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Option: Linguistics

**Investigating EFL Students' and Teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of Culturally-
based Learning in Enhancing Students' Vocabulary Retention**

Case Study: EFL Teachers and First-Year Master Students at the Department of English,
8 Mai 1945 University- Guelma.

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

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Dedication

“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

-Albert Schweitzer-

To my dear parents, you have been a source of muse, support, and guidance to me. You have taught me to be unique, ambitious, to believe in myself, and to persevere at all costs. I am so grateful and privileged to have you.

To my brother **Oussama**, my sisters **Sana** and **Nada**, and my little ball of fluff **Wiwi**, you have been that spark for me when my light blew out.

To all of my friends who helped, encouraged and supported me along this journey.

Thank you so much for everything

INES

Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the most merciful, the most compassionate,

I dedicate this modest work to the memory of my dear « **Chahra** »

To the memory of my grandparents « **Laakri & Med lakhder** »

To my dear father, my everything “**Med Tahar**” and the candle of my life, my adorable mother “**Nora**”, thank you for your prayers, your help and Support.

To my lovely sister « **Youssra** » my brothers « **Ishak Med Amine & Yahia** »

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Abstract

The current study attempts to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes towards the impact of culturally-based learning on EFL students' vocabulary retention. Generally speaking, most students of English face difficulties in learning vocabulary and particularly they are unable to retain unknown words. Accordingly, This investigations aims at answering the research main question to explore students' and teachers' views about the integration of culturally-based learning into EFL classes. Consequently, two questionnaires were addressed to both teachers and students to assess the research' validity, which would allow for the collection of quantitative descriptive data. For this reason, 92 First-Year Master students and thirteen (13) teachers from the Department of English, University of 8 Mai-Guelma, were chosen randomly. The obtained results revealed that both teachers and students strongly agreed on the influence of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention. Hence, teachers could use some practical activities such as recycling of cultural terms to increase EFL students' retention of vocabulary.

Keywords: Culturally-based learning, Vocabulary Retention, Teachers, EFL Students

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CA: Cultural Awareness

CC: Communicative Competence

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

HFV: High Frequency Vocabulary

LFC: Low Frequency Vocabulary

SL: Source Language

FL: Foreign Language

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

L1: First/ Native Language

LL: Language Learning

LLM: Language Learning Motivation

LT: Language Teaching

LTM: Long-Term Memory

NNs: Native Speakers

STS: Short-Term Store

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

TL: Target

Language

TC: Target

Culture

LLs: Language

Learners

S2: Second

Language

VS: Versus

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Arabic Summary: ملخص

French Summary: Résumé

General Introduction

Vocabulary learning is a lifelong process of language and literacy development that begins in childhood and continues through education and beyond. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners are able to acquire and convey meaning through vocabulary as a way of reception and expression. As a result, their ability to retain new and unfamiliar words is crucial to their success. However, retention is the most difficult aspect for gaining a foreign language vocabulary, in view of the fact that it must follow the spelling, pronunciation, meanings, and functions at the same time.

Therefore, when teachers devote a significant amount of time to vocabulary instruction, students' outcomes are still dissatisfying. Since the purpose of language teaching and learning is to enable learners communicate easily in a simple and understandable way, implementing culturally-based learning may be a right solution for improving EFL students vocabulary retention. Hence, neglecting the learners' culture may demotivate them to learn.

Thus, the majority of the data collected revealed that culturally-based learning is related to the teaching and learning of vocabulary. However, no research at our department has tackled the influence of culturally- based learning on vocabulary retention. So, the current research tries to explore the link between the two variables, by investigating EFL students' and teachers attitudes towards the use of culturally-based learning in enhancing students' vocabulary retention. However, vocabulary retention cannot be increased unless the learner is sufficiently knowledgeable about the culture of the target language.

1. Statement of the Problem

Culture and language skills cannot be separated; thus, culture must be taught while teaching vocabulary, particularly, at the Department of English, University of Guelma; many students seem to believe that vocabulary is one of the most essential aspects of learning a foreign language. Learners must be able to understand what they are hearing and reading in order to progress in a foreign language. Therefore, information must be clear to be meaningful and relevant to the students and help them achieve effective retention; but if learners do not comprehend a significant amount of the vocabulary in the language that they are learning, then the vocabulary is not comprehensible and so cannot be useful for learning.

Because the human memory is the most important factor in retaining vocabulary, how well it functions to retain is crucial. Students appear to have preferences in how they learn best, due to the fact that they apply different strategies and techniques to take the information. Additionally, it is essential to be culturally knowledgeable of the primary meaning of words. In written and spoken form, their grammatical function and potential position in a sentence; the collocations that they make or the semantic associations they may establish with other words (i.e. synonyms, antonyms, and hyponyms). However, vocabulary retention cannot be increased unless the learner is sufficiently informed about the target culture.

2. Aims of the Study

Being aware of the cultural differences offers students motivation to study the target language and making it more interesting. Furthermore, culture studies encourage students to overcome difficulties in remembering and retaining vocabulary, inspire them to recognize similarities and differences across different cultural aspects and improve their curiosity in the target countries as

well as relate ambiguous sounds and forms of a language. Therefore, the aims of the study are three-fold:

- a) To investigate both teachers' and students' attitudes towards the role of culturally-based learning in enhancing students' vocabulary retention.
- b) To assess the effects of linking culture into the learning process.
- c) To strengthen teachers' and students' understanding of the value of culture in EFL classrooms in general and in increasing students' ability of retaining vocabulary in particular.

3. Research Questions

To serve the aims of the study, the following questions are raised:

- 1/ Does culturally-based learning help students retain vocabulary effectively?
- 2/ Do teachers use culturally-based learning properly to teach vocabulary?
- 3/ What are both teachers' and students' attitudes towards integrating culture in EFL classrooms?
- 4/ How does culture affect vocabulary retention?

4. Research Methodology and Design

4.1. Research Method

Since the study's aim is to determine the effect of culturally-based learning on enhancing EFL students' vocabulary retention, the quantitative descriptive method is adopted to collect data from the population by administering two questionnaires to both teachers and students. One questionnaire is distributed online to first-year master students at the Department of English,

University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma, while the other is handed to their teachers in order to seek answers to the research questions.

4.2. Population of the Study

The present study is conducted on a randomly selected sample, composed of students and teachers at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. Participants of the sample are first-year Master students and their teachers. The reason for selecting this sample is that they are already familiar with the target culture and have a knowledge of its vocabulary, in addition to their understanding of the significance of the research.

4.3. Data Gathering Tools

The questionnaire as an effective data-gathering tool is used to conduct this research, as well as to verify whether or not its objectives are accomplished. The students' questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaire would provide us with enough information about the role of culturally-based learning in enhancing students' vocabulary retention.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

This research, besides a general introduction and a general conclusion, is divided into three chapters: the first two chapters are concerned with the theoretical background of the topic, and the last chapter is concerned with the practical part of analyzing the students' and teachers' questionnaires.

The first chapter tackles "Culturally-based Learning" in foreign language teaching and learning. This chapter is devoted to culture in general; it includes the contribution and value of culturally-based learning, its relation with language, it also provides some techniques to teach culture in EFL

classrooms. Further to that, this chapter presents some concepts related to culturally-based learning and how it impacts vocabulary.

The second chapter is entitled “Vocabulary Retention”. It explores the different definitions of vocabulary, its relation with the four skills of language, its importance, categories of vocabulary as well as some teaching and learning techniques, in addition to vocabulary retention, its types, factors affecting retention besides some strategies to get rid of those difficulties to enhance retention.

Eventually, the third chapter is entitled “Field Investigation”, it contains a description of both teachers’ and students’ questionnaires, as their aims and administration. Then, it analyses data driven from the questionnaires. Later, it interprets the results in light of the study questions. Finally, in the “General Conclusion” we state some pedagogical implications and recommendations as well as research limitations.

Chapter One

Culturally-based Learning

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Introduction

Culture is a broad set of knowledge, practices, laws, values, norms, and beliefs. It is the all integrated patterns of human behavior of a given society. Therefore, the goal of this chapter is to provide an overview of culture as a concept, its definitions in anthropology and sociology, as well as to highlight the correlation between language and culture. Moreover, it presents some aspects, techniques and claims for teaching culture in EFL classrooms. It reveals the importance of culturally-based learning in foreign language teaching. It also explains how culturally-based learning affects students' vocabulary retention.

1.1. Culture

1.1.1. The Concept of Culture

Culture is an umbrella term that many researchers have reflected different areas and disciplines to define it. According to Hinkel “ we are not exaggerating when we say that there are nearly as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities” (2013, p. 1). In this context, Rosaldo (1984, as cited in Hinkel, 2013, p. 1) points out that culture is far more than a mere catalogue of rituals and beliefs. She contends that cultural models are derived from the world in which people live and the reality they construct. She goes on to say that researchers and anthropologists in particular, cannot provide a full interpretation of it since an individual's sense of self, identity and perceptions of the world and society are entirely reliant on one's involvement within a specific sociocultural environment. Peterson (2004, p. 16) states that culture is so complicated that it cannot be equated only with music, food, clothing, art, or language, but they are components of it. It is a great idea to learn about “surface-level things”

as “Italian paintings” or “Russian music.” However, the most significant aspect of culture is its depth.

Culture, as can be seen, is difficult to define; yet (Goldstein, 1957, p. 1075) emphasizes the fact that “culture” differs from culture. This implies that words in quotation marks are the names of other words, but words that are not in quotation marks are the names of things. Hence, (Robinson, 1950, p. 7) interprets this notion and provides the example of "unicorn" and unicorn to simplify the comprehension of the whole idea. He shows that “unicorn” might be a rule for the proper usage of the given term, while unicorn is a legendary animal with specific features.

Therefore, the concept “culture” in this sense cannot be just like the meaning of culture. Acknowledging the former involves knowing how to use a specific word correctly; knowing the latter entails knowing something else. Admittedly, Guest (2018) says:

Culture is our manual for understanding and interacting with the people and the world around us. It includes shared meanings, belief systems, and cultural knowledge. In other words, shared ways of seeing and understanding the world. It shapes every aspect of our human experience. However, culture is not fixed in stone or accepted by everyone, even those living in a particular place or time. So culture also provides the arena where our ideas about how to behave even what we ought to say and think are debated, challenged, and enforced (p. 32).

Thus, Cutshall (2012, p. 32) mentions that culture is defined in the National Standards as a society's philosophical perspectives, behavioral practices, and products. This "Cultural Framework" is also known as the “3 Ps” and can be represented by a triangle with "Perspectives"

at the top and "Products" and "Practices" at the bottom, demonstrating how products and practices are formed from the perspectives that define a cultural group's world view.

Simply put, since living styles fluctuate from one country to another, so does culture; ergo, its definition surely varies from one culture to another; even anthropologists and sociologists argue on how to define culture.

1.1.2. Culture in Anthropology and Sociology

Anthropologists agree on defining culture as a person's entire way of life. The values and principles that grow within a community, as well as the modes of thinking, feeling, believing, and behaving that are transferred to members of a particular community through social communications and interactions (Hinkel, 2013, p. 3).

The English anthropologist Tylor defines culture in his book *Primitive Cultures* 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). The given definition illustrates what (Guest, 2018) presumes as “Humans do not genetically inherit culture. We learn culture throughout our lives from the people and cultural institutions that surround us” (p. 34). That is, culture is a socially structured behavior, which is learned and adopted by individuals; yet, they are not born with it. The uniqueness of Tylor's definition lingered in anthropology for a long time; it is one of the reasons that political scientists showed interest in cultural issues. In the late 1950s, they were obliged to limit and restrict their relevant cultural realm to “political culture.” Conversely, his most lasting influence was the formulation of the “complex whole.” (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). This point of view on the term culture has been argued for many years to clarify what is meant by “complex whole”. Shaules (2007, p. 26), for instance, says that it refers to “the

shared knowledge, values and physical products of a group of people”. He also notes that culture is not a static object, but something that is modified and re-created in an ongoing process.

Furthermore, Sociologists have emphasized the social dimensions and aspects of culture. They claim that it is the framework for a society's day-to-day way of life, and that it determines the behavior of its members. In addition, it was indicated that culture is “something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next, through human actions, often in the form of face-to-face interaction, and, of course, through linguistic communication” (Duranti, 1997, p. 24). Moreover, Seelye (1997) illustrates that “Culture provides the software of the mind without which most behavior would be random, unpredictable, and meaningless to other people; it tells us how to behave within in our group” (p. 23). He also declares:

Culture is the systemic, rather arbitrar, more or less coherent, group invented, and group shared creed from the past that defines the shape of “reality”; and assigns the sense and worth of things; it is modified by each generation and in response to adaptive pressure; it provides the code that tells people how to behave predictably and acceptably, the cipher that allows them to derive meaning from language and other symbols, the map that supplies the behavioral options for satisfying human need (p. 23).

Seelye, ultimately, asserts that it is more constructive to pick one’s brain about the suitable and effective definition of the term culture in classroom instructions.

1.1.3. Aspects of Culture

The various definitions of culture are related to a shared knowledge between a unique group of individuals and a unit that is made up of several aspects. Cultural beliefs, values, behaviors and

social norms, assumptions, rituals, superstitions, symbols, taboos, stereotypes and prejudices are examples of these aspects.

1.1.3.1. Beliefs

A belief is not a group's social agreement only on the truth of something that a person learned while growing up in a particular culture. They are “facts accepted by all or most members” of a society (The Basic Elements of Culture, n.d.). Beliefs are also, “the tenets or convictions that people hold to be true” (Little et al., 2014). For example, in Algeria, many people believe as a fact that males and elders have a respectable role in their families due to their rigidity and expertise. To be more specific, they feel that authority is often associated with age and gender, specifically, grandparents.

1.1.3.2. Values

Values are the things that individuals of a society consider necessary or valuable in their daily routines. According to (Guest, 2018), values are standards that people use to measure what is important, right, good, and beautiful in their lives and the lives of others. They are not fixed. They can be debated and contested. Also, they may have varying degrees of influence (p. 37). In this vein, Damen (1987) notes that values “are also often the hidden force that sparks reactions and fuels denials” (pp. 191-192). In fact, a deeper understanding of the foregoing values reveals sets of values that tend to complement and support one another, such as “self-discipline” and “education,” or “success” and “happiness”. Other values, directly contradict and conflict with one another, like "competition" and "compassion," or "justice" and "tolerance."

“The Basic Elements of Culture” (n.d.) provides a list to simplify the meaning of values, in which it demonstrates what ordinary Americans value the most:

- Democracy, liberty, freedom, independence, autonomy, and individual rights.
- Capitalism, competition, hard work, self-discipline, and success.
- Wealth, prosperity and materialism.
- Equity, fairness, justice and equality of opportunity.

Eventually, values are more than just clichés about people's thoughts about having a good life. They are effective intercultural tools for explaining cultural goals, and encouraging people to make decisions. Values may be so influential that some individuals will kill or die for them (Guest, 2018, p. 37).

1.1.3.3. Assumptions

An assumption is a belief that has not been proven. In this way, assumptions grow to be taken for granted. In reality, cultural assumptions cover everything that a social unit believes or acts on unconsciously. For instance, if a provided hypothetical solution, backed up by a prediction or even some values, works frequently with success, it is likely to be accepted progressively as a basic assumption, if not as a fact (Schein, 2004, pp. 27–28). In this regard, Hinkel (1999, p. 5) explicitly says:

To members of a particular culture, these assumptions appear self-evident and axiomatic. They are not, however, necessarily shared by members of other cultures whose values are also based on unquestioned and unquestionable fundamental notions and constructs. In this sense, conceptualizations of reality and social frameworks in different cultural communities may occasionally be at odds to varying degrees.

1.1.3.4. Social Norms and Behaviors

Norms are ideas and expectations about how people should behave in specific situations, i.e., they constrain what is considered a normal and appropriate behavior. They are acquired consciously and unconsciously through the process of socialization. People because of belonging to a given culture share Norms. Yet, they may vary within the same community, allowing different norms in community's subgroups that may be determined by gender, age, etc. Norms are instructions that influence our behavior in a certain context. They are prescriptive in the same way that rules and regulations are, but they lack the formal position of rules. These rules, often known as social norms, specify how people should and should not act in particular situations (Mondal, 2014).

Interestingly, behaviors are also, about how people should act and make decisions. Members of a social group exhibit and share behavioral patterns. Laws and social norms that oblige individuals to behave in a specific manner or to refrain from performing certain activities (Burgess, 1999). That is, some norms or guidelines shape the individuals' behavior within a culture. In this context, Mondal (2014) highlights distinct kinds of norms that can be identified, but the most essential distinction is between prescriptive and proscriptive norms. She mentions that a prescriptive norm is positive, constructive and specifies the types of behavior that role-players are expected to exhibit. While a proscriptive norm instructs a role-player to avoid or refrain from engaging in a specific sort of behavior. The latter tend to be stricter in that behavior and seems to be either compliant or deviant, whereas prescriptive norms include behavioral degrees of compliance. Some sociologists classify norms as formal or informal. Formal norms usually have strict guidelines for punishing criminals and violators. Law is an example of a formal norm.

Informal norms are widely accepted but not exactly defined. A notable example of an informal norm is the standard of proper clothes.

Norms are also categorized according to their benefit to society. They are known as mores, folkways, and customs when categorized in this manner. Certain writers have also put Law in the category of norms. The depth of sensations produced and the effects of violating them differentiate this typology (Mondal, 2014).

1.1.3.5. Rituals

A ritual is a fixed set of actions and words, specifically as a part of religious ceremony. As shown in the Collins Cobuild English dictionary (2019), a ritual is “a way of behaving or a series of actions which people regularly carry out in a particular situation, because it is their custom to do so.” It follows from this definition that rituals are habitual actions that are secretive, confidential and personal to individuals who engage in them. They are essential social activities that are carried out in a predetermined fashion. As a result, Bell (1997) admits, “rituals do not only control interpersonal interactions in a society, but also between people and their natural resources” (p. 25). In general, a ritual is a collection of behaviors that are typically regarded to have symbolic meaning and are usually dictated by a religion or cultural traditions.

1.1.3.6. Symbols

Symbols are the essence of culture. A symbol can be an object, word, or action that represents something else; but has no culturally determined tie. Everything a person does in his/her life is based on cultural symbols. When anything depicts abstract ideas or concepts, this is known as symbolism (Symbols and Culture, 2018). In the Hawaiian culture, for example, the performance

of a “Lua” is a symbol of their land and heritage, and it is done through singing and dancing. It might also be face expressions or word interpretations.

1.1.3.7. Taboos

According to The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica (2016), taboo is defined as “the prohibition of an action based on the belief that such behavior is either too sacred and consecrated or too dangerous and accursed for ordinary individuals to undertake”. Taboos may include restrictions on sexual activities like incest and necrophilia. Other taboos relate to dietary restrictions like “Halal” and “kosher” diets for Muslims and Jewish people, eating beef by Hindus, or cannibalism in most societies. Taboos can be repugnant and appalling actions or behavior, which includes the display of some bodily functions. (Fershtman et al., 2011).

1.1.3.8. Stereotypes and Prejudices

A Stereotype is “a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality” (Oxford Advanced American Dictionary, 2021). Stereotypes, by way of explanation, can be both positive and negative, they are a group's members' beliefs and attitudes toward other persons based on a little or no proof.

Moreover, Hall (1997) claims that, stereotyping drives a wedge between normal and deviant, normal and pathological, acceptable and undesirable, what belongs and what does not belong, they and we. Further, by removing anything that does not fit or is different, stereotyping diminishes, naturalizes, and fixes disparities (p. 18).

Prejudices, unlike stereotypes, are generally negative. The Oxford University Press (2022) defines a prejudice as “an unreasonable dislike of or preference for a person, group, custom, etc., especially when it is based on their race, religion, sex, etc.” In this sense, prejudices are negative

emotions and attitudes that a group of people has towards other people or cultures. (Gould, 2021) proclaims that a person might have many preconceived ideas about someone who is Christian, Muslim, or Jewish and will allow those judgements to affect the way they view and treat those people. The same can be true for people who are Dark skinned, White, or Asian. She adds, people who have prejudices towards others, they tend to see everyone who belongs to a specific group as "all the same." They use a wide brush to depict everyone who has certain features or views, failing to see each person as a distinct individual. This really affects how individuals act and interact with persons who are different from them. She mentions, "Those on the receiving end of prejudice are particularly impacted, though. Not only can those presuppositions and biases inflict true hurt, but also it can even affect their ability to get a "fair shot" in this world". As described, it might inhibit a prejudiced person's capacity to learn more about individuals who are different from themselves. Then, they may miss connections or conversations that have the potential to be profoundly gratifying.

1.2. Culture and Language Teaching (LT)

Language and culture are deeply connected. Vocabulary for instance is highly tied to cultural background; our personal language learning experiences underline the reality that simply knowing the language is insufficient for genuinely successful communication. Language, in short, is a component of culture and human behavior. It is apparent that it plays a critical role in forming, developing, and transferring cultures; it serves in the maintenance of the culture and has the potential to affect it to some extent. As illustrated by Kramersch, culture is even taught indirectly in foreign language (FL) classes:

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right

from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them (Kramsch, 1993, p. 1).

