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EFL Learners' Attitudes towards the Development of Intercultural Communicative Competence through the Teaching of Literary Texts

Case Study of Second year Students at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

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

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Dedication

In the name of Allah the Merciful

I dedicate the fruit of this work to the most precious person in this world, to the light of

my life; to my mother for her unconditioned love and tenderness

To my father and to my brothers, may Allah bless them

To all my family members

To all those who taught me even a single letter

To all those who contributed to the achievement of this humble research and even with a

sincere smile and truthful words

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Abstract

The present dissertation examines the students' standpoints towards improving intercultural communicative competence with the utilization of literary texts. English language culture is found to be better portrayed in written pieces that serve as authentic sources depicting the English speaking communities' behaviors and customs. Accordingly, the research aims at figuring out the significance of incorporating literary works in EFL teaching curriculum and determining how such materials can enrich students' intercultural communicative knowledge. The data were collected by means of a quantitative method in which a questionnaire was administered to second year students (N=140), during the second semester at the department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. The results confirm the research hypothesis that the students have positive attitudes towards the application of literary texts to ameliorate intercultural communicative competence. The findings revealed that the students' are aware of the role played by teaching EFL culture in developing their competences to interact effectively with others.

Keywords: Students' attitudes, intercultural communicative competence, literary texts.

List of Abbreviations

C   Big Culture

c   Small Culture

CC   Communicative Competence

EFL   English Foreign Language

ELT   English Language Teaching

FL   Foreign Language

IC   Intercultural Communication

ICC   Intercultural Communicative Competence

L2   Second Language

TL   Target Language

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Culture is described in terms of components that shape human identity and may develop a shared zone for the whole society concerning their beliefs and behaviors. With respect to cultural awareness, people need to be aware that culture differentiates one community from another. Moreover, people's background construct their identities, their way of understanding one's self, others, and how a person views and explains realities about the world.

Each culture has a different framework, diverse ceremonies, and this is what learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) need to pay attention to. The integration of culture in EFL teaching curriculum encourages the students to be aware of their culture and others' to develop positive attitudes towards cultural differences. The growing interest in teaching English culture results in cultural interaction that leads to fostering learners' intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Foreign language (FL) education stresses the importance of developing in parallel learners' linguistic and communicative competences. This phenomenon came to light because it is acknowledged that FL teaching aims at enabling learners' to communicate effectively when interacting with speakers of different cultural background and focusing on developing learners' socio-cultural language use.

Teachers tend to adopt literary works as materials to teach EFL cultural content which is considered a source of authentic language. These tools enable to raise the learners' attention towards the importance of ICC in negotiating meanings, and developing their reading skill and critical thinking. However, some researchers argued that such materials are highly difficult to comprehend which urges the need for a careful selection of literary pieces in order to meet the mentioned objectives. Therefore, the dissertation investigates the students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using literary

texts as sources that demonstrate the English cultural values for the purpose of developingtheir ICC.

1. Statement of theProblem

The application of literary works in education has proved its success in different ways. It has a positive impact on the learner's mastery of ICC, it serves as a reliable source that portrays FL culture, and it may increase their understanding of various societies' ways of living, thinking, etc. However, the students may not guarantee the comprehension and construction of meanings in terms of EFL cultural norms which may result in failure to communicate effectively with others of different cultures; also, they may not be aware of the usefulness of literary works as teaching materials in assimilating English culture. Furthermore, the literature curriculum focuses on developing learners' linguistic competence more than adopting and promoting the intercultural understanding of EFL culture. Therefore, these facts call for exploring the students' perspectives towards the beneficial use of literary texts teaching to improve their ICC proficiency.

2. Purpose of the Study

The dissertation presents the students' attitudes towards the development of ICC with the employment of literary texts in English teaching curriculum. The research aims at:

1) Discovering the importance of incorporating literary works in EFL teaching curriculum;

2) Determining how literary works can enrich students intercultural communicative knowledge; and

3) Raising the students' awareness about embracing EFL culture and the effective use of literarytexts.

3. ResearchQuestions

The present dissertation addresses the following questions:

1) What are the students' attitudes towards the improvement of ICC through the teaching of literary texts?

