between the mother culture and the target culture are always highlighted, one cannot give a lecture in American literature or British literature without explaining the cultural context of the work and showing how the target culture is different from ours.

10. I think that teachers' lack of knowledge about the target culture is itself a constraint.

11. Well, cultural knowledge is a key to communication since without the former, communication would be very difficult for both listener and speaker.

12. The culture-based content can enhance learners' communicative competence because students will be able to use the language in suitable ways, culturally and socially, also they will be aware of the cultural connotations of words, phrases and so on.

Teacher Ten

1. Four years.

2. Yes, it definitely is important to develop learners' communicative competence because before being a learner you have to know how to be a communicator, and here when we say a communicator we are talking about the external world, so we know what we implement in the external world may be of use when it comes to the educational level, so to me as a teacher I would definitely say yes to this question.

3. Unfortunately no, the more we talk about this point which is communicative competence, the more I realize that [laughing] they are really are not aware of this and

they have this massive lack of communication let alone communicative competence, and despite the effort that I myself and other teachers try to make in order to improve their communicative competence it just doesn't work.

4. I would say communication itself, to interact with peers, to interact with teachers themselves, not to isolate oneself as a learner, you know the more you talk to people, in the educational field again, the more this competence is deemed to be developed, so interacting, getting engaged, avoiding isolating oneself from the environment helps I believe.

5. Definitely, definitely yes, there is one interesting means that I depend on which is discussion of course but not any kind of discussion, there is a course that is called communication and the great thing about this course is that it opens the door to you as a teacher and to your students to discuss many topics, so for me what I try to do is to discuss topics from real life instead of talking about things that are related solely to education, to learning, I realized that this bored my students, so I try always to choose or select topics from real-life and I realized that it does work with students, mainly those who want to improve their communicative competence.

6. You reminded me of one of my students who asked such a question and it led to a debate, there are some students who say that it is very important to learn the target culture while others say "no, it's not good", now if you know what to select from the target culture, it's very important, and if you see that you will be drowning in the negatives more than the positives then I believe that it's better to just stick to learning the target language although you cannot separate the two from each other, learning the target language means that you will by necessity learn the target culture.

7. I believe it is really true, and we can see here in Algeria as an Arab and Muslim country, we can see the impact of the target culture, and by this we mean the western culture, for us as teachers and students, here in this small community that is the English department we can see certain things, certain behaviours, attitudes, that are taken from the target culture and I believe this is a bad thing.

8. Well, as I said the target culture and language go hand in hand, you cannot separate, and the good example is that we teach linguistics and at the same time we have courses of civilisation and literature, so there is an integration of culture in EFL classrooms.

9. Not that much, no, I try to bring their attention to certain points and elements in regards to the target culture but I don't really focus on the target culture especially for the first year students because I know how deep this impact may be, and by impact I mean a negative one, if there is a positive one then it is great, but from what I noticed as a teacher is that there is a negative impact more than the positive one, so I don't really focus on the target culture, although again you cannot separate the target language from the target culture. Definitely, all the time, so when I try to mention an aspect of the target culture I have to bring my students' attention to the Muslim or the Arab culture, just to remind them that they are studying a foreign language that is English but they should not forget about their own roots.

10. The fact that the target culture is completely different from the mother culture, this alone imposes a huge problem.

11. If we want to communicate in the foreign language and in this regard it's the English language, in a way we have to be knowledgeable about its culture, it is a necessity.

12. I agree with this, again since you communicate in the English language it means you have to bring the aspect of culture, after all we are speaking, we are using a language that's not ours, hence; knowing about its culture will definitely enhance learners' communicative competence.

Teacher Eleven

1. Seven years.

2. Yes, because the more the learners develop communicative competence in the language the more they will successfully and appropriately communicate in different social contexts.

3. Theoretically speaking, they are aware of its importance, yet students do not really work sufficiently to develop it.

4. Developing communicative competence entails developing linguistic competence, strategic competence, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence.