The concept of culture is sometimes consigned to the tail end of a language educational program in the field of foreign language teaching (FLT). Many educators and professionals think that, language teaching (LT) without also cultural teaching is impossible. Byram and Risagar (1999) in their book, *Language Teachers, Politics and Cultures* believe that teaching culture as a fifth skill for language learners that enriches students' learning, and the function of culture in LT is even more fundamental, not just as a fifth talent, but as something that is constantly in the background, right from the start. For example, each culture has its own set of standards for formal and informal speech, as well as conversational patterns. In addition to vocabulary knowledge, whomever is learning a FL must understand the socio-cultural conventions that native speakers follow when communicating. As a result, the language's lack of cultural knowledge is problematic. For instance, language learners make mistakes and errors because they literally translate each word or statement. It may be perplexing due to how culturally linked language is. In this perspective, Pulitzer (1959) notes:

As language teachers, we must be interested in the teaching of culture not because we necessarily want to teach the culture of the other country, but because we have to teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning; for what he is warned, unless he receives cultural instruction he will operate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols (p.123).

Language cannot be detached from culture. It is difficult to master a language without first knowing and comprehending its culture. Respectively, culture must be included into the target language (TL). In FLT, the process of teaching a language should also include the process of educating its culture. Language and cultural teaching are interrelated. Henceforth, culture is frequently taught implicitly, as a component of the language patterns that students are acquiring. Teachers can make the cultural aspects represented in language an explicit topic of discussion and bring them up when appropriate to promote awareness of them. It is critical that cultural knowledge be provided in a non-judgmental manner that does not judge the differences between the students' own culture and the TC in the classroom.

1.2.1. Culturally-based Learning

According to the aforementioned definitions of the notion of culture in general, culturally-based learning is taken as the different ways of how cultural knowledge is incorporated in the EFL classes. It is also the basis of teaching and learning the foreign culture's values, norms, beliefs and knowledge. Therefore, in the foreign language teaching, culturally-based learning is related to teaching culture.

1.2.2. Definitions of Culture in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT)

The progress of applied linguistics activity has recently permitted us to understand culture on a more precised level when it comes to foreign language teaching (FLT) and education. Correspondingly, Richards & Schmidt prescribe culture as:

The set of practices codes and values that mark a particular nation or group: The sum of a nation or group's most highly thought of works of literature, art, music, etc. A difference is sometimes made between "High" culture of literature and the arts, and small "c" culture

of attitudes, values, beliefs, and everyday lifestyles. Culture and Language combine to form what is sometimes called “Discourses”, i.e. ways of talking, thinking, and behaving that reflect one’s social identity (2010, p. 151).

Furthermore, Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) propose that there are four dimensions or “senses of culture”: aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic. These features are reflective of culture's many aspects, as well as lending concrete substance to culture's ambiguity (as cited in Rajabi & Ketabi, 2012, p. 709). It is worth mentioning as a framework for aiding non-native learners and facilitating their study about the TC.

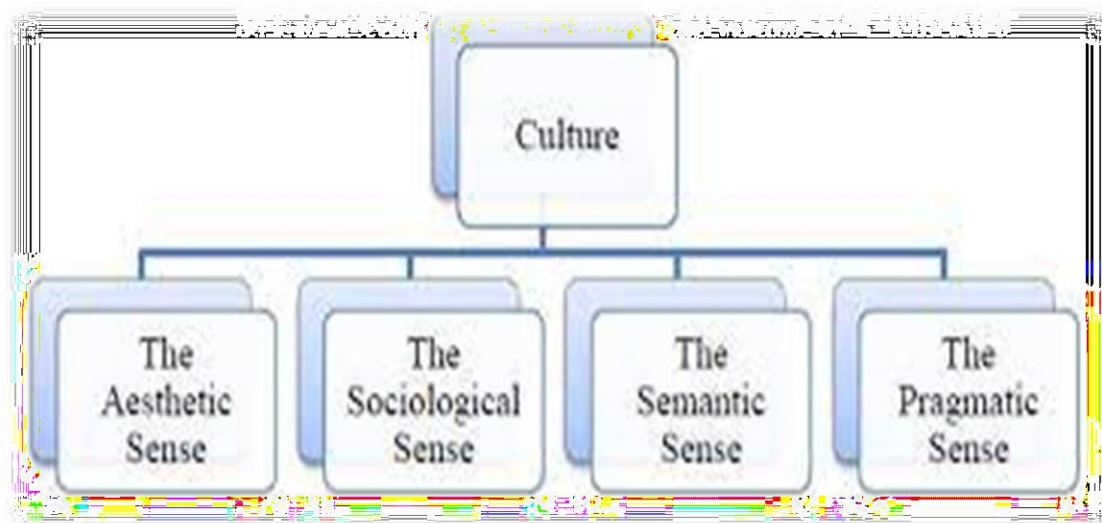


Figure 1.1. Four meanings of culture: Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi (1990, as cited in Rajabi & Ketabi, 2012, p. 709).

1- The Aesthetic Sense: Culture with capital C, refers to media, movies, music (whether serious or popular), literature (the study of which was once one of the primary reasons for language

teaching). Many of these types of culture are also sources of cultural knowledge in the second sense.

2- The Sociological Sense: Culture with a small c: that refers to family organization, living situation, interpersonal relationships, financial conditions, work and leisure, customs and institutions.

3- The Semantic Sense: The conceptual structure represented in language that shapes all of our senses and mental processes, time and spatial relations, emotional experiences, and colors.

4- The Pragmatic Sense: Refers to the prior knowledge, social and paralinguistic skills, and language code that are needed for effective communication such as:

- The ability to apply appropriate exponents of different communicative functions.
- The ability to adapt to politeness rules that differ from the learner's culture, particularly taboo avoidance.
- The Awareness of the rules controlling social relations- issues of status, responsibility, permission, where distinct from the learner's culture.
- The Familiarity with the basic rhetorical patterns in different written genres, e.g., different forms of letters and messages.

These four senses of culture depict its implications and provide the base for culture teaching in FL classrooms (Clouston, 1997, p. 4). Kramsch (1996) typically clarifies that culture has two major definitions, The first one comes from the humanities; it focuses on the way a social group represents itself and others through its material productions, be they works of art, literature, social institutions, or artifacts of everyday life, and the mechanisms for their reproduction and preservation through history. Whereas the second definition comes from the social sciences: it

refers to what educators like Howard Nostrand call the “ground of meaning”, i.e. the attitudes and beliefs, ways of thinking, behaving and remembering shared by members of that community (p. 1). Thereafter, culture is still a matter of debate in FLT around the world, the classroom curriculum, the language teachers, and language learners (LLs) are mentioned as crucial elements for teaching the TC in EFL classes.

The Classroom curriculum frequently separate language classes taught in a foreign language from literature or culture classes taught in a second language (L2) or the students' native language (L1). Similarly, because of the communicative approach encouraged by English as a L2, language teaching that focuses on communicative competence and the learning of conversational skills is sometimes quite different from literature teaching which focuses on the study, interpretation, and translation of works from one language into another. While the first is concerned with the small ‘c’ culture of everyday life, the second is concerned with big ‘C’ Culture of literature and the arts (Kramsch, 2013, p. 58). She adds that language teachers are expected to teach only language; literature professors are expected to teach culture as well. When native speakers of the target language (TL) teach the language, meanwhile, culture becomes a concern.

Many school systems tend to recruit native speakers (NSs) as language teachers because of their real relationship to the TL and culture; yet, NSs may not be familiar with their students' cultural identity and heritage or the intellectual traditions of their school system. NSs represent an appealing exotic other, but they cannot take the role as models for learners who will never become native speakers. Kramsch (2013) also reveals that non-native English teachers have the opportunity to gain knowledge about the language in the same way their learners do, but many of them feel insecure while teaching an everyday culture with which they are unfamiliar. They are cautious of

falling victim to the stereotypes presented by texts and the business hub, so they stick to grammar and vocabulary (p. 59).

Alternatively, FL students have differing perspectives on the cultural component of foreign language classes. Too much focus on culture might make some learners feel intimidated in their L1 identity. Thereby, for FLT in the United States, some students argue that because cultural differences have such a significant impact on how people think and act. Since language is such an integrated aspect of how we formulate our thoughts and understanding of the world; culture cannot be taught in a FL classroom (Chavez, 2002, p. 134). Others claim that while it is possible to teach or learn about a FL culture in a classroom setting, it is not appropriate for a foreign language class. It should be taken as a different class (p. 134). Kramsch (2013), in fact, supposes that these EFL learners would agree that immigrants should learn not just the language but also the culture of their hosting country. Others, from a more middle-class background, are excited to know about foreign cultures but are hesitant to perceive themselves as cultural beings: they view their culture as universal and learn another language and culture simply to appreciate their own (p. 59).

1.2.3. The Correlation between Culture and Language

The relationship between language and culture is so complicated. Both are inextricably linked. This correlation is important in language learning as “the person who learns language without learning culture risks becoming a fluent fool” (Bennett et al., 2003, p. 237). A specific language usually refers to a specific group of people and we cannot understand a culture unless we have direct access to its language. Therefore, culture influences language (The Relationship between Language and Culture Defined, 2018). In this regard, Fishman (2006, p. 35) identifies three links between language and culture and summarizes the relationship between the two entities as follows:

- Language as part of culture.
- Language as an index of culture.
- Language as symbolic of culture.

Moreover, Liddicoat et al. (2003, p. 9) claim that language and culture interact with each other in a way that culture connects to all levels of language use and structures; i.e. there is no level of language that is free of cultural influences. In addition, this unique interaction is best presented in the following Figure:

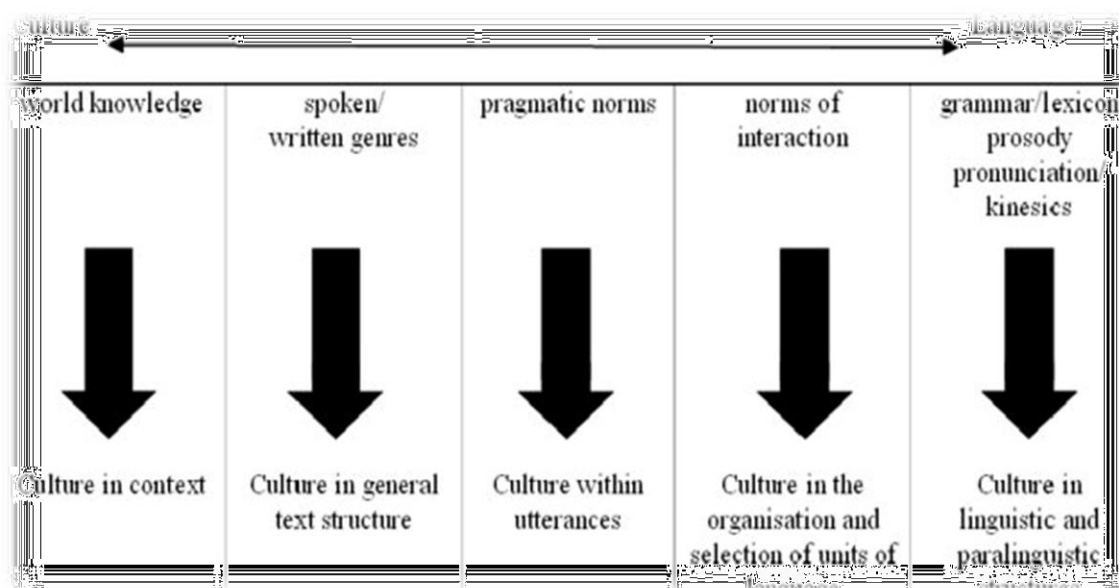


Figure 1.2. Points of articulation between culture and language (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 9)

According to Kramersch (1998), language is the primary means by which we conduct our social lives. When used in communication contexts, it is intertwined with culture in a variety of complex ways. She considers that language is closely linked in three ways: First, “language expresses cultural reality.” In fact, individuals use language to express thoughts, gatherings, beliefs and opinions that is only grasped within a particular cultural setting. Second, because “language embodies cultural reality,” it allows people to use it in a multitude of ways. Language is used in a

variety of contexts, such as greeting people, writing letters and reading books. Besides that, individuals give meaning to their experiences through the medium of communication they choose. For instance, how people use the spoken medium creates meanings that are comprehensible to the speech community. The context in which language is used creates intelligible meanings for the other members of society. Third, "language symbolizes cultural reality" In simple words, since language is a system of signs and symbols that used to represent reality, as well as to symbolize one's identity, speakers of different languages perceive their own language as a symbol of their cultural identity (p. 3).

Corder (1993) asserts, in an attempt to explain the relationships between language, the individual, and culture that, "Psychological and sociological approaches to language converge in the sense that the psychologist is concerned with the relations between the formal system of language (the code) and conceptual system (or cognitive structure) of the individual i.e. language as a symbolic system. The sociolinguist, more interestingly, is, concerned with the relation between linguistic code and the culture of the community" (p. 71). For this reason, Choudhury (2013, p. 21) makes the claim that, when it comes to the realm of teaching and learning, as Gao (2006, p. 58) presents it, the interdependence of language learning and cultural learning is so evident that one can conclude that language learning is culture learning and consequently, language teaching is cultural teaching. Gao further states that foreign language teachers should be aware of the place of cultural studies in foreign language classroom and attempt to enhance students' cultural awareness and improve their communication competence. Wang (2008) likewise, asserts that "foreign language teaching is foreign culture teaching, and foreign language teachers are foreign culture teachers" (p. 49).

So, it is logical to argue that language and culture have a very strong relationship. Culture, in particular, has a direct impact on language. And language is a culturally symbolic representation. For this reason, language is part of culture, and culture is part of language, and the two are so intricately intertwined that they cannot be separated without losing the significance of either language or culture (Brown, 2000, p. 177).

1.2.4. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis/ Linguistic Relativity

Evidently, many anthropological linguists, including Boas, Sapir, and Whorf, were interested in the link between language and culture. They have devoted particular emphasis to the connection that they find between language and culture. Edward Sapir believed that people's perceptions of the world were largely impacted by their language. His viewpoints paved the way for the theory of linguistic relativity as he stated in a paper published in 1929:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection (1929, p. 209, as cited in Swoyer, 2015).

Whorf, Sapir's student, gave a broad view of language in connection to culture, society, and the individual. He contends:

We cut nature up, organise it into concepts, and ascribe significance as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organise it in this way an agreement that holds

throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language

The “Sapir-Whorf hypothesis” refers to Sapir and Whorf’s points of view on the link between language and culture. However, It involves two versions:

The first is "linguistic determinism," which states that language governs how we think. Whereas, the second is known as "linguistic relativism," which asserts that owing to cultural differences, the characteristics embedded in one language are not found in any other language (Messerehi, 2008, p. 18). Consequently, numerous linguists and social scientists have argued over this hypothesis. Yule (1985), for instance, declares that the idea that language determines mind can be partially correct in a very narrow sense. He goes on to mention that “The human manipulates the language, not the other way around ” (p. 198). Moreover, Corder (1993, p. 77) clearly outlines that, “ If languages reflected differences in kind between cultures, that is , encoded radically different ways of seeing the world, then translation between languages would be impossible.”. Nonetheless, the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis/ Linguistic relativity makes an important addition by positing an interconnected link between language and culture. In other words, we might reasonably say that culture and language are linked and cannot be separated.

1.3. Culturally-based Learning Techniques

Culturally-based learning is a pedagogy that uses students’ experiences, customs, rituals of their own culture while developing the target culture competence as useful tools for better classroom instruction.

1.3.1. Culture Capsules

Culture capsules are one of the best-known techniques for teaching culture. They are generally prepared out of class by a student, however presented during class time in 5 or 10 minutes. A Culture capsule consists of a paragraph or so of explanation of one minimal difference between a native custom and a custom in the target culture along with several illustrative photos. A culture capsule is a brief description of some aspects of the target language culture. (e.g., what is customarily eaten for meals and when those meals are eaten). Incorporated with contrasting information from the students' native language culture. The teacher can provide the contrasting information, but it is usually more effective to have the students themselves point out the contrasts (Teaching Culture. Language and Culture, n.d, p. 24).

1.3.2. Culture Clusters

A culture cluster is simply a group of three or more illustrated culture capsules related on topics about the TC plus one 30 minute classroom simulation or performance that integrates the information contained in the capsules (the teacher acts as narrator to guide the students). For example, a student prepares a task and presents it in the class. The task will cover one aspect of the TC (customs, music, monuments, wedding etc). The teacher will provide more information and ask to compare this custom being discussed between the target culture and the native culture. Culture capsules and clusters are good techniques for giving students knowledge and some intellectual knowledge about the cultural aspects being explained (Teaching Culture. Language and Culture, n.d, p. 25).

1.3.3. Culture Assimilators

Culture assimilators consist of short descriptions of an incident or situation where interaction takes place between at least one person from the TC and persons from other cultures (usually the native culture of the students being taught). The description is followed by four possible choices about the meaning of the behavior, action, or words of the participants in the interaction with emphasis on the behavior, actions, or words of the target language of the individual. Students read the description in the assimilator and then choose which of the four options they feel the correct interpretation of the interaction. Once all students have made their individual choices, the teacher leads a discussion about why particular options are correct or incorrect in the interpretation. Written copies of the discussion issues can be handed out to students although they do not have to be. It is imperative that the teacher plan what issues the discussion of each option should cover. Culture assimilators are good techniques of giving students understanding about cultural information and they may even promote emotional empathy or affect if students have strong feelings about one or more of the options (Tanushi, n.d.).

1.3.4. Role-plays

A Role-play is also a useful technique to teach culture. This technique is typically utilized to get students to 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). Learners will be able to boost their self-confidence by employing role-plays, as they will no longer be frightened to perform in front of others, develop their ways of communicating, and learn how to interact with other individuals in different situations. Therefore, through role-plays, students can acquire a strong knowledge of the target culture that 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).

1.3.5. Culture Mini- dramas

Mini dramas are made up of 3 to 5 short scenes that depict misunderstandings and cases of miscommunication. With each scene, more information is revealed, but the actual cause of the misunderstanding is revealed only in the final scene. Following each scene, the teacher leads an open-ended question discussion. However, the scenes are often intended to evoke sympathy for the “wrong” done to a non-native of the culture by a member of the TC. At the end of the mini-drama, a “knowing” character explains what is going on and why the TC member was not doing anything wrong. Scripts for mini-dramas are distributed, and participants are assigned to play the roles. After each act, the teacher invites the students to interpret the characters' actions and words and to state their reasons in making judgements about the characters in the play. After all of the scenarios have been acted out and the “knowing” character has given his/her speech, students are asked to reinterpret what they have seen in light of the information offered by the Knowing figure. When mini-drama is applied in the classroom for the first time, it should elicit a wide range of emotional responses similar to those seen in inter-cultural misunderstandings (Tanushi, n.d.).

1.4. Culturally-based Learning Claims

Culturally-based learning recognizes and integrates both culture and language into the curriculum. By integrating culture and language, students can interconnect both their own culture and the TC. More specifically, cultural practices can also be used as a teaching tool to provide learners with effective competences in order to enhance their English skills and enrich their vocabulary. Moreover, cultural teaching strengthens the learners' intellectual horizons, develops their way of thinking, and maintains their willingness to work hard to become effective FL learners and competent communicators, some arguments will be discussed in the following subsections.

1.4.1. Culture and Language

Byram (1992) stresses that, “to speak a language is to speak a culture, to exchange language which embodies a particular way of thinking and living” (p. 169). He also points out that, “in learning the group’s language, an outsider has also to learn new ways of thinking and living, some of which may contradict those peculiar to his own culture” (p. 170). Which clearly means that in FLT, cultural knowledge and cultural awareness should be equally applied, because other cultures may share native characteristics that can be perceived differently in the TC. Tang (1999) agrees with the notion that, language and culture go together hand in hand. She futilely debates whether to include culture in the classroom or not, she states that:

Questions of this sort and research of this sort appear to me to presuppose (...) that culture is something that needs to be introduced into the language classroom and to the learner, and that learner and teacher have some sort of a choice as to whether ‘cultural integration’ is to be included in the syllabus or not.

In accordance with her, language is not interwoven with culture but “language is culture”. Tang rather proposes going beyond the query of the insertion (or not) of culture in a foreign language curriculum in order to reflect on “deliberate immersion” Vs. “nondeliberate exposure” to culture.

For Valdes (1990), culture is launched together with language from the very beginning of a foreign language class. Valdes declares, “From the first day of the beginning class, culture is at the forefront. Whatever approach, method, or technique is used, greetings are usually first on the agenda” (p. 20). Valdes’ standpoint is almost identical to what is proceeded by Ladu (1974, p. 84), who

affirms that whichever authentic use of a foreign language, any reading of original texts and any listening to native speakers will introduce cultural aspects about the foreign culture. Valdes adds further that if teachers do not make culture instruction explicit in foreign language classes, they will permit misunderstanding to develop in the minds of their learners. From this perspective, Thanasoulas (2001) states that, “foreign language learning is foreign culture learning, and, in one form or another, culture has, even implicitly, been taught in the foreign language classroom for different reasons” (p. 2). This explains that when teachers teach a FL, they are also teaching the culture of the English language.