2) To what extent do literary works contribute in developing students' intercultural communicative awareness?

3) How are the literary works integrated in EFL classroom?

4. Research Hypotheses

The study investigates the students' perspectives towards improving ICC with the utilization of literary texts as sources of EFL cultural content. Therefore, we hypothesize:

The Null Hypothesis implies that there is no relationship between the variables:

(H0): if literary texts are employed as materials to teach EFL culture, students' would not have positive attitudes towards its usefulness in developing their ICC.

The Alternative Hypothesis suggests that there is a relationship between the variables:

(H1): if literary texts are employed as materials to teach EFL culture, students' would have positive attitudes towards its usefulness in developing their ICC.

5. Research Methodology and Design

The research adopts a quantitative design that will enable to understand the subject under investigation.

5.1. Data Gathering

The research makes use of a questionnaire that was delivered to second year students during the second semester at the department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. This medium was used to collect insights about students' background knowledge regarding EFL culture and their awareness level about the significant teaching of literary texts to ameliorate their ICC. The quantitative analysis allowed measuring the

variables and testing the hypotheses by gathering the students' responses and drawing statistically their views.

5.2. Population and Sampling

The present research involves a sample of second year students (N=140) who volunteered to answer the questionnaire. The selection of the population is dependent on the fact that second year students possess the necessary knowledge to take part in the research and they have been taught different genres of literary texts. Therefore, these subjects are more suitable to achieve the research objectives and to gather more reliable data.

6. Organization of the Study

The dissertation is organized into two parts. The theoretical part is composed of two chapters. The first chapter is entitled *Intercultural Communicative Competence* which deals with the concepts of EFL culture, the liaison between language and culture, and ICC in terms of the learning barriers that may hinder the process of communication. The second chapter deals with ICC and literary texts' connections in EFL classroomand the methods to the selection of these materials. The practical part involves the chapter ofthe field of investigation which is *Exploring Students' Attitudes towards Developing ICC through the use of literary texts* by means of a questionnaire.Finally, the findings enabledconfirming the hypothesis, answering the research questions, shaping conclusions, and providing research limitations.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Introduction

The world is witnessing recently a remarkable progress in various domains, in which being a competent individual is considered as a necessity and priority for people to interact and build relations between one another. Accordingly, this process facilitates communication and helps speakers to overcome the cultural boundaries with others. In the case of EFL learning, teachers are required to raise the students' awareness towards the EFL cultural aspect in the classroom setting. Therefore, the chapter aims at highlighting the important role played by culture in FL teaching, it discusses the inseparability of language and culture, and the significant views about the ICC and the communicative barriers that may block the interaction among speakers.

1.1. English Foreign Language Teaching

Studying a new language permits individuals to communicate in an effective and creative way and it allows speakers to take part in real life situations. The learning of other languages provides users with a chance to discover new perspectives and to be aware of other communities' cultures. FL teaching is interested in communication that is more than just transmitting and receiving information (Byram, 1997, p. 3). Thus, its aim can be summarized in preparing learners to integrate in the communicative process with foreigners who are considered as the "other" (Byram, 1997, p. 4). However, this exchange depends on the way information is sent and how it would be interpreted in different cultural contexts. In this regard, the cultural context in which communication takes place is the most influential component in this process (Neuliep, 2000, p. 38).

The FL learning rules, pronunciation, and vocabulary are found not to be sufficient to understand language, because cultural features are significant as well. When international communication takes place, it implies the existence of intercultural communication which leads people to face the differences between the involved cultures (Çakir, 2006, p. 154). In this regard, Kramsch (1993) claimed that the degree of internationalization – the incorporation of cultural values and beliefs when learning a language or socializing - in the world is getting higher. It is agreed that FL is not only related to accomplish academic achievements; but also to learn how to communicate. Communication is dependent on the context and culture is acquired in the sense that language and culture are interrelated (as cited in Zhou & Griffiths, 2011, p. 113).