5. Yes, through some techniques as oral presentations, classroom discussions, role plays.

6. Yes, they are aware, that's what I think from my observation.

7. I strongly agree because the language always mirrors the culture of its people so if you want to learn a language you have to learn its culture too.

8. We highly recommend it as it would enable students to better know about the language they are learning, its people and their lifestyles, their traditions and customs, and it would also raise their awareness of cultural differences and may push them to accept and empathize with the other.

9. I expose my students to the target culture mainly when I introduce controversial cultural content and I try to highlight the differences between the two cultures in that regard and I always ask them to be open-minded and tolerant of ambiguity.

10. Ideological, societal and religious constraints.

11. The more you have cultural knowledge about a particular language the more you become communicatively competent.

12. Yes, I strongly agree, as I've said before when you become aware of the other's culture you'll come to better understand why and how people would behave in such a way in particular social contexts and you would automatically respond appropriately wherever you find yourself in a social interaction with native speakers.

Teacher Twelve

1. Five years.

2. It is important to improve learners' communicative competence because this latter involves linguistic competence and knowledge of rules in order to utilize language items in different contexts, moreover; foreign language learners and teachers should consider communicative competence as a priority since the main objective of language learning is successful communication.

3. Learners are not aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence, you know, the majority of learners do not even know what is meant by communicative competence.

4. I think authentic materials and activities are effective tools that could lead to the improvement of foreign learners' communicative competence, this is because EFL learners are not exposed to the target language in its natural use, so authentic materials

might be considered as a source for language input and enhance EFL learners' communicative competence when being exposed to real language.

5. Yes, I do that through collaborative works, oral discussions, authentic activities and problem-solving activities.

6. The majority of learners are aware of the importance of learning the target culture.

7. I do agree, but the content of the subject matter that is taught as well as teachers' way of teaching need to be taken into consideration.

8. Integrating culture in FLL is important because it will create a kind of cultural coexistence and acceptance of the other, it will also prepare learners for real world situations.

9. Yes, sometimes, and whenever I expose learners to the target culture, I try to explain the cultural differences.

10. I think the constraints are teachers' and learners' attitudes as well as the lack of authentic materials.

11. When learners possess cultural knowledge, they will be communicatively successful.

12. Since culture and language are inseparable, implementing a culture-based content will greatly improve foreign language learners' communicative competence.

Teacher Thirteen

1. I've been an English teacher for seven years.

2. It is very important to develop learners' communicative competence because it involves the learners in a more authentic and interactive learning environment.

3. The majority of my learners are not aware of that importance, only few members are partially aware.

4. I think that learners should be aware of the importance of developing their communicative competence and they must know the purpose behind learning English, motivation and self-confidence are also important factors.

5. I always try to enhance learners' communicative competence inside my classroom, through integrating some aspects of the target culture, accepting their mistakes and encouraging them to speak freely inside the classroom, using as much communicative activities as possible, any activities that encourage and require a learner to speak with/ and listen to other learners.

6. Yes, I guess they are.

7. Well, I do agree, because it is impossible to disassociate a language from its culture.

8. Teaching the target culture plays an important role in teaching the target language, but I think it is not an easy thing to do as there may be many challenges, but it is very important indeed.

9. Honestly, I do not do it unless it's in the syllabus.

10. Learners may not be able to understand some cultural aspects and it requires too much preparation time.

11. Communication is the means of human interaction and through this interaction we learn cultures and cultural knowledge is created.

12. This is absolutely true, but the teacher should be intelligent and he/she should know when and where it is necessary to introduce the appropriate cultural aspects.

Teacher Fourteen

1. Six years.

2. Yes, communicative competence is about giving learners the opportunity to come into the world, it's about the creation of situations in which learners are able and allowed to respond, it's about saying and doing, it is an integration of the four skills.

3. Yes, a good command of any language requires the mastery of this language's communicative competence.

4. Well, I think that the most important factors that can lead to the development of learners' communicative competence are exposure to authentic language, learning by doing, and the practice of problem-solving activities.