1.4.2. Culture and Communication

It is an undeniable truth that foreign cultural knowledge influences communication. Because its learners' interactions are immersed in culturally varied contexts, the use of English as an international medium of communication necessarily implies interacting with others (Alptekin, 2002, p. 57). To enable EFL learners to become successful international, or rather intercultural, communicators of English, EFL teaching should not be limited to instructing English phonology, morphology, vocabulary, and syntax, but should also include cultural knowledge and awareness of the target language (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 67). In this context, (Samovar et al., 1981, p. 24) mention:

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted (...) Culture (...) is the foundation of communication.

Accordingly, insufficient cultural knowledge leads to inaccurate language use, lack of comprehension, and ineffective communication not just between EFL learners and English native-speakers, but also amongst EFL learners themselves. This is due to the fact that English is not only taught as a foreign language, but also as an international language. Peck (1984, p. 1) describes this pattern as follows:

A knowledge of the codes of behavior of another people is important if today's foreign language student is to communicate fully in the target language. Without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete. For foreign language students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken. Language learning should be more than the manipulation of syntax and lexicon.

1.4.3. Culture and Language Learning Motivation (LLM)

Learning about other cultures does not only motivates learners to acquire foreign languages; but also improves their results (Bals, 1971, as cited in Kitao, 1991, p. 16). Bals compared a group of American learners of German who used a textbook that focused on the study of the target language to another group of learners who received extra cultural teaching. According to the findings of his study, three students in the first group abandoned studying German, but no one in the second group did. Based on Bals's research, we can conclude that foreign culture classes may also be used to motivate students to learn a foreign language. In addition, Kitao (1991) explains that, in the FL classroom, culture-based activities like singing, dancing, role playing, skits, doing research on countries and people, are not only good at motivating students in their FL learning but also at developing a positive attitude towards people of the foreign culture and countries (p. 17). He, also, says "The study of culture increases students' curiosity about and interest in the target

countries, their people, and their culture.” (p. 17). As a result, teaching culture that involves both language learning and language use, shows integrity to the language classroom and reduces its artificiality. In the same vein, Kitao (1991) claims:

Studying culture makes studying foreign languages real. Students have difficulty relating to the people of another culture without knowing anything about them. [...] explaining cultural aspects of language would help students relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places (p. 17).

Accordingly, cultural teaching increases the language learning and makes it more adequate for students. It facilitates understanding and reinforces the FL sessions as well.

1.5. Concepts Related to Culturally-based Learning

Culturally-based learning ought to be deeply embedded in any teaching practice. Yet, it is obvious that there is some confusion in the usage of concepts such as cultural awareness, knowledge, and competence during the process of teaching the TC. Therefore, it is critical to distinguish between these three concepts since they are connected with the process of cultural teaching and EFL learners.

1.5.1. Cultural Awareness (CA)

Cultural awareness is the development of an understanding of one's own and other cultures. It means being aware of human behaviors, beliefs, values, attitudes, ways of thinking, and distinctions in social norms so that when students participate in cultural learning, they will instinctively compare those foreign cultural patterns. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993, p. 5) define cultural awareness as “sensitivity to the impact of culturally behavior on language use and communication”.

Byram (1997, p. 60) thoroughly discusses the skills that are required in cultural awareness. He mentions that, it is the ability to reflect on one's own cultural identity taking into consideration the comparison of values and beliefs of our own culture and the other one with the intention to help learners cope with such differences. Intercultural communicative awareness means the ability to identify cultural diversity and develop empathy. To put it another way, seeing things from the other person's point of view entails becoming aware of cultural differences. In addition, allowing EFL learners to engage in comparative thinking, or developing a process of comparison from two different perspectives, could be the first step in teaching cultural awareness.

1.5.2. Cultural Knowledge

The cultural knowledge includes two parts: “the conceptual knowledge” and “the cultural competence” about the target culture. The former, belongs to the category of proficiency objectives and the latter that belongs to the category of cognitive objectives. The conceptual knowledge about the target culture refers to the systematic conceptual knowledge about the target culture and society, it includes the target society's geography, institutions, history, religions, economy, education and art, etc., and it may be referred to as general knowledge about the TC. (Keltoum, 2014, p. 17).

1.5.3. Cultural and Intercultural Competence

In order to become a proficient learner in a FL, learners need to certainly develop some competences in the TC. In the past few decades, there was a shift in the acquisition of language competences from a communicative competence (CC) to intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

Furthermore, the ICC takes into consideration the notion of social identities as unavoidable part in the human interaction. That means, when students interact with one another, the aim is not only

to convey information, but to recognize each other's social identity as well. So, Hedge (2002, p. 34) refers to CC as the acquisition of the grammatical knowledge and the social knowledge. This exemplifies how and where the utterances are presented. Similarly, CC is the result of acquiring a good understanding of the cultural aspects.

In addition to that, the intercultural communicative competence ICC refers to the implicit mastery of the norms, values and orientation of a society that make up the cultural factor. It is related to the knowledge of what is “appropriate” in language i.e. “the ability of a person to behave adequately in flexible manner when confronted with attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures” (Meyer 1991, p. 137). The central objective of the intercultural aspect in LT is to prepare EFL students to be intercultural speakers who can deal with different identities. Thus, in order to achieve strong ICC, EFL learners need to include the cultural background knowledge in their language learning LL process. They can learn about the TC's daily life and compare them to those of their own culture, to discover parallels and contrasts that will help them enhance their communication abilities.

1.6. The Importance of Culturally-based Learning in FLT

EFL language teachers in more traditional classrooms are often unaware of the significance of cultural orientation. They see communication as nothing more than the application of grammatical rules in oral and written communication. Learning about the target culture is sometimes perceived as a threat to native values, and the usefulness of linguistically appropriate knowledge is neglected. Since having a close contact with the target culture and its speakers is a rare opportunity for all language learners in countries from outer circles (Kachru, 1992, p. 76), learners cannot appreciate the importance of learning the aspects of culture unless they visit a foreign country and experience the desperate straits. Moreover, nonverbal aspects of the TC are

sometimes acquired from movies and TV serials, which are far from being helpful for communicative purposes or may sometimes develop misconceptions or stereotypes.

Admittedly, McKay (2003) claims that, culture influences LT in two important ways: linguistically and pedagogically. He says that, culture plays an important role in the linguistic dimension of the language, influencing the semantic, pragmatic, and discourse levels of the language. It effects the choice of language materials from a pedagogical standpoint since the cultural content of the language materials and the cultural base of the teaching approach must be considered when selecting language resources. He firmly believes that, in order to master a language, learners must first understand its linguistic and cultural norms (p. 41).

Kitao (1991), also, considers international understanding a benefit of culture learning and gives some other reasons why is it important to include culture in FL curriculum. Kitao claims that, studying culture gives students a reason to study the target language because understanding culture makes studying foreign language and literature more meaningful (p. 16).

Culture studies are very beneficial in teaching EFL learners about their own culture. The values of a student's culture shape his/her broad perspectives. When he/she meets people from other cultures, this might cause difficulties. He also claims that, studying culture “gives students liking for the people of that culture” and “helps to avoid the stereotypes”.

Tomalin (2008) is with the opinion that the international role of the English language and globalization are the two main reasons to teach culture as a “fifth language skill”, in addition to listening, speaking, reading and writing. What the fifth language skill teaches you is the mindset and technique to adapt your use of English to learn about, understand and appreciate the values, ways of doing things and unique qualities of other cultures. It involves understanding how to use

language to accept differences, to be flexible and tolerant of ways of doing things, which might be different to yours. It is an attitudinal change that is expressed using language (p. 150).

One of the issues that arises because of the usage of the TC in EFL classes is the fear that students would be affected by the TC and lose their own identity, which may be classified as a linguistic imperialism. Some scholars have proposed using both the L1 and the target language culture to overcome the constraints of only employing one of the cultures.

According to Ariffin (2009, p. 75), this idea is great and beneficial since it encourages students to explore similarities between their culture and the target language culture, which may lead to mutual understanding and tolerance. Choudhury (2013) further says that, the necessity of incorporating culture in LT has been addressed by worldwide and national foreign language associations, such as Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), which has specified the third purpose in English as a second language (ESL) standards as “to use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways.” (p. 22).

1.7. The Influence of Culturally-based Learning on Vocabulary

Language is the carrier of culture and vocabulary is the basic ingredient of language. The cultural difference will be inevitably exhibited on vocabulary, and the explanation of vocabulary will reflect the national or cultural difference. For instance, illustrating color meaning in the Chinese language, white, denoting a color, often associates with “pure, noble and moral goodness”, and the bride is dressed in white during the wedding in most western countries. However, in China, the bride must wear red in the traditional wedding, definitely not white. Because Red means “happiness, good luck, flourishing and prosperous” in the future and people only wear white in

funerals when one's family member is dead. White in China, is associated with "pale, weak and without vitality" (Choudhury, 2014, p. 4). In this context, mastering a language does not involve only knowledge of its grammatical rules and meanings of words, but also the cultural daily life, habits and customs, history and everything related to culture. Simply put, culture is a vast mixture with many implications, and each component of it may be expressed through words. It is critical to learn vocabulary while also taking into account the cultural aspects.

According to Lewis (1993), the lexical approach, in which vocabulary is regarded highly important in communication, learners cannot communicate effectively if they do not comprehend the meaning of words. He recommends using words in chunks (collocation), however for better learning, students are exposed to culture-based resources that will teach them where to utilize words collocation in the suitable context. As a result, the cultural components will help them by increasing their motivation and teaching them how to use words properly (p. 30). Furthermore, learning vocabulary is a difficult task; and it takes effort to comprehend, retain, and know how to use the target words in general, in addition to the target culture in particular.

Correspondingly, culturally-based learning provides a relevant context for retaining the target language vocabulary. Students get the opportunity to use language in its cultural context and this in turn helps them to reconsider that what is familiar in a culture is unfamiliar in another. More interestingly, students need to know more than just the words' meaning in order to retain them appropriately.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the notion of culture and its integration in LT has long been a source of discussion among scholars, particularly when it comes to FLT and learning, despite the undeniable correlation between language and culture. It is important to note that whether or not to include culturally-based learning in LT does not imply that language and culture do not go together. In fact, they have always been tied. Thus, learning the English vocabulary is strongly linked to knowing its culture.

Chapter Two

Vocabulary Retention

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Introduction

Vocabulary is the building block of any language, without it learners are unable to communicate. It is also essential to convey their thoughts and feelings. However, the challenge is not just in FL vocabulary, rather in remembering and retaining it. Therefore, this chapter defines vocabulary. It sheds light on vocabulary retention, definitions, and its relation with the four language skills. It also includes vocabulary categories, aspects, and its importance in EFL classes. Besides that, it covers some learning and teaching techniques and how they may be used to help students retain easily and effectively the target language's vocabulary. Moreover, the chapter investigates the factors that affect vocabulary retention as well as some strategies to enhance the ability of retaining vocabulary.

2.1. The Concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is of a paramount importance to FL learners in in order to understand and use language in an engaging way. When learning a FL, students must be knowledgeable about its vocabulary. Due to the fact that nothing can be learned or understood if there is no vocabulary knowledge. It allows students to express themselves and grasp what they are learning. In this context, scholars like Todd (1987) argues that no definition of vocabulary can be satisfactory since the definition of vocabulary differs from one researcher to another as well as from one dictionary to another (p. 38).

Richards and Renandya (2002a) refer to vocabulary as a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write. They claim that without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning

opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to the native speaker, using language in a different context, reading or watching television (p. 255). Ultimately, vocabulary connects the four skills of learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning these skills is equivalent to learning vocabulary. Simultaneously, Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 1) consider vocabulary as “a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speakers of language might use”. They also mention, “Vocabulary is the only system involved of alphabetical order”. This indicates that vocabulary should be used in order to initiate or facilitate a conversation.

Nashi and Jenabzadeh (2016) have provided another definition arguing that, “vocabulary involves not only single words but also multiword phrases, idioms, and even sentences” (p. 52). In this vein, Diamond and Guthlon (2013) state that vocabulary is the knowledge of a word that implies both a definition and how those words fit into the world. They add that it is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. To put it another way, vocabulary is the knowledge that must be understood contextually.

In addition, Min and Hsu (n.d.) claim that vocabulary learning is closely related to foreign language (p. 84). This makes sense that vocabulary and learning EFL are closely linked. Similar to Mehrpour (2008), who makes it very clear that, learning a second or foreign language mainly means learning the sound system, grammar and vocabulary of that language. He goes on to say that, second or foreign language learners who possess good word power or knowledge of vocabulary are usually more successful language learners (p. 85).

Based on such definitions, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a collection of words as a fundamental component of language proficiency that has a form or expression, and comprise features such as meaning and word use.

2.2. Vocabulary and the Four Skills

Vocabulary represents one of the most important skills for teaching and learning a FL, it is the basis for the development of all language skills such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking and writing. According to Montgomery (2007, as cited in Bordieanu, 2022, p. 1), there are four types of vocabulary, which are Listening, speaking, reading and writing.

2.2.1. Listening

Listening reflects the words we hear and comprehend. Humans began to listen as newborns, listening to others around them during their waking moments. When they reach maturity, they can understand around 50000 words. Yet, deaf children, on the other hand, are introduced to a visual listening vocabulary rather than a listening vocabulary if they have signing models at home or school.

2.2.2. Speaking

This refers to the words we use to communicate. Most individuals utilize 5,000 to 10,000 words for all interactions and instructions. This quantity is significantly lower than our listening vocabulary, most likely due to its simplicity of use.

2.2.3. Reading

Reading covers all the words that we comprehend while reading. Many words that we do not use in our spoken language may be read and understood. However, if you are not a reader, you will be unable to expand your vocabulary.

2.2.4. Writing

Writing refers to the words that we retain when we write to express ourselves. In general, it is simpler to convey oneself orally by utilizing facial expressions, body movements, and intonation to help get our ideas through rather than simply using the perfect words to explain the same thoughts in writing. Thus, our ability to spell words influences our writing vocabulary.

2.3. Groups of Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a significant role in the FL learning, it helps students to communicate effectively in the target language. Hence, it is classified into two main groups depending on frequency:

2.3.1. High Frequency Vocabulary (HFV)

According to Kartikasari (2015, p. 67), high frequency vocabulary refers to words that are utilized in all the four skills and across the full range of situation of use and words that are used very often in normal language. This type of vocabulary contains 2000 words, which are around 87% of the running words in formal written text and more than 95% of the words in informal spoken texts.

2.3.2. Low Frequency Vocabulary (LFV)

This vocabulary includes only a small percentage of the running words in a continuous text. This implies that low frequency vocabulary, which includes over 100 000-word families, is rarely utilized in regular English activities.

Moreover, Kartikasari (2015) mentions that EFL learners would need about eighteen years of studying to be able to receive the same amount of vocabulary that native speakers absorb in one

year. He add that a native speaker has a vocabulary of around 20 000 words, while a good learner who has studied English for many years absorbs only about 5000 words.

2.4. Categories of Vocabulary

Researchers have categorized vocabulary into many categories depending on a variety of factors. Heibert (2019), for example, classified vocabulary knowledge into receptive and productive vocabulary.

Receptive vocabulary involves words for which an individual can assign meanings when listening or reading. These are words that are often less well known to students and less frequent in use. Individuals may be able to assign some sort of meaning to them, even though they may not know the full subtleties of the distinction. Typically, some words that individuals do not use spontaneously. However, when they encounter these words, they recognize them, even if imperfectly. Conversely, Productive vocabulary is the set of words that an individual can use when writing or speaking. They are words that are well known, familiar, and used frequently (p. 4). In this sense, Nation (2000) says:

receptive vocabulary use involves perceiving the form of a word while listening or reading and retrieving its meaning and productive vocabulary use involves wanting to express a meaning through speaking or writing and retrieving and producing the appropriate spoken or written word form (p. 38).

Accordingly, we may deduce that productive vocabulary, on the one hand, is all the words that a person employs in speech and writing to communicate his thoughts or meanings, taking into account the proper spoken or written word form. Receptive vocabulary, on the other hand, refers

to all the words that one grasps when reading a book or hearing someone else speaks and remembers the meaning.

Besides that, vocabulary is divided by Aeberslod and Field (1997, p. 139) into active and passive. Active vocabulary is words that students understand, can pronounce correctly, and use it constructively in speaking and writing. It refers to items that a learner can use appropriately in speaking or writing, and it is known as productive vocabulary, although it is more difficult to put into practice. Whereas, passive vocabulary refers to language items that can be recognized and understood in the context of reading and listening and it is known as receptive vocabulary (as cited in Pinang et al., 2011, p. 9). Moreover, Fries (1985, p. 34) argues that vocabulary is divided into function words and content words.

- **Function words**

They are words that connect sentences. Function words are more closely related to grammar than to vocabulary, they can be prepositions, pronouns, models, auxiliaries...etc.

- **Content words**

Content words include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Their meaning is complete even if they are used alone. Content words are also classified into: word for action, like speak, draw, walk,..., word for things, such as desk, table, pen,..., and word of qualities, for instance cold, true, false.

Moreover, Burton & Humphries (1992, p. 100) distinguish two other categories of vocabulary that people use for communication, which are general vocabulary and special vocabulary. The general vocabulary is the words used in general; there is no limit of fields of users, general in meaning and use. While the special vocabulary is used in a particular field or job, like politicians,

journalists and lawyers. All these have specific vocabulary arising from particular circumstances of their lives and work. Correspondingly, another significant distinction made by Nation (1990) is between increasing vocabulary and establishing vocabulary. He explains that increasing vocabulary means introducing learners to new words and thus starting their learning whereas establishing vocabulary means building on strengthening the initial knowledge (as cited in Pinang et al., 2020, pp. 10-11). This entails boosting the development and expansion of specific word knowledge.

On the grounds of these explanations, we acknowledge that each researcher has a distinct view on identifying the type of vocabulary because each individual has a different perspective on expressing and conveying their thoughts and ideas. Some of them emphasize vocabulary to the items that EFL learners may use correctly in speaking or writing and to the language items that can be comprehended in the context of reading and listening, while others have classified vocabulary according to the field of usage.

2.5. Aspects of Vocabulary

EFL students should have a large vocabulary concerning the TC that they chose to study for better understanding. According to Harmer (2007), the following aspects of vocabulary have to be covered: word meaning (synonym, antonym, connotation, and denotation), extending word use such as idioms, word combination or collocation, and the grammar of words which comprises noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

2.5.1. Meaning

Meaning is categorized depending on the form to which it is attached: lexical meaning, morphological meaning, and syntactic meaning. The lexical meaning of a word is determined by

the non-linguistic notion it is used to communicate. Morphological meaning is the meaning linked to morphemes, which are the smallest meaningful unit in a language. The meaning that links the word order is referred to as syntactic meaning. Similarly, Lado (1964) asserts that “a word meaning can also be defined by its relationship to other words. One should also know the denotation and connotation of a word in order to know the negative or positive meanings that occur in the word” (pp. 209-212).

2.5.1.1. Synonym

It is derived from the Greek word *syn* + *nymy*, which means "same and name." The same thing is meant by a synonym. This means that we can find many words with the same meaning (Musfina, 2016, p. 12).

2.5.1.2. Antonym

Antonyms are words with opposite meaning. They enable us to express briefly the opposite of a particular thought, often for the sake of contrast (Gao & Zheng, 2014, p. 237).

2.5.1.3. Denotation

According to Keraf (1984), denotative meaning is the literal definition of a word or the dictionary definition. It is also known as cognitive meaning, conceptual meaning, ideational meaning, referential meaning, or proportional meaning. Because the meaning refers to a specific referent, concept, or idea via reference, this is referred to be denotational, referential, conceptual, or ideational. He goes on to say that denotative meaning is also known as cognitive meaning since it is concerned with awareness or knowing (p. 28).

2.5.1.4. Connotation

Tarigan (1982) claims that connotation “is feeling and emotion that occurs within a word. Thus, it can be said that connotation is denotative meaning which is stretched” (p. 23). Connotation, by way of explanation, refers to the emotional associations of a word.

2.5.2. Use

Nation (2001) affirms that there are some ways to draw attention to the use of words by quickly showing the grammatical pattern the word fits into (countable/uncountable, transitive/intransitive, etc.). Giving a few similar collocates, mentioning any restrictions on the use of the word (formal, informal, impolite, only used with children, etc.), and giving a well-known opposite or a well-known word describing the group or lexical set it fits into (p. 1).

2.5.3. Spelling and pronunciation

Spelling is about how written words are spoken, where each word is a mixture of organized and ordered letters. When teaching vocabulary, learners should consider both the spelling and pronunciation of each word (Ur, 1996, p. 60).

Pronunciation is the main components of speech that are combined together. These components range from the individual sounds that make up speech, to the way in pitch. Pronunciation is also related to phonetic transcription. Since the phonetic transcription represents speech sound consistently, it can be used as a reliable guide to have a control of the spoken language. The main components of pronunciation are sounds, syllables, and words (Hewings, 2004, p. 3).

2.5.3.1. Sounds

Individual sounds serve as the foundation for pronunciation. When vowels and consonants are combined, they form words. Consonants such as /b/ and /p/ are separated in English because combining them creates new words, as in bit and pit. Therefore, It is crucial to know the distinction between vowel and consonant letters and vowel and consonant sounds (Musfina, 2016, p. 14).

2.5.3.2. Syllables

Syllables are formed when vowel and consonant sounds join. The structure of English syllables may be thought of as: [Consonant (s)] + Vowel + [Consonant (s)]. So, this means that other vowel-consonant pairings are possible (Musfina, 2016, p. 15).