A distinction is necessary to be made between the terms *second* (L2) and *foreign* language (FL) learning. The former requires the learner's presence in the same environment where the language is spoken, while a language is treated as the latter when it is learned in academic context as the classroom, and which is not used by the society members where the learning process takes place (Moeller & Catalano, 2015, p. 327). Speakers of different backgrounds use English language world widely as L2 or FL in diverse fields of work, such as: medicine, law, science, tourism, online networks, etc. (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006; Hyland, 2006, as cited in GÜven, 2015, p. 9). Furthermore, the linguistic competence alone is not sufficient to participate in a successful communication due to the fact that communication is beyond exchanging, sending, and receiving messages (Romanowski, 2017, p. 7).

1.2. Language Culture

Back to early times, the concept of culture was identified by Tylor (1871, p. 1)as everything that is complex in nature which involves what people believe in, knowledge, legislation, customs, and manners, in addition to other capacities and practices that are

acquired by the society members. In another study, Byram and Risager (1999, p. 85) classified culture into four categories:

1) Culture is identified in terms of people's way of living in real life situations, their daily activities, their traditions, and how they coexist in the community.

2) Culture holds the rules that govern people such as political, social, and economic, etc.

3) Culture is seen as the norms and the values, people's perceptions, beliefs, and mentality.

4) Culture involves the society products such as literature, music, and art, etc.

Culture has been investigated in many disciplines; for instance, in sociology it is defined as a regulator of people's behavior because speakers behave in a certain way and not in the other as they belong to a particular culture and not to the other. Similarly, anthropologists perceive culture as a life style and a manifestation of what they have achieved in addition to their unique way of how they think and feel (Thanasoulas, 2001).

Long-Fu (2001, p. 24) divided the meaning of culture into two elements that are the narrow and the broader. The former is concerned with literature, history, geography, drama, music, etc., while the latter involves customs of the society, traditions, and thoughts. Depending on this view, the complex nature of the notion of culture makes it difficult to bind its meaning to only one definition or limiting its scope, as it may complicate, simplify, or even weaken the real meaning of this aspect, because some of its components may not be obviously noticed. For example, the TV show of *Oprah* is considered a social activity for people who attended at regular basis; however, it cannot be linked clearly to culture, although the former is shared among a group of people (Nieto, 2002). In a similar manner, the concept of culture can be viewed from different angles as it

is associated with various meanings and interpreted differently depending on particular contexts (Nieto, 2002, p. 135). In line with this idea, Yule (2010, p. 267) claimed that culture is the unconscious acquisition of information by society members and forming hypotheses about people and whatever exists in the universe.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J, and Minkov (2010, p. 5) explained that culture is not genetic in nature or something that people are born with, but rather, they learn it through socialization within their groups. They added that Culture has various senses that are originated in Latin. In its tight meaning, culture refers to the minds' improvement in the areas of education, literature, and art. Yet, in its general sense, it is known among anthropologists and sociologists as the mental software.

In the field of FL teaching, a clear distinction has been made between what is called the big 'C' and the small 'c' culture. The 'C' is known as a high culture which represents the structural design, art, history, writings, and music, etc., while the small 'c' stands for peoples' daily life, their behaviors, traditions, society customs, and individuals' unique way of thinking. In EFL context, the learners tend to prefer the 'C' culture over the 'c' culture; however, a great shift is being directed recently towards the small 'c' culture due to the influence of sociological and anthropological studies (Hall, 1990 as cited in Ghanam, 2017, p. 1).

As a result, people grasp culture through living within their ethnic groups which demonstrates who they are. Accordingly, the learning of EFL in classroom necessitates teaching its cultural aspects to the students, in order to communicate easily in cross-cultural situations.

1.3.   Links between Language and Culture

Byram (1989) stated that language plays the role of representing the worth of culture and individuals' cultural identity thanks to the fact that language is characterized by being transparent and highly symbolic in its nature. It is highly noticeable that language and culture depends on one another, and the absence of language imposes the absence of culture and vice versa. In terms of inseparability of the two concepts, Jiang (2000, p.328) declared that language is a major portion of culture. Some scholars believe that the existence of culture would be something impossible without language; hence, in a simultaneous and natural way, language introduces culture. Language represents individuals, since it embraces their background, whether historically or culturally in addition to their way of thinking and living.