5. Yes, I do that, I do that by exposing them to authentic language and its culture, practicing problem-solving activities, involving them in communicative and group work activities, and practicing tasks of real-world.

6. Yes, I do think so, from what I see I can say that they show interest in learning about the target culture.

7. I agree, because the consideration of the cultural and situational aspects of the target language, at the end, leads to a better understanding of that language and a greater learners' autonomy in using it, and most importantly, it results in producing more communicative successful learners.

8. I think that the integration of culture in FLL is very important since as you know, whenever there is language, there is culture, they cannot be separated.

9. Yes, I take into account the main differences, differences are usually taught in terms of comparison and contrast activities in order to make learners aware about them.

10. Well, the main constraint, I guess, is the misunderstanding of native speakers' original intentions since cultures differ.

11. Cultural aspects of any language are the main source of authentic materials, and authentic materials are the best tools that help FL learners develop their autonomy and communicative competence.

12. I agree, because if learners know about the target culture, they will communicate with no fear from being misunderstood, they can be good communicators indeed.

ملخّص

تسعى الدّراسة الحاليّة إلى تقصّي تأثير المحتوى القائم على الثّقافة على الكفاءة التّواصليّة لمتعلميّ الإنجليزيّة كلغة أجنبيّة. يهدف هذا التّحقيق إلى استكشاف تصوّرات ووجهات نظر ومواقف المتعلّمين والمعلّمين إزاء دمج المحتوى القائم على الثّقافة في الفصول الدّراسيّة للإنجليزيّة كلغة أجنبية. وبالتّالي تفترض الدّراسة أنّ التّطبيق الملائم للمحتوى القائم على الثّقافة يؤثّر على الكفاءة التواصليّة للمتعلّمين. لتحقيق الهدف المذكور آنفا، يعتمد البحث الحاليّ على المنهج الوصفي. يتجلّى هذا الأخير بواسطة استبيان ومقابلة يمكن من خلالهما الحصول على بيانات كمّية ونوعيّة. ولهذا الغرض، تمّ اختيار 108 طالب وطالبة سنة ثالثة نظام ل م د و أربعة عشر (14) مدرّسا كعيّنة عشوائيّة للبحث ، بقسم اللّغة الإنجليزيّة، جامعة 8 ماي 1945 ـقالمة. تكشف النّتائج المستخلصة عن وجود علاقة إيجابيّة بين المتغيّرين الرئيسيين. هذه الأخيرة تؤكّد الفرضيّة المحدّدة في بداية البحث. ولذلك، فإنّ إعادة النّظر في وضع الثّقافة في الفصول الدّراسيّة للّغة الإنجليزيّة كلغة أجنبيّة يصبح واحدا من الأهداف الرّئيسيّة الّتي يجب أن يأخذها صنّاع القرار بعين الإعتبار.

الكلمات المفتاحيّة: المحتوى القائم على الثّقافة، الكفاءة التّواصليّة، متعلّميّ اللّغة الإنجليزيّة كلغة أجنبيّة.

Résumé

La présente étude a pour but de démontrer l'impact du contenu culturel sur la compétence communicative des apprenons d'Anglais. Par la même occasion, on tente de dévoiler les attitudes des étudiants ainsi que celles des enseignants vis-à-vis l'intégration d'un contenu culturel dans les classes d'Anglais langue étrangère. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, la présente recherche adopte une méthode descriptive. Cette dernière se manifeste par l'instrumentation d'un questionnaire et d'une interview. Pour cette raison, 108 étudiants de troisième année LMD et quatorze (14) enseignants d'Anglais à l'université du 8 Mai 1945 Guelma sont sélectionnés au hasard comme échantillon. Les résultats obtenus confirment l'hypothèse qui implique qu'une intégration adéquate des contenus culturels pourrait influencer la compétence communicative des étudiants. Par conséquent, la révision du status de la culture dans les classes d'Anglais en Algérie devient l'un des objectifs principaux que les spécialistes devraient prendre en compte.

Mots-clés: Le Contenu Culturel, La Compétence Communicative, Les Apprenons d'Anglais.