- a) Only a vowel (like in a)
- b) Consonant + vowel (e.g. in me)
- c) Vowel + consonant (e.g. in eat)
- d) Consonant + vowel + consonant (e.g. in bag)

2.5.3.3. Words

A word can be a single syllable (for example, cat, own) or a series of two or more syllables (for example, window, about [two syllables]; lemonade [three syllables]; or electricity [five syllables]). When a word has more than one syllable, one of these syllables is stressed in relation to other syllables in the word, while other syllables are said to be unstressed. For example, in “window” the first syllable is stressed and the second is unstressed, while in “about” the first syllable is unstressed and the second is stressed (Musfina, 2016, p. 15).

Henceforth, Kartikasari (2015, p. 78) presented the separate aspects of form, grammar, meaning, and word formation. Starting with the form. Knowing a word's form entails knowing its pronunciation and spelling. When teaching irregular verbs, for example, a teacher should also provide the other two forms (i.e., pronunciation and spelling). Thus, when teaching a noun with an irregular plural form, such as man, the teacher should immediately teach the plural form.

Likewise, meaning may be divided into several categories; the most common ones are synonyms, antonyms, and hyponyms. More advanced students will most likely engage with word formation, which is the process of creating new words by modifying the existing ones. Compounding (basketball), adding a prefix (il/legal), or a suffix (understand/able) are all methods to create a new word. Eventually, he , also, specifies eight word classes, which are nouns (Mark, London), adjectives (beautiful, cheerful), pronouns (she, they), numbers (second, five), adverbs (often, always), verbs (write, drink), prepositions (to, on), and conjunctions (and, or).

2.6. The Importance of vocabulary

Learning vocabulary of the target language TL is essential in the teaching and learning of any FL. Vocabulary knowledge helps EFL learners to develop and maintain successful communication, which is the main objective of any FLT and learning. Besides this, it allows them to discover the beauty of the language through a wide range of new words. Vocabulary knowledge also helps students in comparing and contrasting the FL and the native language. Thus, learning vocabulary aids in comprehending the similarities as well as the differences between the two languages and improves the acquisition of the TL by knowing the linguistic systems of both languages.

Words are the building blocks of language, they enable FL students to communicate and express themselves effectively. A student who masters vocabulary becomes an excellent speaker, whereas a learner who lacks vocabulary fails to achieve successful communication. Moreover, EFL learners who are unable to read more difficult and complicated texts miss out opportunities to enhance their vocabulary and are less successful in using vocabulary-learning strategies (Malapong, 2013, p. 74). In addition, strengthening students' vocabulary is especially crucial since a deficiency of vocabulary affects all other language skills. A lack of vocabulary is also seen as one of the primary causes of EFL learners' failure to create successful communication, whether written or oral. It is common for learners with reading difficulties to have limited vocabulary. A good mastery of vocabulary aids in speaking and writing, but a lack of vocabulary frequently leads to a lack of meaningful communication (p. 75).

Many scholars, like Wilkins (1972) have presented different perspectives on vocabulary and its importance in learning the TC's language. He clearly conveys that "(...) while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111). In simple words, vocabulary learning is just as important as grammar learning. In this context, Cluston (1996, p. 27) declares that "vocabulary words, phrases, idioms, etc., are the heart of all language usage in the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, as well as culture".

Accordingly, Hu and Nation (2000) say that learners must know around 98% or more of the words in the text in order to guess unfamiliar words from context (p. 21). In other words, learners' knowledge and skills in multiple aspects of language and its culture. This includes enlarging vocabulary reservoir, improving comprehension, expressing their own ideas, and boosting their power of persuasion and communication.

These points of view are sufficient to agree that vocabulary teaching, development, and learning should be the primary focus in an EFL classroom. As a result, conscious or unconscious learning of new words provides a fundamental basis for learners' language level improvement, which is why EFL teachers should make an effort to expand their students' vocabulary of the TC.

2.7. Teaching and learning vocabulary

The main unit of language form is regarded to be vocabulary. Vocabulary teaching and learning, according to O'rurke (1974, p. 6), helps students to understand what they hear and read in classrooms. In addition, learning a language necessitates great vocabulary, but if a learner has a restricted vocabulary, he/ she may be unable to learn it. Harmer (1991) asserts that while language structure is thought to be the skeleton of language, vocabulary gives the vital organs and flesh to language (p. 76). This clearly shows that without vocabulary, no one can communicate with others because they do not know how to express themselves. However, Beskri (2012) claims that:

It is not possible for an English language teacher to teach a large stock of vocabulary of English to the learners within a specific period of time. But, students can be taught some lexical collocations in such a time” (p. 40).

She goes on to say that:

When learners develop the ability to use vocabulary making proper use of its collocations, then we can say that they have developed the sense which the native speakers possess and which helps them in collocating different vocabulary items accurately (p. 41).

From this perspective, we get to know how important is the teaching and learning of vocabulary.

In addition to vocabulary teaching, Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 383) present the following five steps for learning vocabulary:

- Having sources for encountering new words; with sources of new words being regarding, watching TV, listening to radio, conversations with native speakers...
- Getting a clear image, whether visual or auditory or both, for the forms of the new words; creating a mental picture of word form, relating a new word with the first language words or other foreign language with similar sounds, using phonetic script, relating to already acquired English words that sound similarly.
- Learning the meaning of words; asking the native speaker for the meaning. Guessing from context and creating a mental image of meaning.
- Making a strong memory connection between the forms and meaning of the words. Creating a strong linkage between word form and meaning in the memory, regardless the memory strategy usage as long as it is used.
- Using the words in example sentences, collocations, various contexts, conversation...

2.7.1. Techniques of teaching and learning vocabulary

Students learn vocabulary in a variety of ways, and as the necessity of teaching vocabulary has become more apparent, several techniques for teaching and learning vocabulary have arisen. In the same vein, Gairns and Redman (1986, p.73) mentions three techniques for teaching and learning vocabulary, which are visual techniques, verbal techniques, and translation.

Visual techniques are provided to EFL students in a visible format. They take the form of activities, diagrams, or drawings. However, by using such techniques Nation (2001, p. 5) additively highlights the impact of presenting vocabulary on the learners' memory where he notes that "an advantage of using actions, objects, pictures or diagrams is that learners see an instance of the meaning and this is likely to be remembered". On this account, teachers and students can use visuals, explanations, examples, synonyms, contrasts and opposites, as well as other verbal techniques to explain words. Therefore, Gains and Redman (1986) stress that giving learners visual information followed by a verbal explanation helps them to retain the meaning both verbally and visually. So, words displayed visually with verbal explanation may be learned and retained more effectively. Teachers might also use another technique, which is translation. However, as it is a double-edged sword technique, it should be applied with caution while learning and teaching vocabulary (p.15).

Translation, according to Nation (2001), is a quick, simple, and easy technique to utilize, but it may encourage learners to depend more on their mother tongue and disregard the value of mastering the FL. As a result, translation from the TL to the source language (SL) should be maintained under the teacher's guidance (p. 7).

2.8. Vocabulary and memory retention

According to Thornbury (2002), students must not only learn a large number of words, but also retain them. In other words, learning is simply remembering. Unlike grammar, which is primarily a rule-based system, acquiring vocabulary is mostly a matter of gathering individual items. It is mostly a memory issue.

2.8.1. Memory definitions

Memory is thought to be a complicated brain function. Cherry (2022) claims that the psychological processes of obtaining, storing, maintaining, and retrieving information are referred to as memory. She adds that memory involves three fundamental processes: encoding, storage, and retrieval. It entails the capacity to both save and retrieve data. However, this is not a perfect procedure. People occasionally forget or misremember things. Sometimes information is not correctly encoded in memory. In addition, Preston (2007) says that memory is “the mental capacity or brain's ability to recover, retrieve, and remember previous events, impressions and facts”.

2.8.2. Memory types

Memory can be divided into three main categories as mentioned by many scholars. Thornbury (2002) in his book *How to teach vocabulary* distinguishes between the three following types: short-term store, working memory, and long-term memory.

According to Thornbury (2002), the short-term store (STS) is “the brain’s capacity to hold a limited number of items of information for periods of times up to few seconds” (p. 23). He emphasizes that, in order to successfully learn vocabulary, it entails more than just keeping words in the human’s head for few seconds. They have, nevertheless, to be exposed to a variety of procedures. Moreover, he mentions that the working memory's role is to concentrate on words long enough to conduct operations on them. Working memory is required for various cognitive functions such as thinking, learning, and understanding. It may be thought of as where information is initially put, reviewed, and moved around before being filed away for later retrieval (p. 23).

Eventually, Long-term memory (LTM) has a huge capacity and its contents are durable over time, in contrast to working memory, which has a limited capacity and no permanent information. However, Thornbury (2002) explains:

the fact that learners can retain new vocabulary items for the duration of a lesson (i.e. beyond the few seconds' duration of short-term store) but have forgotten them by the next lesson suggests that long-term memory is not always as long-term as we would wish. Rather, it occupies a continuum from 'the quickly forgotten' to 'the never forgotten' (p. 24).

2.8.3. Vocabulary retention

The knowledge of words meaning and the ability to access that knowledge efficiently are recognized as important factors in language comprehension. It is commonly known that as long as the acquired information is kept in the memory, learners can profit from it when it comes to retrieve it. This is known as retention and retrieval. According to Souleyman (2009), retention is a memory function that includes more functions like memorizing, retention, recall, and recognition. He also mentions some processes that come before retention like noticing, intake, and storage in short-term memory, followed by storage in long-term memory (p. 56).

Further, vocabulary retention is important in learning the English language in which Mohammed (2009, p. 16) defines it as “the ability to keep the acquired vocabulary and retain it after a period of time to use it in different language contexts” (p. 34). Also, Zhang (2002) affirms that one of the most difficult problems for EFL learners is how to remember, retain, and retrieve the new learned English vocabulary efficiently.

2.8.4. Vocabulary Retention Types

Learners use vocabulary as useful mean of reception and expression to acquire and convey meaning. Thus, having the capacity to remember new and unfamiliar words is very important for their success. Nevertheless, Souleyman (2009) presents two types of vocabulary retention, which are immediate retention and delayed retention. He gives the meaning of immediate retention as “the level of retention of the newly comprehended piece of information as measured by a test after the experimental treatment immediately, It can also be referred to as medium-term retention”. At the same time, he identifies delayed retention as “the level of retention of the target piece of information newly acquired through the experimental treatment, as measured by a test on that new information” (p. 56).

Moreover, Eyraud et al. (2000) claim that teachers can boost learners' vocabulary learning and retention by reframing instructional priorities and implementing the following steps:

First, teachers should immerse their students in a word-rich environment to encourage incidental vocabulary learning. Second, they should assign more reading. Third, they should schedule time for explicit/direct vocabulary teaching in which teachers not only teach word meanings but also give chances for:

- a. Vocabulary reusing in different meaningful contexts.
- b. Connections between new and known vocabulary.
- c. Active student involvement.

2.8.5. Factors affecting vocabulary retention

Sometimes students can retain some words better than others. And this could be for different reasons like the nature of the words themselves, the context in which the words are acquired, how

the words are taught to students, and so on. Gairns and Redman (1986, p. 19) in this regard, demonstrate that learning new items entails storing them first in the short term memory and then in the long term memory, which can store any amount of information. They claim that our “mental lexicon” is well organized and efficient, with semantically related items stored together. Word frequency is another factor that influences retention, as the most frequently used words are easy enough to find.

Correspondingly, retention is not the only difficulty that EFL learners confront when acquiring language. Nunan (1990) proposes that learners can be motivated to establish their own specific learning techniques for vocabulary, including aspects like memorizing and recalling new words (p. 29). However, Cater (1987) ensures that storing information does not guarantee its restoration. Learners require ways to maximize the possibility that retrieval cues will be successful, as well as techniques to allow the remembrance of words that are appropriate for the context. He also states that using strategies for improving productivity must mainly focus on the meanings of words rather than their forms, because the majority of our output involves searching for an acceptable meaning to meet the current context (p. 117).

Similarly, Thornbury (2004) suggests other factors that make vocabulary difficult to remember like pronunciation and spelling, length and complexity and meaning (as cited in Rezkianti, 2021, p. 9).

2.8.5.1. Pronunciation

Difficult-to-pronounce words are more difficult to learn. However, words with unfamiliar sounds to learners such as ‘regular’ and ‘lorry’ for Japanese speakers, are likely to be challenging.

2.8.5.2. Spelling

When learners discover a new word for the first time, they must know how to spell it. Therefore, they will be able to write words accurately if they know how to spell it. Words with silent letters, such as *foreign*, *listen*, *headache*, *climbing*, *bored*, *honest*, *cupboard*, *muscle*, and so on, are particularly difficult to retrieve.

2.8.5.3. Length and complexity

Longer words appear to be more difficult to retain than shorter ones. However, high-frequency terms in English are often short. Hence, EFL students are more likely to encounter them.

2.8.5.4. Meaning

Learners are likely to be perplexed when the meanings of two terms overlap. Words with various meanings, such as *since* and *still*, might be confusing to remember. In addition, unfamiliar culturally loaded words like expressions and terms that are related to the Indian cricket game (a *sticky wicket*, a *good innings*) will be more confusing and tougher to retain.

2.8.5.5. Grammar

Grammar is another factor that affects word retention. Especially if it differs from its L1 equivalent. For example, frequently think that '*explain*' follows the same pattern as both Spanish '*explicar*' and English '*tell*', and claim '*he explained the lesson*'. It might be difficult to recall if a verb like *enjoy*, *love*, or *hope* is preceded by an infinitive (*to swim*) or a -ing form (*swimming*). Moreover, the grammar of phrasal verbs is exceptionally hard: certain phrasal verbs may be separated (*she looked the word up*), while others cannot (*she looked after the children*).

2.8.6. Strategies to improve vocabulary retention

Since students struggle with retaining words, some strategies are suggested in order to improve their ability to retain the learned vocabulary effectively. Gu and Johnson (1996) mention some vocabulary learning strategies such as metacognitive, cognitive, memory, and activation strategies to promote the ability to retain words effectively.

They indicate that metacognitive strategies include selective attention and self-initiation strategies. However, Cognitive strategies include guessing strategies, dictionary skills, and note-taking strategies. In addition, memory strategies are divided into two categories: rehearsal and encoding. Rehearsal strategies comprise word lists and repetition. While, association, imagery, visual, auditory, semantic, and contextual encoding, as well as word structure, are all examples of encoding strategies. Further, activation strategies are the ones that enable students to employ new words in a variety of contexts (p. 209).

Likewise, when new words and established terms share a similar part in spelling, sound, or meaning, memory of vocabulary can be improved. It is recommended to use the semantic mapping strategy because it covers additional memory strategies such as grouping, correlation or elaboration. Also, it is beneficial in enhancing retention and comprehension of new words, as well as expanding students' vocabulary. There are no correct or incorrect answers in semantic mapping since learners are instructed to classify the main word supplied by the teacher and then to search for some new terms linked to what they have classified (Richard and Renandyab, 1986, p. 20). However, in EFL classrooms, teachers have to follow these steps when mapping a word:

First, the teacher gives a guided practice by encouraging the students to create a semantic map. Second, the Students debate the target term given by the teacher. However, if they appear to be struggling to understand and classify the terms during the first session, the teacher asks them to bring a dictionary in the following session. Third, the teacher sets a process for communicating the students' semantic map results. Fourth, he/ she motivates students to use the words in a statement. At the end, he/ she does a review for each session to determine the learners' preparation for the new semantic mapping that will be created at that time. In the same context, Johnson and Pearson (1984, pp. 12-13, as cited in Dilek & Yürük, 2013, p. 1536) generalize this strategy as follows:

- Choose a word or topic related to classroom work on a paper or a blackboard.
- Encourage the students to think of as many words as they can that are related to the selected key word and then list the words by categories on a sheet of paper.
- Students then share the prepared lists orally and all words are written on the class map in categories.
- Students can gain further practice in classification by labeling the categories on the semantic map.

Ultimately, Nation (2001) discovers that by implementing this strategy, students will be able to retain the learned vocabulary linked to the topic they are dealing with (p. 102). In addition to that, Channell (1988, as cited in Thuy, 2010, p. 633) concludes from her research that learners should be encouraged to develop their own lexical associations when learning vocabulary.

Conclusion

To summarize, vocabulary is an essential component of teaching and learning EFL. More precisely, vocabulary is regarded as the first step to master a foreign language. It is the core element of comprehension in any language skill, whether in reading, listening, speaking, or writing. Accordingly, understanding a foreign language entails knowing its vocabulary, and students would benefit from being knowledgeable about the target culture's language in order to readily retain vocabulary. However, in order to maintain the learned vocabulary and improve word retention, teachers and students, on the one hand, try to look for strategies and techniques that would help learners develop their vocabulary knowledge; these strategies/ techniques, on the other hand, may aid EFL students to enhance their vocabulary retention as well.

Chapter Three

Field Investigation

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Introduction

The present chapter focuses exclusively on the practical part. It includes teachers' and EFL students' questionnaires in an attempt to investigate the impact of culturally-based learning on students' vocabulary retention. Furthermore, it seeks to analyze and explain the questionnaires' findings objectively in order to seek answers for the research questions. Moreover, some pedagogical implications are discussed together with limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

3.1. The Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is used to collect data for the current research. It is carried out to get the necessary information. The questionnaire is distributed to teachers in order to get their standing points about the impact of making students aware of the target culture in order to increase their vocabulary retention.

3.1.1. Population and sampling of the Study

This questionnaire is intended for first-year master teachers at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945. It was handed to several teachers; however, only 13 answered it. All the teachers who responded to this questionnaire have taught first-year master students in various modules. Along with that, the chosen sample appears to be well suited for providing the relevant data concerning the theme under investigation. They are able to recognize what helps students to expand their vocabulary retention. Hence, the questionnaire's aim is to figure out if teachers are aware of the role of the target culture in developing the capacity of retaining vocabulary effectively or not.

3.1.2. Choice of the Method

Quantitative data from the teachers' and students' questionnaires will be gathered to address the research questions. We selected questionnaires as a data-collecting tool in order to obtain both information and views on the issue under investigation. In this context, Rowley (2014) mentions the big advantage of conducting a questionnaire and says that "it is easier to get responses from a large number of people, and the data gathered may therefore be seen to generate findings that are more generalizable" (p. 4). He adds that questionnaires are also useful when:

- The research objectives center on surveying and profiling a situation, to develop overall patterns.
- Sufficient is already known about the situation under study that it is possible to formulate meaningful questions to include in the questionnaire.
- Willing respondents can be identified, who are in a position to provide meaningful data about a topic (p. 5).

3.1.3. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire is made up of twenty-six (26) questions divided into four sections. Each section and question is relevant to a specific component of our research, either directly or indirectly. The questions are either closed ones, allowing teachers pick 'yes' or 'no' responses, or multiple-choice questions where they have to select the relevant response from a range of choices, besides open-ended questions requiring teachers to provide a comprehensive clarification or suggest additional possibilities (*see Appendix A*).

3.1.3.1. Section One: Personal Background (Q1-Q5)

In this introductory section, teachers have to specify their qualification, years of teaching at the university, their specialty and modules taught. In addition, whether they have ever visited an English-speaking country or not, as well as the length of their stay for those who have.

3.1.3.2. Section Two: Teachers' views about Culturally-based learning (Q6-Q11)

There are six (6) questions in this section. Its main purpose is to collect teachers' perspectives, views, and attitudes about culture in EFL classes. More specifically, it indicates their perception of culture, and how frequently do they incorporate it into their lessons. Aside from the techniques and goals they believe are most essential and beneficial while addressing the target culture, it demonstrates the significance of exposing students to the English culture in addition to their attitudes when confronted with various English customs that are included in the instructional materials.

3.1.3.3. Section Three: Vocabulary Retention (Q12-Q21)

This section consists of (10) questions. It starts with (Q12) which teachers are requested to define vocabulary as well as to point at the component that has to be the most important in their classroom discussions (Q13). They are then asked to indicate which features can determine vocabulary retention and which aspects should be taught to students to strengthen their vocabulary retention (Q14-Q15). Furthermore, (Q16) asks teachers to specify which vocabulary learning strategy/ies they believe are most effective in promoting the students' vocabulary retention, in terms of picking several answers.

Following that, teachers are inquired about the impact of vocabulary learning on memory retention and expected to explain the relation between learning vocabulary and memory retention

(Q17-Q18). Moving on to the last three questions of the section (Q19-Q21), participants are demanded to specify the typical issues which their students have while remembering vocabulary (Q19) along with the reasons for their errors in retraining words (Q20), alongside the options they should use to solve such issues (Q21).

3.1.3.4. Section Four: The Impact of Culturally-based learning on Vocabulary Retention (Q22-Q26)

This section comprises five (5) questions. It investigates the impact of culturally-based learning on EFL students' vocabulary retention. (Q22) attempts to discover if learners are effortlessly able to recall words that are connected whether to the target culture, to their own culture, or words that are unrelated to culture at all. Correspondingly, the teachers' response are required to be explained. Hence, (Q23) offers four (4) options on how culturally-based learning should be used in EFL classrooms to assist learners retain vocabulary more effectively as well as allowing teachers to choose numerous answers and propose any alternatives that might be beneficial in remembering vocabulary. On the one hand, (Q24) analyzes whether or not adopting culturally based learning influences vocabulary retention, if yes, teachers are asked to justify their opinion. They are also requested whether they are interested in using culturally based learning to aid students develop their vocabulary retention. If their answer is yes, they are kindly requested to explain in few words (Q25). Eventually, in the last question (Q26) teachers are asked to add any further suggestions for boosting students' vocabulary retention through culturally-based learning.