According to Risager (2006, p. 1), the variations of cultures are expressed and transmitted linguistically; in addition, the inseparability of language and culture they tend to be linked together in a way that language is culture and culture is language. Risager added that since the 1990's, linguists, sociolinguists, and anthropologists focused in their studies on the existing relationship between language and culture which is found to be complicated.

Back to the 1980's, Fishman (1985) as cited in Risager (2006, p. 13) worked more on the correlation between language and culture, and established three principles that connect one with the other. These are:

- Language is considered as a part of culture.

- Language takes the role as an index for culture.

- Culture is symbolized by language.

On the one hand, language plays a role in delivering culture and communicating cultural differences. On the other hand, culture shapes language meanings and both

notions go hand in hand. As a result, this liaison strongly supports the teaching of FL culture (Risager, 2006).

In another attempt, Krech (1962) summarized language functions that are: (1) communication which takes place via language; (2) language which represents and constructs individuals' personality and the history of their culture; and (3) culture which is shared and transmitted by language (as cited inDayam, Asl&Farjami, 2015, p. 3632).

1.4. Teaching of Language Culture

Attention is directed recently towards incorporating culture as an important component in the process of language learning and teaching. In this regard Samovar, Porter, Mc Daniel & Roy (2014) pointed out that the inseparability of communication and culture is explained as the function of culture goes beyond addressing how communication occurs, who is speaking, about what, understanding messages' meanings, and the conditions of the use and avoidance of these messages. Additionally, language, culture, and communication coexist together to transmit the people's wants and reflect the whole society they belong to when communicating with others consciously or unconsciously. According to Bennett (1997, p. 16), a speaker who tends to use language without understanding the cultural significance and having a cultural background is described as a "fluent fool". Bennet added that language works as a device that represents others' way of thinking and even if the learner is linguistically competent but s/he is not aware of FL culture; this would result in communication problems.

In the same vein, Bada (2000, p.101) revealed that FL culture must be taken into considerations when setting syllabus objectives in order to link different cultures and create a tolerant circumstances between diverse societies. Similarly, Gao (2006) stated that "foreign language teachers should be aware of the cultural studies within FLT and try, in

every way, to enhance students cultural awareness and improve their communication competence" (p. 59).

Ćakir (2006, p. 157) stated the reasons behind making learners familiar with the components of culture. These are:

1- To enhance their skills of communication.

2- To comprehend the patterns of both behavior and linguistics of the target culture.

3- To improve their international and intercultural comprehension.

4- To perceive reality in a wider sense.

English is becoming a predominant language for communication and exchange of information due to globalization. This fact stimulates language teachers to reinforce the teaching of culture as a fifth language skill besides reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Culture presents the mechanisms for speakers to be familiar with the use of English, and to develop appreciation and awareness towards the characteristics that are unique in other cultures. In other words, the teaching of the fifth language skill enables learners to embrace and cope with the cultural differences (Tomalin, 2008). In language teaching classroom, the concern is not only about enriching and enhancing learners' knowledge of other cultural backgrounds; but also to enable them to be aware of their identity in relation to others (Scarino&Laddicoat, 2009, p. 21).

To sum up, the aim behind involving culture in FL teaching is because it allows learners to be culturally competent individuals that are able to function when communicating with native speakers and it increases the sense of familiarity with the TL contextual situations.

1.5. Cultural Competence

The concept of Cultural Competence (CC) comprises culture and competence. The former involves humans' behavior, way of communicating, beliefs, and what makes them worth. The latter indicates the required capacity to perform in a prosperous way in the communication process (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989, p. 13). Despite the various definitions assigned to CC, the emphasis is on individual's ability to be aware of the diversities among the ethnic groups to respect and deal with the differences properly. Five major elements were made by Cross et al. (1989, p. 19-21) that contribute in making people, institutions, and professionals culturally competent agents. These are:

1- Give estimation to the diversities that exist: by giving respect to others who belong to different cultures.

2- Promote awareness towards self-assessment: people should know and value their own culture.

3- Awareness about the dynamics when interacting with others: comprehend that many things may change because of that interaction.

4- Application and institutionalization of knowledge

5- Diversity adaptation in addition to the context of the served culture.