3.1.4. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was handed out to eighteen (18) teachers on May16th and 17th, 2022 at the Department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University, Guelma. Unfortunately, owing to the situation of

Covid 19, informants were difficult to reach. There were only thirteen (13) questionnaires collected. Besides this, it took a whole week to get them back.

3.1.5. Data Analysis and Interpretations

This section is divided into four main parts: personal background, teachers' views about culturally-based learning, vocabulary retention, and their attitudes towards the impact of culturally-based learning on improving students' vocabulary retention.

3.1.5.1. Section One: Personal Background

Question One: Degree (s) held.

a. Magister (MA)

b. Doctorate (PhD)

Table 3.1. Teachers' degree

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Magister (MA)	12	92.31 %
Doctorate (PhD)	00	00 %
No response	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As seen in table 3.1 above, nearly all the respondents (92.31%) stated that they had a Magister degree; nevertheless, (7.69%) of the sample skipped the question. Thus, it is clear from their responses that they are competent to provide reliable information

Question Two: How long have you been teaching English at the University?*Table 3.2. Teachers' expertise in Teaching English at the University*

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1 to 5 years	02	15.38 %
5 to 10 years	04	30.77 %
10 to 15 years	07	53.85 %
Total	13	100 %

According to table 3.2, more than half of the teachers (53.85%) stated that they had between 10 to 15 years of academic experience. In additions, a significant percentage of them (30.77%) claimed that they have taught between 5 to 10 years. However, few instructors (15.38%) have between 1 to 5 years of expertise at the university. Henceforth, these data indicate that the sample was composed of experienced teachers. They have had an experience, which offered them a broad perspective on the entire teaching or learning process generally, and the target culture, specifically.

Question Three: What is your field of specialty?

- a. Literature b. Linguistics c. Civilization d. Translation

Table 3.3. Teachers' specialty

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Literature	06	46.15 %
Linguistics	03	23.08 %
Civilization	04	30.77 %
Translation	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

Less than half of the participants (46.15%) who responded to this questionnaire are specialized in literature, as shown in table 3.3. Further to that, (30.77%) of teachers are specialized in civilization. Moreover, (23.08%) of them are specialized in linguistics. However, teachers of translation did not participate.

Question Four: Which modules do you teach?

Table 3.4. Modules taught by teachers

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Oral expression	02	15.38 %
Didactics	01	7.69 %
Cognitive Psychology	01	7.69 %
Grammar	04	30.77 %
Civilization	01	7.69 %
Literature	01	7.69 %
Linguistics	01	7.69 %
Written expression	02	15.38 %
Total	13	100 %

According to the results displayed in table 3.4, teachers have presented the modules they had taught throughout their careers, not only the modules they are teaching this year. As a result, a significant percentage of participants (30.77%) have taught grammar, whereas (15.38%) have instructed oral and written expression at various levels. Equally, linguistics was taught by (7.69%) of the lecturers. (7.69%) of them taught modules like civilization, literature. Hence, with a proportion of (7.69%), just one teacher was concerned with teaching cognitive psychology and didactics.

Question Five: Have you ever visited/ stayed in an English speaking country?

a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.5. Teachers' visit/ stay in an English speaking country

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	01	7.69 %
No	12	92.31 %
Total	13	100 %

This table 3.5 shows the portion of teachers who had a direct contact with the target culture. As demonstrated, nearly all the participants (92.31%) claimed that they had no direct interaction with the English culture. However, one teacher (7.69%) mentioned that he/ she had an experience with the English culture. This indicates that the participants are conversant with the target culture even beyond its cultural setting.

3.1.4.2. Section Two: Teachers' views about Culturally-based learning

Question Six: What is your understanding of the concept culture?

- a. A society's perspectives, behavioral practices and products
- b. A broad set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms and ways of living
- c. Literature and arts
- d. Understanding and interacting with the people around us
- e. All of the above

Table 3.6. Teachers' definition of culture

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	00	00 %
B	06	46.15 %
C	02	15.38 %
D	02	15.38 %
E	03	23.08 %
Other (s)	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

This question aim at determining what viewpoints teachers have while attempting to define culture. We provided four distinct definitions, each from a unique perspective. Culture, according to a significant percentage of the participants (46.15%), is a comprehensive set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms, and ways of life. Moreover, (23.08%) of them responded that culture is not represented by a single definition and picked all of the available options. However, (15.38%) stated that culture includes literature and arts, as well as knowing and interacting with others.

As we have seen in the theoretical part, there is not merely one definition of culture. Rather, culture is everything that is visible and practical, and cannot be defined in a single way.

Question Seven: How often do you include culture in your class?

- a. Always b. Often c. Sometimes d. Rarely e. Never

Table 3.7. Teachers' inclusion of the target culture

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Always	03	23.08 %
Often	06	46.15 %
Sometimes	02	15.38 %
Rarely	02	15.38 %
Never	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is shown in table 3.7, (46.15%) of the informants said that they often include culture into their lessons. Furthermore, a considerable proportion (23.08%) stated that they always discuss cultural issues throughout the lecture. Very few teachers (15.38%) said that they sometimes or rarely talk about culture when it is important. It has been established that teachers incorporate culture into their instructional strategies and, as a result, place a greater emphasis on cultural knowledge.

Question Eight: If you were teaching English along with its culture, which of the following techniques is/ are the most beneficial to be used?

a. Role-plays

b. Cultural clusters (ex, students prepare a task that covers one aspect of the TC, and then

the teacher adds more information and asks them to compare the aspect being discussed between the native culture and the TC).

c. Cultural capsules (ex, discussions about the differences between a native custom and a custom in the target culture using lectures, pictures...etc.).

d. Cultural assimilators (ex, interactions between people from the native culture and those from the TC, followed by choices on the meaning of the participants' behavior, action, or words, in which students pick the correct interpretation of the interaction before leading a discussion of the chosen choices).

- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.8. Teachers' techniques for teaching English with its culture

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Role plays	01	7.69 %
Cultural clusters	01	7.69 %
Cultural capsules	08	61.54 %
Cultural assimilators	03	23.08 %
Other (s)	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

Concerning cultural teaching techniques (table 3.8), teachers were required to select one or more of the four options. They may choose “other” if they prefer techniques that are not listed. Less than two-thirds of the participants (61.54%) chose the third option, teaching culture through cultural capsules, which suggests that they prefer to deal with culture through diverse but related topics. Moreover, few participants (23.08%) select cultural assimilators. This implies that cultural assimilators are an effective technique for teaching students about the target culture. One teacher

(7.69%) views cultural clusters as the most beneficial technique for teaching culture. Also, role-plays attract another instructor (7.69%), indicating that they recognize the value of cultural clusters and role-plays in providing cultural content.

Question Nine: Which of the following goals do you think is/ are the most essential for using culturally-based learning?

- a. Providing students with knowledge and comprehension of the target culture
- b. Providing students with an awareness of their own cultural identity
- c. Increasing students' ability to recognize parallels and contrasts between their culture and the target culture
- d. Making language teaching more motivating and interesting

Table 3.9. Teachers' goals behind using culturally-based learning

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	03	23.08 %
B	01	7.69 %
C	07	53.85 %
D	02	15.39 %
Total	13	100 %

This question aims at exploring teachers' views about the goals reached while teaching the target culture. According to the data presented in table 3.9, more than half of the participants (53.85%) opted for option "C," indicating that their goal is to help students improve their ability

to recognize similarities and differences between their culture and the target culture. Option “A” chosen by (23.08%), demonstrating that teachers preferred providing students with knowledge and comprehension of the target culture. Additionally, few teachers (15.39%) select response "D," indicating that their goal is to make target culture teaching more motivating and interesting to their students. However, only one teacher (7.69%) is interested in raising awareness of the target culture among their learners without causing conflicts with their own cultural identity.

Question Ten: How important for students to learn about the English culture?

a. Very important

b. Important

c. Not important

Table 3.10. Teachers’ views about the importance of teaching students the target culture

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Very important	10	76.92 %
Important	03	23.08 %
Not important	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

In this question, we are interested in teachers' perspectives on their students' attitudes about learning the target culture. Simply, we want to determine whether teachers believe that their students are eager to learn about culture through language. Learning the target culture is very important to the majority of the teachers (76.92%). However, barely (23.08%) think that it is important. In the same way, none of them stated that learning about the target culture is unimportant to their learners. Based on these findings, we may conclude that teachers thought that the students’ motive to learn about the target culture may substantially aid in the development of

their linguistic and communicative competence. Accordingly, this mindset will also make the teacher's work much easier when it comes to teaching the cultural aspects.

Question Eleven: How would you describe your students' attitudes when confronted with various English etiquette (social behavior) incorporated in your teaching materials (whether in plays, novels, historical documentaries, oral expression sessions, linguistics, and so on...)?

- a. They accept and appreciate
- b. They comprehend yet refuse to accept
- c. They find it tough to comprehend

- Please, justify

Table 3.11. Teachers' attitudes towards the English culture

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	11	84.62 %
B	01	7.69 %
C	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As a follow-up to the previous question. We are still curious about the learners' attitudes regarding the target culture. An overwhelming majority of the teachers (84.62%) believe that their students accept and appreciate the English culture. While only one teacher (7.69%) stated that their students comprehend but refuse to accept the English culture, and a same proportion (7.69%) believes that students find it difficult to grasp the target culture. For this reason, teachers noted that

the majority of learners have no difficulties with the English culture. Nevertheless, only (5) teachers provided justifications to their responses, which be summarized as follows:

- Learning about the English culture is important to non-English students because culture expresses more than words, so if there is a kind of confrontation, students should appreciate and accept since they know what is different.
- Learning about the English culture depends on how close or similar the idea is to their own culture.
- Students find the provided examples interesting and after discussing them, they come to identify the difference between our culture and the target culture.
- It depends on the cultural aspect. E.g., if it is something that contradicts the Islamic religious beliefs, learners usually comprehend but refuse to accept. Other aspect can be simply accepted with or without appreciation.
- Due to the restrain traditional norms, or religiousness, students sometimes refuse to accept the target culture.

3.1.4.3. Section Three: Vocabulary Retention

Question Twelve: How would you define vocabulary?

- a. Set of terms used in a certain language
 - b. Words that we see and understand when used properly
 - c. A set of knowledge about words and their meanings in both oral and written language
 - d. All of the above
- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.12. Teachers' definitions of vocabulary

Options	Frequency (N)	Frequency (%)
A	04	30.77 %
B	01	7.69 %
C	05	38.47 %
D	02	15.39 %
Other (s)	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

Vocabulary, according to a significant percentage of instructors (38.47%), is a set of knowledge about words and their meanings in both spoken and written language. While (30.77%) of the teachers classified vocabulary as a collection of items used in a certain language. On the other hand, a few proportion (15.39%) indicated that vocabulary includes all of the above mentioned definitions. Correspondingly, one teacher (7.69%) stated that vocabulary is words that we see and comprehend when used properly.

Question Thirteen: Which of these components has to be the most essential in your classroom discussions?

- a. Vocabulary
- b. Grammar
- c. Familiarity with the target culture
- d. All of the above

- Please, justify

Table 3.13. Teachers' views about the essential components in English teaching

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A and B	01	7.69 %
C	00	00 %
D	12	92.31 %
Total	13	100 %

As displayed in table 3.13, nearly all the teachers (92.31%) stated that they focus on all of the proposed aspects. Only one instructor (7.69%) emphasizes on vocabulary and grammar. However, no one has highlighted the familiarity with the target culture as the most important component in his/ her classroom discussions. Although the reasons given by the informants differ, they can be described as follows:

- Just like the human body; you cannot disassociate the soul from the body, so are the linguistic system & culture.
- All of the listed components are necessary to learn the language.
- Grammar and vocabulary are closely related to culture.
- When students have knowledge about the culture of the people they are learning their language, the process would be easy to understand more terms and their references.
- As far as the modules I teach, I give more importance to grammar and vocabulary.
- Language is a human phenomenon.
-

Question Fourteen: According to you, Vocabulary retention depends on:

- a. The teaching quality
 - b. The learners' interests
 - c. Meaningfulness of the materials
- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.14. Teachers' views on the features determining vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	01	7.69 %
B	04	30.77 %
C	00	00 %
B and C	02	15.38 %
A, B and C	05	38.46 %
Other (s)	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is shown in table 3.14, a significant portion (38.46%) select all the listed options, stating that the teacher plays a major role since he is a key component in the teaching and learning of vocabulary. As a result, understanding the students' interests will aid in presenting them with high-quality teaching opportunities. By allowing them to explore areas of interest, they will be more likely to interact with vocabulary acquisition, making it easier to retain the acquired words later. In addition to the materials utilized, the more significant they are, the easier the learning and

retention will be. However, one-third of the teachers (30.77%) mentioned that vocabulary retention depends on the learners' interests. This suggests that learners may attempt to learn vocabulary on their own in order to maintain the acquired words. Therefore, we can say that they might recall vocabulary based on their own interests and needs. A small minority of instructors (15.38%) choose both "a, b" options, emphasizing that the learners' interests and the relevance of the presented content determine memorizing vocabulary. Yet, only one teacher (7.69%) declared that the quality of teaching determines word retention. Similarly, another teacher (7.69%) noted that vocabulary and word retention is a very large body that has to be supplemented from several angles.

Question Fifteen: Which of the following elements do you believe should be taught to your students in order to improve their vocabulary retention?

- a. Pronunciation and spelling
- b. Grammar
- c. Synonyms and Antonyms
- d. Target culture words

Table 3.15. Teachers' perspectives about the elements to be taught for improving students' vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A, B and C	01	7.69 %
B, C and D	02	15.38 %
C and D	02	15.38 %
A, C and D	03	23.08 %
All of the above	05	38.47 %
Total	13	100 %

Table 3.15 shows that a considerable proportion of teachers (38.47%) chose the last option, which is that all the mentioned elements should be taught to EFL students. This means that teachers acknowledged retention of vocabulary is more demanding than it seems; therefore, they rely on various elements to achieve a desired goal. A small proportion of them (23.28%) select options "a, c and d" to be exposed in EFL classes. This suggests that teachers concentrate more on the pronunciation and spelling of words in their courses. Furthermore, teaching the synonyms and antonyms in depth helps students to use them properly in a variety of contexts. However, option "d" indicates that introducing students to target cultural words could develop their English vocabulary as how words are utilized in support of the target culture. On the other side, two teachers (15.38%) believe that paying attention to grammar, synonyms, antonyms, and including target culture words into their lessons may help students retain vocabulary. Two other instructors (15.38%) stated that providing EFL learners with alternate synonyms and antonyms besides using the target cultural words may be useful in helping them retain the vocabulary learned before. Only

one instructor (7.69%) considers that correctly pronouncing and spelling words, in addition to being accurate (grammar), aids students to learn better. By supplementing the students' vocabulary with synonyms and antonyms, they will easily retain and use many words while interacting with others of the target culture.

Question Sixteen: Which vocabulary learning strategy (gies) do you consider is/are the most effective in terms of enhancing students' vocabulary retention?

- a. Social interaction
- b. Creating a strong memory link between word form and meaning
- c. Using dictionaries
- d. Using either verbal or auditory assistance, or both, to create a clear image of words
- e. Repeating words orally or in writing, taking notes in class, or naming objects
- f. Cultural Consciousness-raising activities

- Please, justify

Table 3.16. Teachers' views about strategies to enhance students' vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A and C	01	7.69 %
B, C, D and E	01	7.69 %
A, B and D	01	7.69 %
A, C, D, E and F	04	30.77 %
B, C and E	02	15.38 %
A and D	01	7.69 %
D	01	7.69 %
C and D	02	15.38 %
Total	13	100 %

Table 3.16 shows that a significant percentage of teachers (30.77%) claim that used in social context, dictionaries, verbal or auditory assistance or both to create a clear image of words, and repeating them orally or in writing, taking notes in class, along with presenting cultural consciousness-raising activities are the most effective strategies for students to improve their vocabulary retention. This means that when students interact with others, such as asking teachers and classmates about the meaning of new terms, they may also know the meaning of the new words through discussions in a group work project, which in turn will be helpful in maintaining those words. Aside from that, using dictionaries may assist students in analyzing multiple meanings of new and unfamiliar words using examples, making it easier for them to remember such terms later. Besides, Verbal aids could be useful when teaching/learning concrete items whereas auditory aids may help teachers introduce and define new concepts to their students. Because they are offered

in context, listening to stories, songs, and plays can better explain the meaning of new items. Further, repeating words orally or in writing, also taking notes, may help students link what they heard, the spoken forms of words, to the written forms of words.

Few instructors (15.38%) emphasized choices "b, c, and e" as the most effective strategies for their students to enhance their word recall. A comparable amount (15.38%) stated that using dictionaries and using verbal or auditory assistance are more useful for improving vocabulary retention. Just one teacher (7.69%) stated that engaging with people and using dictionaries are the greatest strategies for improving word retention. Another instructor (7.69%) claimed that in order for students to better retrain vocabulary, they must develop a strong memory link between word form and meaning in addition to using dictionaries, verbal/auditory aids, and word repetition. Other teacher (7.69%) argued that socialization, memory connection between word form and meaning, and verbal/auditory aids are all important for enhancing word retention. Similarly, another teacher (7.69%) choose interpersonal interactions and verbal/auditory aid as the best means for enhancing word retention.

In the same vein, just one instructor (7.69%) stated that using verbal/auditory support to generate a clear image of words is most helpful for students to develop their vocabulary retention. From this, we may conclude that teachers had different opinions regarding the ideal strategy to improve their students' vocabulary retention.

Question Seventeen: Do you think that vocabulary learning has an impact on memory retention?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Table 3.17. Teachers' opinions about the impact of vocabulary learning on memory retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	92.31 %
No	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As seen in table 3.17, nearly all the respondents (92.31%) concurred that learning vocabulary has an influence on memory retention. However, just one instructor (7.69%) reported that vocabulary learning has no effect on memory retention.

Question Eighteen: If yes, how is vocabulary learning related to memory retention?

Table 3.18. Teachers' thoughts about the relation between vocabulary learning and memory retention

Teachers	Answers
01	It is said, "If you don't use it, you'll lose it"; thus, lexis learning keeps your brain neurons active in encoding/decoding/storing and retaining data and thus in memory retention and maintenance.
02	It is a matter of enhancing memory; if students could not remember words, the context will guide them.
03	It keeps students updated about the various cultural traits.
04	A rich vocabulary facilitates memorization.
05	Practice makes perfect.

Question Nineteen: What are the obstacles that hinder your students' vocabulary retention?

a. Length and complexity

b. Culturally-loaded words

c. Both a and b

- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.19. Teachers' perspectives about the obstacles that hinder students' vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	02	15.38 %
B	00	00 %
C	10	79.92 %
Other (s)	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is noticed in table 3.19, the vast majority of the participants (79.92%) choose option "C," suggesting that word length and complexity, as well as culturally loaded words, are the issues that impede their students' vocabulary retention. This implies that long words appear to be more difficult to learn than short ones, and word families such as necessary, necessity, and necessarily can contribute to their difficulty. Furthermore, idioms, or expressions that have an unfamiliar meaning in the target culture may be hard and confusing for learners who lack cultural knowledge since they are words rooted in their unique culture and foreigners must comprehend their cultural meanings. A low percentage of teachers (15.38%) believe that the problem of learners' poor

vocabulary retention is caused by the complexity and length of words. However, just one teacher (7.69%) mentioned other issue that is the resemblance to already recognized English vocabulary. This explains that a term that is linked to an English term that learners already know is simpler than one that is not. For example, if students had previously seen the term kind, they should be able to deduce the meaning of unkind.

Question Twenty: Do you think that the reason behind the students' errors in retaining words is because of:

- a. inability to stop using Arabic
- b. inability to stop using French
- c. lack of language knowledge
- d. lack of cultural knowledge

- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.20. Teachers' opinions about the reasons behind students' errors in retaining words

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A, C and D	10	76.92 %
B	00	00 %
C and D	01	7.69 %
Other (s)	02	15.38 %
Total	13	100 %

According to table 3.20, the vast majority of instructors (76.92%) assert that the students' inability to stop utilizing Arabic, as well as their lack of language and cultural knowledge, are the causes of their flaws in retaining vocabulary. This shows that students would be unable to speak English efficiently and therefore will commit several errors when attempting to recall some words if they lack sufficient target cultural vocabulary and grammatical structures. They may also lack sentence formation skills, resulting in the use of their mother tongue. Few teachers (15.38%) mentioned other reasons like curriculum/ courses overload in addition to the insufficient use of the acquired words that make them stick in short-term memory rather than being implemented in students' schemata. This indicates that if students suffer from courses overload frequently performs poorly because of acquiring too much knowledge at once. The huge amount of content received may be daunting at times. It may feel as though a circuit breaker has tripped, and they may become too tired to comprehend more information at the same time they will face difficulties to retain that vocabulary.

Besides this, students required to be guided and challenged in a variety of activities, with many chances to access and use English vocabulary over time to boost their long-term retention and to avoid committing flaws while retraining those words. On the one hand, only one teacher (7.69%) considered that learners make errors while retaining vocabulary due to a lack of both language and cultural knowledge. This implies that culture and language go hand in hand. Thus, having insufficient cultural knowledge of the target language will result in providing the incorrect meaning to each word in contexts since students will not be able to communicate or think in the foreign language. They will eventually make several mistakes in order to retain the proper words to be applied in the appropriate context.

Question Twenty-one: Which of the following choices EFL students need to use to overcome such issues?

- a. Recycling
- b. Extensive reading and listening
- c. Using notebooks
- d. Integrating culture

- If other (s), please specify

Table 3.21. Teachers' suggestions on how EFL students might overcome their issues with vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A, C and D	07	53.85 %
B	03	23.08 %
B and D	02	15.39 %
Other (s)	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

According to Table 3.21, more than half of the instructors (53.85%) believe that recycling, utilizing notebooks, and incorporating culture are useful for overcoming EFL students' difficulties encountered to retain vocabulary. Few teachers (23.08%) indicated that extensive reading and listening could help students to retain vocabulary effectively. In other words, students may need to write down words while listening. Nevertheless, simply reading those words in a particular

context will improve their ability to retain vocabulary. Aside from that, two instructors (15.39%) stated that incorporating the target culture with extensive reading and listening could be beneficial in terms of overcoming retention obstacles. This means when students come across a new term they do not recognize, they need to add it to their vocabulary list. They then go over the list few times a week, cover up the English definitions, and try to recall what the term means. The more frequently learners read the notebook, the better they will recall the words. The idea is simply to remember to take the notebook with them so that you may have it whenever they learn a new term or phrase. Moreover, EFL learners must understand how native speakers apply verbal expressions to better grasp the English vocabulary.

3.1.4.4. Section Four: The Impact of Culturally-based learning on Vocabulary Retention

Question Twenty-two: Do you think that students retain easily words that are:

- a. Related to the target culture
- b. Related to their own culture
- c. Not related to culture at all

Table 3.22. Teachers' views about the words that students may easily retain

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
B	02	15.38 %
A and B	10	76.93 %
No response	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is noticed in table 3.22, the majority of the informants (76.93%) declared that students could easily retain words that are related to both the target culture and their own culture. In a word, students may find it easier to retain words with cultural references since the relationship between culture and language is crucial. However, few teachers (15.38%) pointed out that learners can readily retain words that are only related to their own culture, which implies that culture determines the language that is spoken within general societal limits. Yet only one teacher (7.69%) choose not to respond to this question.

Question Twenty-three: How would you use culturally-based learning to help your students' retaining vocabulary more efficiently?

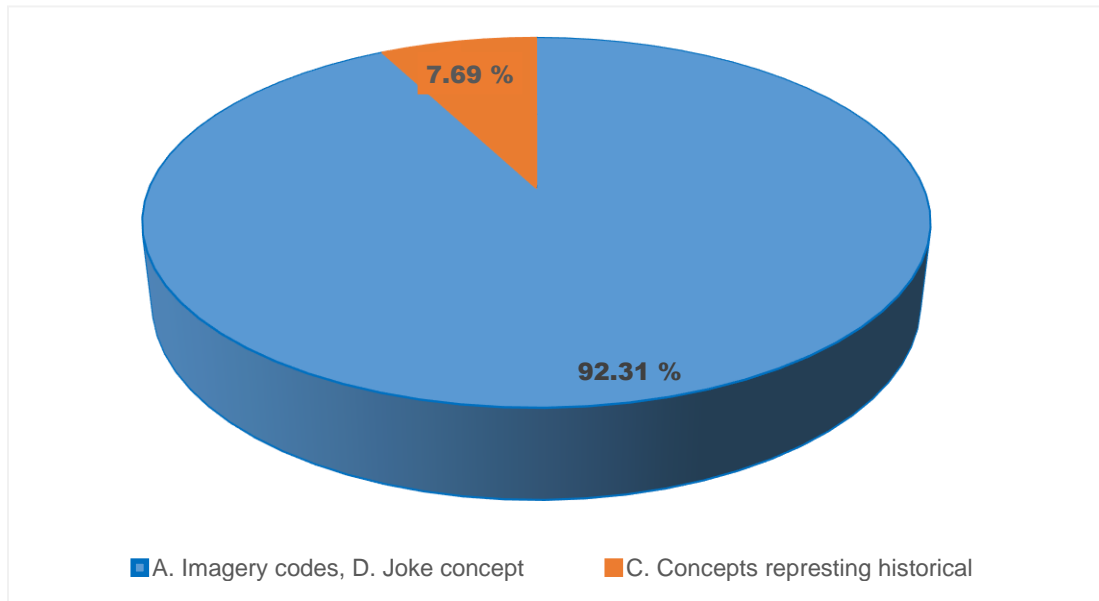
- a. Through imagery codes (creating mental pictures of objects or events not present to the eye and connect the words with those in the native language).
- b. Through sentences in pronunciation codes (The pronunciations of native culture members can be used to construct sentences).
- c. Through concepts representing historical facts.
- d. Through joke concept codes (something is said or done to evoke laughter or amusement, especially an amusing story).

Table 3.23. Teachers' use of culturally based learning to help students retain vocabulary more efficiently

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A and D	12	92.31 %
C	01	7.69 %
B	00	00 %
Total	13	100 %

In this question, teachers are asked about their use of culturally-based learning to assist their students in efficiently retaining vocabulary. The vast majority of the teachers (92.31%) preferred teaching culture through imagery and joke concept codes. This means that encoding an idea in terms of visual imagery will aid students in retaining words easily. For example, rather than the word typewriter, the item “typewriter” may be remembered as a mental image of a typewriter. Besides, including a sense of humor and telling jokes in the classroom is useful because it enhances social interaction between instructors and students and therefore creates a link between cultural knowledge and memory retention. Whereas, just one teacher (7.69%) uses concepts that depict historical facts to help students recall vocabulary proficiently. This demonstrates how the organization of information in a relevant way, and the creation of a sophisticated interpretation of events, which will lead to a long-term word retention.

Figure 3.1. Teachers' use of culturally based learning to help students retain vocabulary more efficiently



Question Twenty-four: Do you think that using culturally-based learning influences vocabulary retention?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Don't know

- Please, justify

Table 3.24. Teachers' views about the impact of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	90.31 %
No	00	00 %
Don't know	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is shown in table 3.25, nearly all the teachers (90.31%) stated that culturally-based learning influences vocabulary retention, which suggests that the use of culture in learning plays a great role in motivating the students to learn the language. In addition, understanding the cultural context in which certain vocabulary is used makes it easier to retain and use in the appropriate context. In short, placing a term in a cultural context improves its comprehension and storage. As a result, it will be easy to remember. Despite that, just one instructor (7.69%) chose not to answer the question.

Question Twenty-five: Are you interested in using culturally based learning to help your students improve vocabulary retention? (A brief explanation is appreciated)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

Table 3.25. Teachers' degree of interest in using culturally-based learning to foster students' vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	11	84.62 %
No	01	7.69 %
Don't know	01	7.69 %
Total	13	100 %

As it is displayed in table 3.25, a high percentage of teachers (84.62%) claimed that they are interested in incorporating culturally-based learning to help students in fostering their vocabulary retention. While one teacher (7.69%) declared that he/she is uninterested in teaching culture. However, another instructor (7.69%) emphasizes that he/she is unsure whether to add culture to help students retain words. Hence, only 03 instructors provided explanations that are summed up as follows:

- I am interested, however not in lexis retention, rather in teaching everything about the language.
- The broader the students' vocabulary is, the more they will learn about many aspects of cultures.
- Knowing about the English language's culture helps students appreciate it. Appreciation leads to acceptance, which leads to motivation, which is why it is critical to be involved in the teaching and learning process.

Question Twenty-six: We would be grateful for any further suggestions for improving students' vocabulary retention through using culturally-based learning.

Out of 13 teachers, only three teachers (23.08%) added their suggestions and commented on the topic of our research. The participants' comments and suggestions can be summarized in the following few point:

- Materials are needed, it is not only a matter of listening, students need to practice the language through culture, which is a real life experience, a challenge that should be addressed in the future.
- Exposing students to the target culture by reading or listening helps them to interact with people from different cultures effectively.
- I Suggest videos (of native speakers in different situation) in the EFL classroom as the most 'visually' attractive and entertaining way to teach vocabulary.

3.1.6. Summary of the Results and Findings from the Teachers' Questionnaire

In view of the previously mentioned results from the teachers' questionnaire, the questionnaire covered the teachers' personal background reveals that the majority of the instructors had a magister degree. Furthermore, they had a great experience in teaching English besides their competence of teaching numerous modules. This illustrates the appropriateness of selecting this sample, which will give reliable data for this research.

Based on the findings of the second section, "Teachers' views about Culturally-Based learning," the majority of teachers emphasized the importance of culturally-based learning as a teaching strategy in EFL classrooms. Moreover, the third section "Vocabulary Retention," demonstrated that teachers focus more on the comprehension of the target culture, vocabulary, and grammar in

their classroom discussions. In addition to what have been mentioned, they have also presented practical strategies for improving students' word retention and how to overcome difficulties encountered when retaining vocabulary. Similarly, section four, "The Impact of Culturally-based Learning on Vocabulary Retention," addressed various levels of instructors' interest in incorporating culturally-based learning into EFL classes, as well as how they would integrate cultural teaching to assist EFL students in maintaining long-term word retention.

3.2. Students' Questionnaire

The second questionnaire sought to find out what students think about culturally-based learning and its impact on improving vocabulary retention. It, also, examines how students are interested in the target culture and their opinions about integrating it into EFL classes. It is divided into four sections: the study's population, sampling, the description of the students' questionnaire, and the administration of the students' questionnaire.

3.2.1. Population of the Study

The current research included 120 EFL students from the Department of English, University of Guelma. It is mainly composed of first-year master students. Therefore, the participants were randomly selected to answer the questionnaire.

3.2.2. Students' Sampling

To conduct our research, we randomly selected 92 first-year master students of English from a total population of 120 students.

Working with first-year master students was chosen for a variety of reasons. Due to the fact that they have sufficient knowledge of the English language besides being familiar with its culture is the most important factor for our study. Furthermore, their primary goal is to improve their level

of English in general and to enhance their ability to retain lexical vocabulary in order to be used appropriately.

3.2.3. The Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was divided into four sections, The questionnaire is composed of 25 items. Moreover, the first section is devoted to general information. It consists of questions about students' background information. This section includes four main questions (Q1-Q4), moving on to the next section which entitled students' views about culturally based learning; it deals with the concept of culturally-based learning and its importance in the teaching/learning process, it includes seven questions (Q5-Q11). However, the third section is concerned only with vocabulary retention, its meaning, significance, problems faced by learners while trying to retain words and suggested solutions to get rid of those obstacles and problems. This section contains nine questions (Q12-Q20). Furthermore, the last section is concerned with the impact of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention. It has five questions (Q21-Q25). The questions were varied in order to collect reliable information and establish the research's validity (*see Appendix B*).

3.2.4. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire was administered online to first-year master students of Guelma. However, due to the specific situation of Covid 19 informants were not easily found. Furthermore, the questionnaire's answers took almost a week to be finally collected.

3.2.5. Data Analysis and Interpretations

This section presents the results and findings from the students' questionnaire. It is structured as follows: background information, students' views about culturally-based learning, vocabulary retention, and the impact of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention.

3.2.5.1. Section One: Background Information

Question One: Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

Table 3.26. Students' gender

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	26	28.26 %
Female	66	71.74 %
Total	92	100 %

The majority of first-year Master students (71.74%) are females; hence, the sample contains sixty-six (66) girls. In contrast, males represent just (28.26%) of students, which implies there are only 26 boys in the sample.

Question Two: Was studying English your own choice?

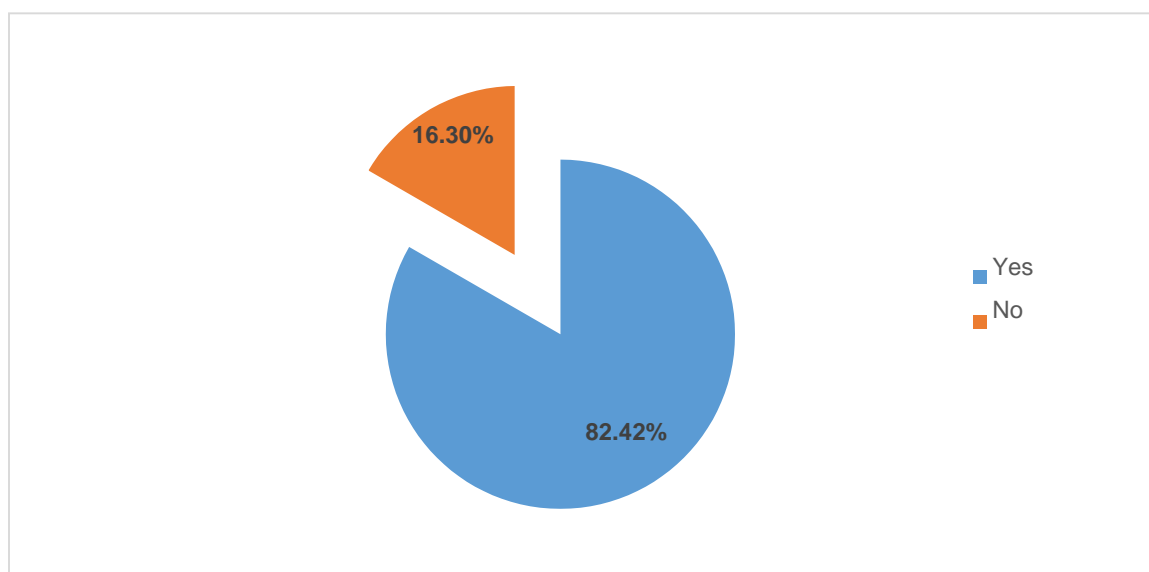
- a. Yes
- b. No

Table 3.27. Students' choice of studying English

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	75	82.52 %
No	15	16.30 %
No response	02	2.17 %
Total	92	100 %

The vast majority of students (82.52%) stated that learning English is a personal choice. Yet, just (16.30%) said no. Only two students (2.17%) did not respond to the question. This indicates that most of the participants chose to learn English and therefore are expected to be motivated to learn more about English and its culture and interested in enhancing their skills for better achievements.

Figure 3.2. Students' choice of studying English



The majority of the students (86.96%) claimed that they have never visited an English speaking country. However, few students (13.04%) had a direct contact with the target language and its culture. This shows that only 12 students had a real experience with the target culture.

3.2.5.2. Section Two: Students' views about Culturally-based Learning

Question Five: How would you define culture?

- a. A broad set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms and ways of living.
- b. A society's perspectives, behavioral practices and products.
- c. Literature and arts.
- d. Understanding and interacting with the people around us.
- e. All of the above.

Table 3.30. *Students' definitions of Culture*

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	40	43.49 %
B	12	13.04 %
C	5	5.43 %
D	3	3.26 %
E	32	34.78 %
Total	92	100 %

This question aims at assessing the students' understanding of the term "culture". According to the results displayed in table 3.30, less than half of the participants (43.49%) believed that culture is a broad set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms, and ways of life. A substantial percentage of

Question Seven: Do you think that it is important to learn the culture of English speakers when learning the language?

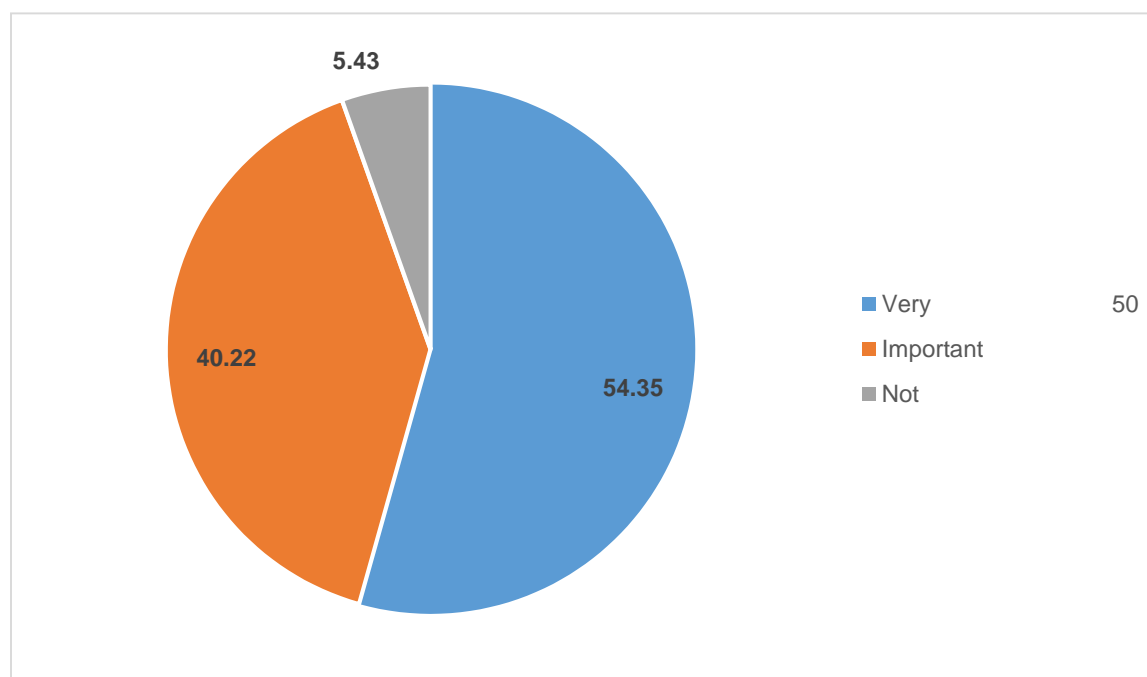
- a. Very important.
- b. Important.
- c. Not important.

Table 3.32. Students' perspectives about the importance of learning about the culture of English while learning the language

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Very important	50	54.35 %
Important	37	40.22 %
Not important	5	5.43 %
Total	92	100 %

As shown in table 3.32, more than half of the participants (54.35%) believe that learning the target culture is very important while learning English. A considerable proportion of students (40.22%) stated that learning the target culture is just as important as learning the language. only a low percentage of students (5.43%) stated that studying the target culture is unimportant. Thus, knowledge about the culture of English speakers is a significant aspect for the majority of the students when it comes to learning a foreign language. Therefore, it is reasonable to claim that first-year master students of the English Department at Guelma University are aware of the significance the cultural learning. This leads us to believe that they may have a positive attitude towards it.

Figure 3.3. Students' perspectives of the importance of learning about the culture of English while learning the language



Question Eight: Should culture be taught concurrently with language or separately?

a. Along with the language.

b. A separate module.

Table 3.33. Students' views about teaching culture along with the language or as a separate module

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Along with the language	61	66.30 %
A separate module	31	33.70 %
Total	92	100 %

The purpose of this question is to investigate whether or not students understand that language learning entails cultural learning. For this reason, the students were asked if they believe that culture should be taught alongside the language or as a separate module. Two-thirds of the students (66.30%) agreed that culture should be taught alongside the language, indicating that they are aware of the relation between language and culture. A significant proportion of the students (33.70%) assert that culture should be taught as a separate course. The responses to this question complement the findings from the previous question (Q7), in which (54.35%) of participants believe in the importance of the cultural learning.

According to the data of both questions (Q7 and Q8), we can conclude that first-year master students of the Department of English, University of Guelma understand the significance of including culture with the English language learning.

Question Nine: Which cultural aspect (s) that interest (s) you the most to learn about the target culture?

- a. Art and literature.
- b. Customs and beliefs.
- c. Political institutions and government.
- d. Verbal and not-verbal communication.
- e. All of the above.

Table 3.34. Students' interest in the cultural aspects

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	13	14.13 %
B	20	21.74 %
C	7	7.61 %
D	17	18.48 %
E	35	38.04 %
Total	92	100 %

This question aims at exploring the students' interest in the cultural aspects of the target culture. While a considerable proportion of the respondents (38.04%) chose all of the listed aspects, just a low percentage of students (21.74%) stated that they are interested in customs and beliefs. Furthermore, other students (18.48%) focused on verbal and non-verbal communication. Nevertheless, just (14.13%) responded that art and literature attracted them the most. Only 07 students (7.61%) showed an interest in political institutions and government. This means that students are generally interested in nearly all the cultural aspects. However, some of them are more interested in the cultural aspects that are related to small c "culture" than those related to big C "culture." So, we can infer that when we talk about culture, students may think of small c "culture," which suggests that culture involves customs and beliefs, communication, institutions, and governments. In addition, we may assume that if they were not provided with the options of big C "Culture," they would choose none.

Question Ten: Do your teachers use culturally-based learning while teaching the language?

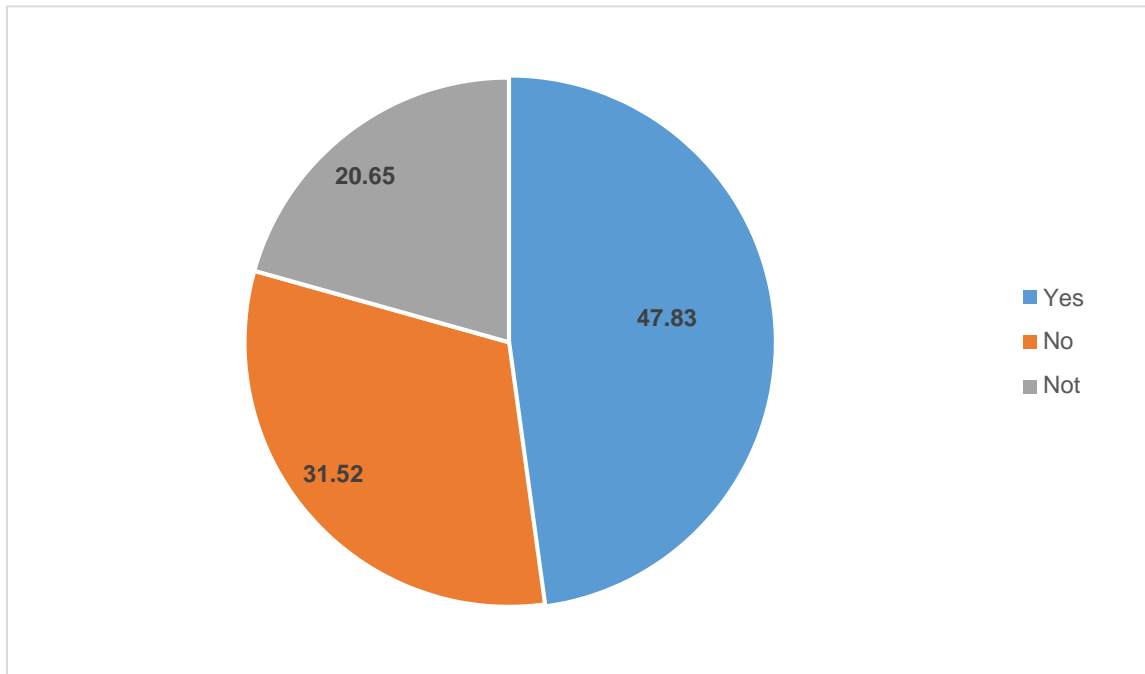
- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

Table 3.35. Students' opinions about teachers' use of culturally-based learning while teaching the language

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	44	47.83 %
No	29	31.52 %
Not sure	19	20.65 %
Total	92	100 %

The results shown in table 3.35 indicate that less than half of the students (47.83%) claimed that their teachers employ culturally-based learning while teaching, whereas a sizable proportion of the students (31.52%) said that their teachers do not use culturally-based learning while teaching. However, a small percentage of the students (20.65%) stated that they are unsure whether or not their teachers implement culturally-based learning while teaching English. This shows that the students' perceptions of culture may influence the results of this question. We may say that those who answered yes believe that culture is all the integrated patterns of a given society that influences every part of our life experiences. This, however, does not explain why (31.52%) of the students believe the opposite.

Figure 3.4. Students' opinions about teachers' use of culturally-based learning while teaching the language



3.2.5.3. Section Three: Vocabulary Retention

Question Eleven: Learning a foreign language, in your opinion, is considerably more related to the development of:

- a. Phonology
- b. Grammar
- c. Vocabulary
- d. All of the above

Table 3.36. Students' perspectives about what is more related with learning a foreign language

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Phonology	05	5.43 %
Grammar	13	14.13 %
Vocabulary	21	22.83 %
All of the above	53	57.61 %
Total	92	100 %

According to the data displayed in table 3.36, more than half of the participants (57.61%) opted for option (d). This reveals that students believe that phonology, grammar, and vocabulary help to master any foreign language. Moreover, just (22.83%) of the students chose vocabulary. Meanwhile, a low percentage of the learners (14.13%) selected grammar. Only 5 students (5.43%) chose phonology. This demonstrates that their knowledge about how to pronounce and spell words leads to mastering the English language. Based on these findings, we may conclude that learning a foreign language is associated with acquiring all of the options listed above: Grammar, phonology, and vocabulary.

Question Twelve: Learning Vocabulary is:

- a. Boring
- b. Needless
- c. Interesting
- d. Very interesting

Table 3.37. Students' views about learning vocabulary

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Boring	00	00 %
Needless	00	00 %
Interesting	57	61.96 %
Very interesting	35	38.04 %
Total	92	100 %

As it is shown in table 3.37, less than two-thirds of students (61.96%) are interested in acquiring vocabulary. While a sizable proportion of students (38.04%) find learning vocabulary to be very interesting. However, no student said that acquiring the English vocabulary is boring or unneeded. As a result, it is assumed that the majority of students are interested in expanding their vocabulary.

Question Thirteen: How would you describe your vocabulary knowledge?

- a. Poor
- b. Average
- c. Above average
- d. Excellent

Table 3.38. Students' self-assessment of their vocabulary knowledge

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Poor	05	5.43 %
Average	20	21.74 %
Above average	57	61.96 %
Excellent	10	10.87 %
Total	92	100 %

According to the results in table 3.38, less than two-thirds of the population (61.96%) rated their vocabulary knowledge as above average. This suggests that students are able to use words appropriately, which in turn reveals that they retain words easily since they declared that they above average vocabulary knowledge. Few students (21.74%) reported that their vocabulary knowledge is average, which means that they have an intermediate level of English. While just (10.87%) stated that, their vocabulary knowledge is excellent. Only five students (5.43%) answered that he/ she had a poor vocabulary. Hence, we may conclude that the students who took part in this questionnaire had high level of English vocabulary.

Question Fourteen: Do you think that you lack vocabulary knowledge because of:

- a. Reading deficit
- b. Not aware of its significance
- c. Difficulty of the word
- d. All of the above

Table 3.39. Students' reasons of their lack of vocabulary knowledge

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	56	60.87 %
B	20	21.74 %
C	11	11.96 %
D	05	5.43 %
Total	92	100 %

In this question, less than two-thirds of the students (60.87%) believe that lack of reading might result in lack of vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, few students (21.74%) stated that they lack vocabulary because they are unaware of its value. Furthermore, a low percentage of students (11.96%) chose option (c): difficulty with the term itself. As a result, just five students (5.43%) declared that all of the given options contributed to their lack of vocabulary. Based on these results, we can say that students' struggle to comprehend the meaning of words, shows a lack of vocabulary knowledge.

Question Fifteen: Based on your experience, which element (s) do you think is/ are the hardest to learn?

- a. Complex words
- b. Ambiguous words
- c. Words that are difficult to pronounce
- d. Words contain silent letters, like in foreign

e. Words that are unfamiliar to Arabic culture

f. All of the above

Table 3.40. The hardest elements for students to learn

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	23	25.00 %
B and E	45	48.91 %
C and D	18	19.57 %
F	06	6.52 %
Total	92	100 %

According to the data presented in table 3.40, less than half of the students (48.91%) consider that ambiguous words in addition to words that are unfamiliar to the Arabic culture are the hardest to learn. Few students (25.00%) believe that complex words are the most difficult to learn. Furthermore, a small percentage of students (19.57%) stated that words with difficult pronunciation together with words that contain silent letters are hard to learn.

Moreover, a very small proportion of the students (6.52%) reported that all of the offered options are tough to be acquired. Due to the fact that most of the students chose ambiguous and unfamiliar words to the Arabic culture as the hardest element to master, we cannot ignore that the other elements are also challenging for others.

Question Sixteen: When learning English words, you should be aware of:

a- Meaning

b- Form

c- Use

d- All of the above

Table 3.41. The students' needed aspect for knowing an English word

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Meaning	18	19.56 %
Form	08	8.70 %
Use	21	22.83 %
All of the above	45	48.91 %
Total	92	100 %

As it is noticed in table 3.41, less than half of the participants (48.91%) said that they should be aware of all of the given options while acquiring any words linked to English vocabulary. This means that in order to master a foreign language, learners must be knowledgeable of the language's usage, form, and meaning. Few respondents (22.83%) highlighted option “c” as a necessary aspect when learning English terms. A low percentage of students (19.56%) stated that getting the meaning of an English word is sufficient for learning it, while eight students (8.70%) think that knowing the form of the word is enough to acquire it. This means that learners focus on acquiring the functions of words to truly gain vocabulary.

Question Seventeen: Is it difficult for you to retain vocabulary?

- a. Very difficult
- b. Difficult
- c. Moderate
- d. A little
- e. Not at all

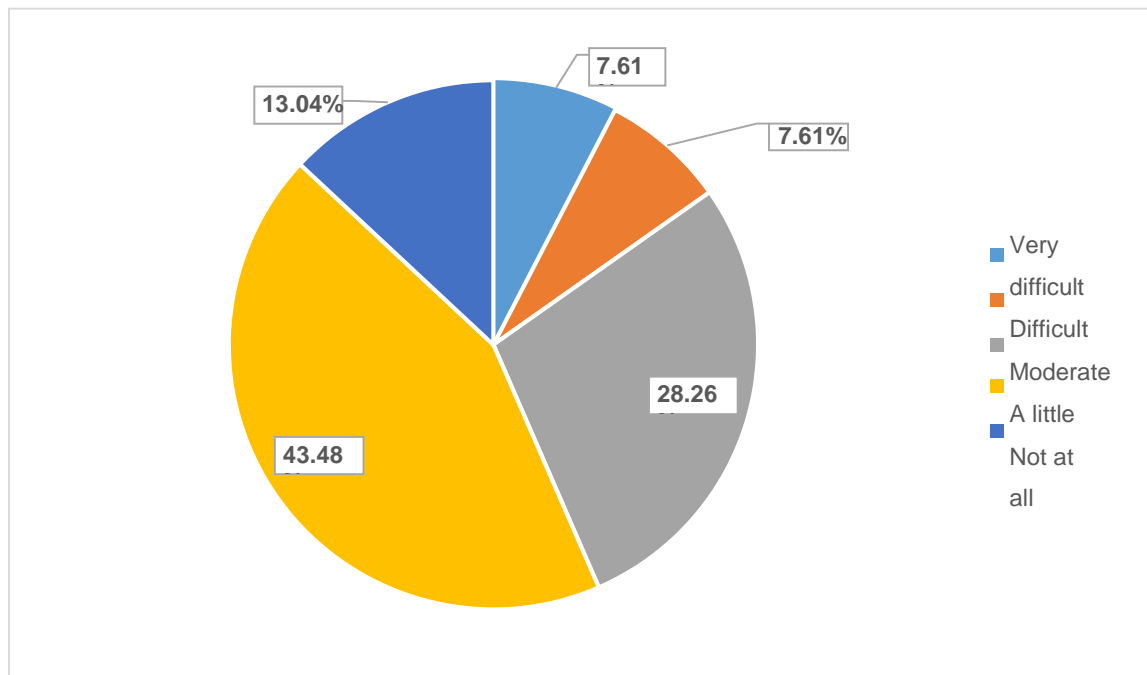
Table 3.42. The level of difficulty of students' vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Very difficult	07	7.61 %
Difficult	07	7.61 %
Moderate	26	28.26 %
A little	40	43.48 %
Not at all	12	13.04 %
Total	92	100 %

This question attempts to determine the level of difficulty that students have with vocabulary retention. Accordingly, less than half of the participants (43.48%) believe they have a little difficulty when retaining vocabulary. Few learners (28.61%) indicated that they have a moderate difficulty in retaining vocabulary. A low percentage of the students (13.04%) revealed that they have no difficulty in remembering words. However, just 7 student (7.61%) said that it is very difficult for him/her to retain vocabulary, while another (7.61%) answered that it is simply difficult

to memorize words. As a result, most of the students find it less difficult to retain the English vocabulary. This means that students were unable to completely retain English vocabulary although they previously (Q13) stated that their vocabulary knowledge is above average (61.96%).

Figure 3.5. The level of difficulty of students' vocabulary retention



Question Eighteen: How would you assess your ability to retain vocabulary?

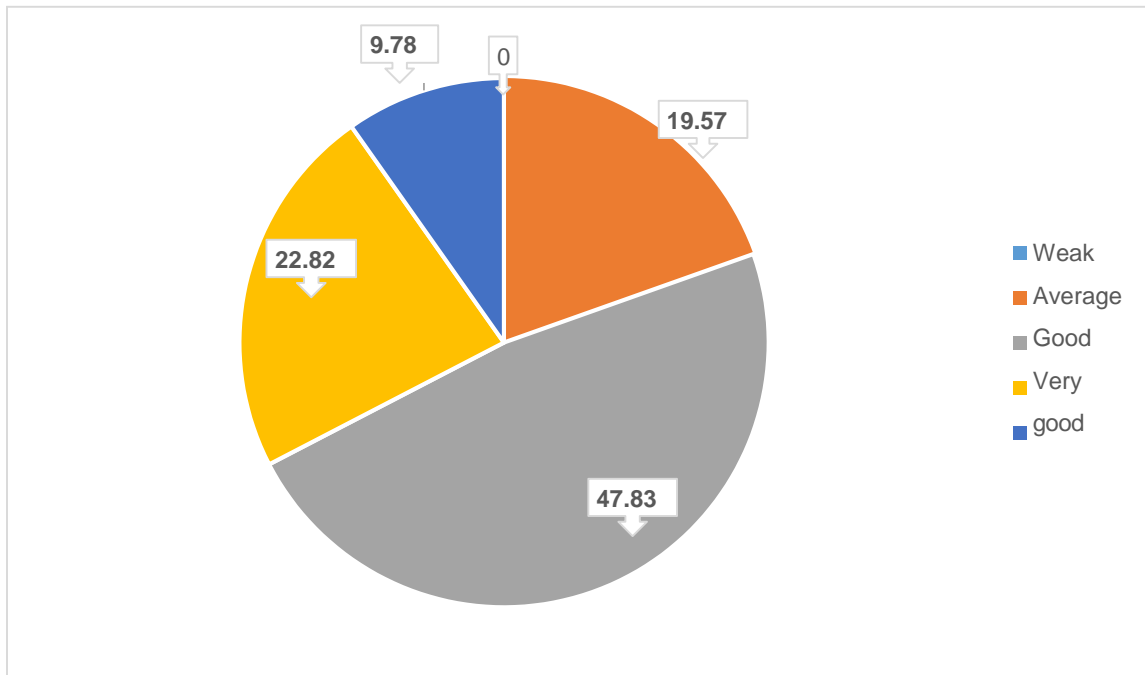
- Weak
- Average
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

Table 3.43. Students' self-evaluation of vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Weak	00	00 %
Average	18	19.57 %
Good	44	47.83 %
Very good	21	22.82 %
Excellent	09	9.78 %
Total	92	100 %

According to the answers of the participants shown in table 3.43, less than half of the students (47.83%) had a good vocabulary retention. Moreover, few learners (22.82%) responded that their ability to retain vocabulary is very good. Meanwhile, a small number of students (19.57%) rated their English retention as average. Conversely, just (9.78%) stated that they are excellent at retaining vocabulary. Eventually, we may find that the overall of students are good at retaining the English vocabulary. In addition, the findings may tend to represent the satisfying level of the students in remembering the vocabulary introduced to them while learning the target language.

Figure 3.6. Students' self-evaluation of vocabulary retention



Question Nineteen: Which solution (s) would you adopt to retain vocabulary effectively?

- Word repetition
- Note taking
- Dictionary use
- All of the above

Table 3.44. Students' solution (s) for retaining vocabulary effectively

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Word repetition	14	15.22 %
Note taking	05	5.43 %
Dictionary use	10	10.87 %
All of the above	63	68.48 %
Total	92	100 %

This question focuses on discovering which solution (s) the students use to successfully retain vocabulary. Two-thirds of the participants (68.48%) underlined all of the provided options. This demonstrates that word repetition, note taking, and dictionary use are all useful for retaining vocabulary efficiently. A small percentage of the students (15.22%) proved that repeating words several times makes it easier to remember them later. Therefore, just 10 students (10.87%) stated that using a dictionary helped them to retain words better. Yet, only 5 students (5.43%) chose note taking as their best solution for retaining vocabulary effectively. This reveals that most students believe that all of these techniques are helpful for retaining vocabulary; however, this varies from a student to another depending on what works best for him/ her.

3.2.5.4. Section Four: The Impact of Culturally-based learning on Vocabulary Retention

Question Twenty: Do you easily retain words that are linked to:

- a. Common expressions
- b. Images and pictures

c. Target culture with native culture language

d. Phonetics

e. All above

Table 3.45. Students' responses about the easiest words to retain

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
A	47	51.09 %
B	18	19.56 %
C	11	11.96 %
D	00	00 %
E	16	17.39 %
Total	92	100 %

According to the findings in the table 3.45, more than half of the population (51.09%) considered that common expressions are the easiest to retain. Furthermore, a small percentage of students (19.56%) stated that they can readily retain words through images and pictures. Only 16 students (17.39%) selected the target culture with native culture language since it is much simpler to remember. Besides that, just 11 learners (11.96%) chose all of the listed options. Consequently, these results demonstrate that the simplest words for students to retain are those associated with common expressions.

Question Twenty-one: How could culture help you to retain the target culture's words? (A comprehensive explanation is appreciated)

This question aims at discovering the students' views and perspectives about how the integration of culture could help them to retain the target culture's vocabulary. In spite of this, only 13 students (14.13%) answered this question, hence their responses could be summarized as follows:

- Language is created and shaped by the needs of a culture as it changes.
 - I believe that becoming acquainted with the beliefs and costumes of the English is a method of remembering words related to their culture.
 - Discovering how such words function, i.e., knowing the word's meaning in a particular context of the target culture helps me to retain that word easily.
 - Culture enables us to efficiently communicate with others, which in turn helps us to readily comprehend new terms. Moreover, grasping the new vocabulary is an easy way to retain it.
 - If you are familiar with the language of the target culture, you will understand the meaning of words more accurately so you will retain them.
 - Learning about culture requires learning the words that describe this culture through the best way possible and the closest to the mindset of its respective native origin.
 - Getting involved in the foreign language culture.
 - Understanding the word from its use in particular cultures helps in retaining the word.
 - When you are immersed in a culture, you are compelled to utilize certain vocabulary, which encourages you to look for at first and then becomes easy to retain it.
 - Being aware of the target culture can extremely help a non-native speaker or an EFL to retain new lexis since culture represents a set of perspectives and notions of a given society.
- Therefore, it would be extremely helpful to retain vocabularies through culture.

- Culture helps me to retain vocabulary by being aware of the significance of a certain term as well as its right application.
- If words are related to real life situation, there will be a probability of retaining them later.
- Exposure to language as well as daily repetition of what is culturally viable.

Question Twenty-two: Has your teacher ever tried to teach you vocabulary through cultural words?

a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.46. Students' views about teaching vocabulary through cultural words

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	65	70.65 %
No	27	29.35 %
Total	92	100 %

As it is displayed in table 3.46, the majority of the participants (70.65%) indicated their teachers taught them vocabulary through cultural words. Whereas, few students (29.35%) said that they were not exposed to vocabulary through cultural terms. This implies EFL teachers are aware of the relationship between language learning and culture, as well as how culture influences the students' learning process.

Question Twenty-three: When you face a new word that is represented several times, are you able to use it in the right context?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Maybe

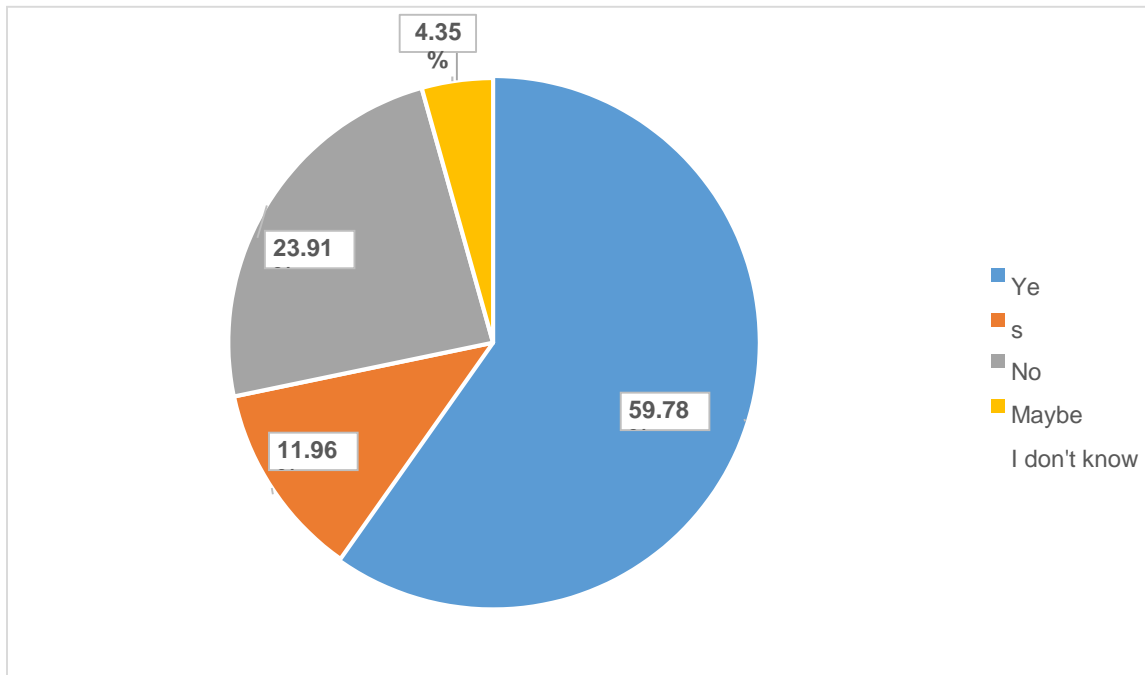
d. I don't know

Table 3.47. Students' thoughts about their ability to use new words in the right context

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	55	59.78 %
No	11	11.96 %
Maybe	22	23.91 %
I don't know	04	4.35 %
Total	92	100 %

According to table 3.47, more than half of the respondents (59.78%) confirmed that they are able to use words presented to them multiple times in their correct context, indicating that they easily understand the specific meaning of that word and can use it appropriately. Nevertheless, few students (23.91%) claimed that they are able to utilize words appropriately in a suitable context. This implies they may become confused if they come across terms with similar meanings through verbal contact. Despite this, a small percentage of students (11.96%) said that they are unable to use words correctly even after seeing them several times. Moreover, only 4 students (4.35%) expressed their doubt and uncertainty about their ability to use words properly in the right context. Based on these results, we can say that students' ability to apply vocabulary properly depends on the context itself as well as on the words themselves.

Figure 3.7. Students' thoughts about their ability to use new words in the right context



Question Twenty-four: Do you think that culturally-based learning has an impact on vocabulary retention?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

Table 3.48. Students' views about the impact of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention

Options	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	69	75.00 %
No	14	15.22 %
Maybe	09	9.78 %
Total	92	100 %

As it is revealed in table 3.48, the majority of the students (75%) believed that culturally based learning has an effect on vocabulary retention. As a result, they noted, more interaction to the target culture makes the process of retaining vocabulary much easier. However, just few students (15.22%) stated that culturally based learning has no impact on vocabulary retention. This implies that students may improve their vocabulary retention outside of the cultural setting. Further, very few learners (9.78%) expressed uncertainty regarding the influence of culturally-based learning on vocabulary retention. This signifies that, depending on the teacher's cultural implementation strategies and techniques besides the students' learning preferences may help them in enhancing their vocabulary retention.

Question Twenty-five: Any further suggestions or comments are most welcome.

This question allows the participants to make any comments and/or recommendations about the topic under investigation.

- Culture, as well as tolerance and accepting of diversity, should be taught in EFL.
- Teaching English culture is critical because it allows us to learn new vocabulary to expand our knowledge about the target culture.

- I think that the ideal way to not forget the acquired vocabulary is by practice.
- Teachers should emphasize the value of teaching culture so that students recognize its usefulness in broadening their knowledge.
- I think that culturally-based learning should be included in the teaching system of Algeria for many reasons, and we hope that the upcoming generation of teachers will do their best to be part of this, of developing the ALGERIAN ENGLISH LEARNING SKILLS.

From these suggestions, it is obvious that students are aware of the significance of incorporating culturally-based learning into EFL classes and the influence it has on their language skills in general and vocabulary retention in particular.

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

According to the results of the students' questionnaire, mastering a foreign language depends on the phonology, grammar, and vocabulary. This means that vocabulary is as important as the other linguistic elements. Furthermore, the majority of the students believed that acquiring vocabulary is both interesting and important, despite the difficulties they faced, such as difficult-to-pronounce, complicated and ambiguous words. Following this, using a variety of techniques and strategies such as dictionaries, taking notes and word repetition would easily aid students to retain the learned vocabulary.

In addition to what have been perceived, most of the students answered that culture influences language use, and that culture learning/teaching should go hand in hand with foreign language learning/teaching since they complement each other. In the same context, many learners asserted that vocabulary teaching through cultural terminology improves their ability to retain it.

According to the obtained results, the majority of students responded positively to the research questions, indicating that both teachers and students have positive attitudes towards the use of culturally-based learning to enhance students' vocabulary retention.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show that culturally-based learning is viewed as an essential and creative element that should be adopted into the EFL classroom by both students and teachers. The findings of the students' questionnaire demonstrate that when they were exposed to the vocabulary through cultural words, they were better able to comprehend the English language and retain vocabulary better. They also showed a deep understanding of students concerns by attempting to bring culture into their classes.

The results of both questionnaires show that raising students' attention to the target culture is quite successful in improving vocabulary retention. Furthermore, culturally based learning helps in the improvement and enhancement of EFL students' vocabulary retention. As a result, the students' knowledge will increase. In other words, we affirm that the research goals of this study have been achieved, implying that culturally-based learning plays a significant role in boosting students' vocabulary retention.

General Conclusion

Culturally-based learning is crucial in any foreign language teaching or learning. Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to find an answer to the research questions about the impact of culturally-based learning on the vocabulary retention of EFL students, especially at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma.

The study addressed three main chapters; it started with culturally-based learning, in which we discussed the concept of culture in general, as defined by many scholars from various perspectives. Then we moved on to define culture in the context of foreign language teaching. In addition to that, the link between language and culture was explained. Besides that, several cultural instructional techniques in EFL classes were introduced, specifically cultural clusters and cultural assimilators. Furthermore, claims about culture related to language, communication, and language learning motivation were established for teaching culture. Moreover, the chapter aimed to address the importance of culturally-based learning in foreign language instruction as well as its impact on vocabulary retention.

Considering the fact that vocabulary is the focus of our investigation, chapter two dealt with the teaching and learning of vocabulary, as well as the techniques to be adopted to enable students retain words better. Further, some major factors that contributed to EFL retention difficulties, as well as various strategies for increasing vocabulary retention in the target culture were mentioned.

In addition to what have been mentioned, the third chapter summarized the major results, as well as their analyses and interpretations. The quantitative descriptive method was used to seek answers for the main research question: Does culturally-based learning help students retain vocabulary effectively?

As a result, the findings of both questionnaires showed that both teachers and students believe that in order to understand a language, students must first learn about its culture, and that vocabulary is the basic component of every language, playing an important part in the teaching/learning process. They stated that culture impacts the language use and that cultural learning/teaching should be linked to foreign language learning/teaching. Similarly, many students claimed that learning vocabulary through cultural terms boosts their capacity to retain them. Furthermore, they have both prioritized the teaching/learning of language along with its culture. They have also showed an interest in employing culturally-based learning to increase vocabulary retention and eliminate problems faced in language learning. Hence, both EFL students and teachers demonstrated positive attitudes toward the use of culturally-based learning in enhancing students' vocabulary retention, thus, the research questions are brought to fruition.

1. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the current study's findings, which show that both instructors and learners value the relevance of incorporating culturally-based learning into EFL lessons, some pedagogical implications will be suggested to both teachers and students. Further, these implications would help students to develop their vocabulary knowledge and boost their lexicon retention. Consequently, teachers could use practical activities such as recycling in addition to the semantic mapping as a technique to increase students' retention of vocabulary.

1.1. Teachers

1.1.1. Recycling (Spaced Repetition)

Repeating words for few days will actually boost a student's long-term memory as Klausen (2019) explains:

Spaced Repetition is why good foreign language teachers will give students time to think about an answer, rather than immediately jumping in with a word the student has forgotten. If the student can eventually remember it for themselves, they've just strengthened their recall for the future.

Because when they simply forget a word, their brain needs to work a bit harder to remember it, and that extra effort will enhance their memory retention. In addition, recycling can help students learn and retain words more effectively because:

- It is more useful since it directs the student's attention to the words with which they are currently struggling.
- It is more successful because it allows learners to begin forgetting the words they have acquired, making remembering more challenging, in order to strengthen memory in the future.

1.1.2. Steps of Using the Semantic Mapping Technique *(see chapter two)*

- The teacher greets the learners.
- The teacher verifies the students' attendance and absence.
- Outlines the material that will be covered.
- Giving students the text.

- The teacher asks students to look up the definitions of the highlighted terms in the dictionary.
- The teacher asks his students to repeat the words after him.
- The teacher generates students' schemata regarding the words by asking questions based on the words provided.
- What comes to mind when you hear the term failure?
- Could you please provide me a synonym for failure? The map is shown to the students by the teacher as a visual tool of what they need to know in order to grasp the new term.
- The teacher invites that his students provide ideas or phrases for additional boxes.
- The teacher gives several examples to his students. Each example includes a new term.
- The teacher encourages his students to use dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference materials to finish the map.
- The teacher splits the class into two-student groups.
- He informs them that they must complete the map.
- After getting the semantic mapping words, the teacher administers the quiz to the students.
- The teacher summarizes the session by asking: What vocabulary do you have today? Mention some new terms that you have acquired.
- If the students have any queries, the teacher will answer them at the end of the session

1.2. Students

1.2.1. Never Adopt

As students need to be receptive, aware, and adaptable to the differences of the target culture, they must seek to strengthen their understanding of their mother culture. They should also not become so immersed in the target culture that they lose sight of their own.

2. Research Limitations

Because the researchers encountered various obstacles and difficulties to carry out this research, it addresses some roadblocks, which are detailed below:

- The lack of reliable sources. As any other master's students struggle with finding sources that fit their variables. They also took a long time to filter the ideas they desire
- Although some teachers were emailed, they did not participate in the process of responding to the questionnaire, others asked to take a copy and answer it at home while others did not complete the questionnaire.
- Some students did not take the procedure seriously and bypassed numerous questions while answering the questionnaire.
- The study only included first-year Master students and their teachers. As a result, the findings cannot be extended to all students.

3. Recommendations for Further Research

The current study has provided insights into the use of culturally-based learning and its impact on the vocabulary retention of EFL students. While we investigated the students' and the teachers

views and attitudes on the topic, future research can widen and strengthen such insights. On that basis, the following are some potential areas for future research:

- More study is needed to determine the influence of culturally-based learning on students' self-esteem.
- More study is needed to investigate the influence of culture on the creative reasoning of EFL students.
- For the study to be more reliable, a quasi-experimental method would be more effective.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

Our research aims at investigating the role of culturally-based learning in EFL classrooms and how it affects students' vocabulary retention. The questionnaire findings based on your feedback will be processed anonymously and will be highly useful for the validity of the research. Thereby, it would be appreciated if you could take time to share your standing points.

You are kindly requested to select the relevant response and to provide a comprehensive statement wherever necessary.

Ms. OURIDENE Ines & Ms. MOUAIZIA Meriem

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, Algeria

Section One: Personal Background

1. Degree (s) held:

a. Magister (MA)

b. Doctorate (PhD)

2. How long have you been teaching English at the University? (Please specify the number of years)

.....
3. What is your field of specialty?

a. Literature

b. Linguistics

c. Civilization

d. Translation

4. Which modules do you teach?

.....
.....

5. Have you ever visited/ stayed in an English speaking country?

a. Yes

b. No

Section Two: Teachers' views about Culturally-based learning

6. What is your understanding of the concept culture?

a. A society's perspectives, behavioral practices and products

b. A broad set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms and ways of living

c. Literature and arts

d. Understanding and interacting with the people around us

e. All of the above

- If other (s), please specify

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.....

7. How often do you include culture in your class?

a. Always b. Often c. Sometimes d. Rarely e. Never

8. If you were teaching English along with its culture, which of the following techniques is/are the most beneficial to be used?

a. Role-plays

b. Cultural clusters (ex, students prepare a task that covers one aspect of the TC, and then the teacher adds more information and asks them to compare the aspect being discussed between the native culture and the TC)

c. Cultural capsules (ex, discussions about the differences between a native custom and a custom in the target culture using lectures, pictures...etc.)

d. Cultural assimilators (ex, interactions between people from the native culture and those from the TC, followed by choices on the meaning of the participants' behavior, action, or words, in which students pick the correct interpretation of the interaction before leading a discussion of the chosen choices)

- If other (s), please specify

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9. Which of the following goals do you think is/ are the most essential for using culturally based learning?

a. Providing students with knowledge and comprehension of the target culture

b. Providing students with an awareness of their own cultural identity

c. Increasing students' ability to recognize parallels and contrasts between their culture and the target culture

d. Making language teaching more motivating and interesting

- If other (s), please specify

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.....

10. How important is for your students to learn about the English culture?

a. Very important

b. Important

c. Not important

11. How would you describe your students' attitudes when confronted with various English etiquette (social behavior) incorporated in your teaching materials (whether in plays, novels, historical documentaries, oral expression sessions, linguistics, and so on...)?

a. They accept and appreciate

b. They comprehend yet refuse to accept

c. They find it tough to comprehend

- Please, justify

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Section Three: Vocabulary Retention

12. How would you define vocabulary?

a. set of terms used in a certain language

b. Words that we see and understand when used properly

c. A set of knowledge about words and their meanings in both oral and written language

d. All of the above

- If other (s), Please specify

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13. Which of these components has to be the most essential in your classroom discussions?

a. Vocabulary

b. Grammar

c. Familiarity with the target culture

d. All of the above

- Please, justify

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14. According to you, Vocabulary retention depends on:

a. The teaching quality

b. The learners' interests

c. Meaningfulness of the materials

- If other (s), please specify

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15. Which of the following elements do you believe should be taught to your students in order to improve their vocabulary retention?

a. Pronunciation and spelling

b. Grammar

c. Synonyms and Antonyms

d. Target culture words

f. All of the above

16. Which vocabulary learning strategy (gies) do you consider is/are the most effective in terms of enhancing students' vocabulary retention?

a. Social interaction

- b. Creating a strong memory link between word form and meaning
- c. Using dictionaries
- d. Using either verbal or auditory assistance, or both, to create a clear image of words
- e. Repeating words orally or in writing, taking notes in class, or naming objects
- f. Cultural Consciousness-raising activities

17. Do you think that vocabulary learning has an impact on memory retention?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. If yes, how is vocabulary learning related to memory retention?

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19. What are the most typical issues that hinder your students' vocabulary retention?

- a. Length and complexity
- b. Culturally-loaded words
- c. Both a and b

- If other (s), please specify

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20. Do you think that the reason behind the students' errors in retaining words is because of:

- a. inability to stop using Arabic
- b. inability to stop using French
- c. lack of language knowledge

d. lack of cultural knowledge

- If other (s), please specify

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21. Which of the following choices EFL students need to use to overcome such issues?

a. Recycling

b. Extensive reading and listening

c. Using notebooks

d. Integrating culture

- If other (s), please specify

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Section Four: The Impact of Culturally-based learning on Vocabulary Retention

22. Do you think that students retain easily words that are:

a. Related to the target culture

b. Related to their own culture

c. Not related to culture at all

23. How would you use culturally-based learning to help your students' retaining vocabulary more efficiently?

a. Through imagery codes (creating mental pictures of objects or events not present to the eye and connect the words with those in the native language)

b. Through sentences in pronunciation codes (The pronunciations of native culture members can be used to construct sentences)

c. Through concepts representing historical facts

d. Through joke concept codes (something is said or done to evoke laughter or amusement, especially an amusing story)

24. Do you think that using culturally based learning influences vocabulary retention?

a. Yes b. No

- Please, justify

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25. Are you interested in using culturally based learning to help your students fostering vocabulary retention? (A brief explanation is appreciated)

a. Yes
b. No
c. Don't know

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26. We would be grateful for any further suggests for improving students' vocabulary retention through using culturally-based learning

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Thank you for you valuable collaboration

Appendix B

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

Our research aims at investigating the role of culturally-based learning in EFL classrooms and how it affects students' vocabulary retention. The questionnaire findings based on your feedback will be processed anonymously and will be highly useful for the validity of the research. Thereby, it would be appreciated if you could take time to share your standing points.

You are kindly requested to select the relevant response and to provide a comprehensive statement wherever necessary.

Ms. OURIDENE Ines & Ms. MOUAIZIA Meriem

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, Algeria

Section One: Personal Background

1. Gender:

a. Male

b. Female

2. Was studying English your own choice?

a. Yes

b. No

3. How long have you been studying English including this year?

.....

4. Have you ever visited/ stayed in an English speaking country?

a. Yes b. No

Section Two: Students' views about Culturally-based learning

5. In your opinion, what is culture?

- a. A society's perspectives, behavioral practices and products
- b. A broad set of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms and ways of living
- c. Literature and arts
- d. Understanding and interacting with the people around us
- e. All of the above

6. Are you exposed to English culture in the classroom?

a. Yes b. No

7. Do you think that it is important is to learn the target culture?

- a. Very important
- b. Important
- c. Not important

8. Should culture be taught concurrently with language or separately?

- a. Along with the language
- b. A separate module

9. Which cultural aspect (s) that interest (s) you the most to learn the target culture?

- a. Art and Literature
- b. Customs and Beliefs
- c. Political institutions and government
- d. Verbal and non-verbal communication

10. Do your teachers use culturally-based learning while teaching the language?

- a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

Section Three: Vocabulary Retention

11. Learning a foreign language, in your opinion, is considerably more related to the development of:

- a. Phonology
b. Grammar
c. Vocabulary
d. All of the above

12. Learning vocabulary is:

- a. Boring
b. Needless
c. Interesting
d. Very interesting

13. How would you describe your vocabulary knowledge?

- a. Poor
b. Average
c. Above Average
d. Excellent

14. Do you think that you lack vocabulary because of:

- a. Reading deficit

b. Not aware of its significance

c. Difficulty of the word

d. All of the above

15. Based on your experience, which element (s) do you think is/ are the hardest to learn?

a. Complex words

b. Ambiguous words

c. Words that are difficult to pronounce

d. Words that contain silent letters, like in foreign

e. Words that are unfamiliar to Arabic culture

f. All of the above

16. When learning English words, you should be aware of:

a. Meaning

b. Form

c. Use

d. All of the above

17. Is it difficult for you to retain vocabulary?

a. Very difficult

b. Difficult

c. Moderate

d. A little

e. Not at all

18. How would you assess your ability to retain vocabulary?

- a. Weak
- b. Average
- c. Good
- d. Very good
- e. Excellent

19. Which solution (s) would you adopt to retain vocabulary effectively?

- a. Word repetition
- b. Note taking
- c. Dictionary use
- d. All of the above

Section Four: The impact of Culturally-based learning on Vocabulary Retention

20. Do you easily retain words that are linked to:

- a. Common expressions
- b. Images and pictures
- c. Target culture with native culture language
- d. Phonetics
- e. All of the above

21. How could culture help you retain the target culture's words? (A comprehensive explanation is appreciated)

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22. Has ever your teacher tried to teach you vocabulary through cultural words?

a. Yes

b. No

23. When you face a new word that is represented several times, are you able to use it in the right context?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Maybe

d. I don't know

24. Do you think that culturally-based learning has an impact on vocabulary retention?

a. Yes

b. No

c. I don't know

25. Any further suggestions or comments are most welcome.

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Thank you for your cooperation

المخلص

تحاول الدراسة الحالية التحقيق في مواقف كل من الأساتذة و الطلاب تجاه تأثير التعلم القائم على الثقافة على تحصيل المفردات لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل عام ، يواجه أغلب طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية صعوبات فيما يخص حفظ و تعلم المفاهيم و الكلمات و يمكن القول أنهم غير أكفاء عندما يتعلق الأمر باستيعاب و تحصيل الكلمات الغير معروفة. و عليه تم توجيه استبيانين لكل من الأساتذة و الطلاب و ذلك لتقييم مصداقية البحث و هذا ما سمح بالتأكيد بجمع كمية معتبرة من البيانات الوصفية و الكمية بطبيعة الحال . لهذا ، قد تم اختيار 92 طالب سنة أولى ماستر و 13 من أساتذة قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة 08 ماي 1945 قالمة و ذلك بشكل عشوائي. أظهرت النتائج المتحصل عليها أن كلا من الأساتذة و الطلاب قد اتفقوا بشدة على تأثير التعلم القائم على الثقافة في تحصيل المفردات. بالتالي ، من الممكن للأساتذة استخدام بعض الأنشطة العملية كتقنية التكرار على فترات متفاوتة و ذلك للرفع من قدرة تحصيل الطلاب للمفردات.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التعلم القائم على الثقافة، تحصيل المفردات، الأساتذة، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

Résumé

L'étude actuelle tente d'enquêter sur les attitudes des enseignants et des étudiants à l'égard de l'impact de l'apprentissage basé sur la culture sur la rétention du vocabulaire chez les étudiants en anglais comme une langue étrangère. D'une manière générale, la plupart des étudiants en anglais rencontrent des difficultés dans l'apprentissage du vocabulaire et, en particulier, ils sont incapables de retenir des mots inconnus. En conséquence, cette enquête vise à répondre à la question principale de la recherche pour explorer les points de vue des étudiants et des enseignants sur l'intégration de l'apprentissage basé sur la culture dans les cours des étudiants en anglais comme une langue étrangère. Pour cela, deux questionnaires ont été adressés aux enseignants et aux étudiants pour évaluer la validité de la recherche, ce qui permettrait la collecte de données descriptives quantitatives. Pour cette raison, 92 étudiants en première année Master et treize (13) enseignants du Département d'Anglais de l'Université du 8 Mai-Guelma ont été tirés au sort. Les résultats obtenus ont révélé que les enseignants et les étudiants étaient fortement d'accord sur l'influence de l'apprentissage basé sur la culture sur la rétention du vocabulaire. Par suite, les enseignants pourraient utiliser certaines activités pratiques telles que le recyclage de termes culturels pour augmenter la rétention de vocabulaire des étudiants en anglais comme une langue étrangère.

Mots-clés : Apprentissage basé sur la culture, Rétention de vocabulaire, Enseignants, Étudiants en anglais comme une langue étrangère.