Moreover, CC is not achieved by obliging people to accept others' culture and behave in the same way as they do (Kramsch, 1993, p. 181). However, Baraja-Rohan (1999, p. 143-154), supported that it is about enabling learners to be aware of the cultural diversities, to acquire the ability to notice and accept the differences that exist between people, and the ways to overcome the divergence in a successful manner.

Intercultural sensitivity is a concept that refers to the capability to experience and to distinguish the variances that may exist between cultures (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p. 422). Intercultural sensitivity is considered as the first reaction that

individuals produce whenever they face an intercultural situation as well as predicting cultural competence (Altshuler, Sussman, &Kachur, 2003, p. 389). Furthermore, it is defined as the influential side of intercultural communication where individuals encourage themselves to grasp, estimate, and admit the variation among the existed cultures (Peng, 2006, p. 38-45).

The CC differs from intercultural competence. The former implies the enrichment of knowledge of other cultures but the learners are not allowed to convert their own culture and their own identity. However, the latter denotes that the learner is engaged in the process of learning to communicate information, maintain relationships, and preserve those connections. Therefore, the aim of learning FL is to develop intercultural identity that may lead to successful communication and shape culturally competent individual (Scarino, Laddicoat, 2009, p. 21).

The distinction in meanings can be traced back to the context in which it is used as in guidelines for workers, trainings for teachers, and international affairs, etc. CC focuses on enhancing estimation towards own culture and assimilating and functioning within other cultures. Thus, CC is the capacity to work and interact in a successful way with other people who faced different social experiences from ours (Mullin, 2012, p. 8). Additionally, Moule (2012) defined CC as the successful ability to be flexible and it requires both awareness and sensitivity towards learning new information about other ethnic groups (p. 5).

CC refers to the situation where people react to other persons from other ethnic groups that have distinct languages. It also stands for the individuals who are committed to other religions or belongs to different backgrounds. CC deals with many other factors that differentiate people from each other in a respectful and effective way and value all these differences (Fong, 2004; Fong, Furuto, &Lun, 2011, as cited in [NASW], 2015, p.13). In

this regard, CC is a group of identical capacities that collaborate together to allow frameworks and workers functioning effectively in cross-cultural situations. It evokes the one who has the insight and the ability to view the connection that exists between several cultures and having a critical comprehension of their own and other's culture (Byram, 2000, as cited in Nguyen, 2017, p. 150).

Consequently, for an educational system to be culturally competent, educationists are ought to look forward to educating a community that is full of diversity by increasing their perception of cross-cultural relationships and foster the ability to function appropriately.

1.6. Intercultural Communication

The concept of Intercultural Communication (IC) is originated in the book of Edward T. Hall *"The Silent Language"* (1959) which gained interest of many scholars (Gudykunst, 2003, p. viii). According to Byram (1997, p. 22), IC can refer to three types. First, IC is the situation where people have different languages and belong to different countries or communities, but one of the two interlocutors is the native speaker of the language being used. Second, IC is where language is used as a Lingua Franca between people from different countries and with different languages. Third, IC is where people have different languages but they belong to the same country, and the native speaker is one of the two participants.

Neuliep (2000, p. 14) emphasized the importance of interaction, because the world is a diverse place; people vary in their way of thinking and life style, etc. In this regard, cultural diversity brings out challenges and benefits to human beings, such as: a minimizing fights, enhancing businesses at local or international levels, and tolerance that would increase self-development.

When teaching and learning a FL language, the intercultural perspective is more than just knowing and learning new information about people of different cultural

backgrounds and from distinct settings. It is about developing awareness that everyone is characterized with a unique culture, and the process of communication includes one's culture and others' when interaction takes place and exchanging of verbal or non-verbal information (Neuliep, 2000, p. 21; Scarino&Laddicoat, 2009, p. 22). Dealing with other speakers from diverse backgrounds may result in a conflict or misunderstandings as we may not be aware of their attitudes, practices, values, and culture, which may lead not to behave appropriately in specific circumstances. This suspicion about others may make us uncomfortable when confronting them (Neuliep, 2000, p. 26).

In other words, stimulation to communicate, acquiring enough information, and developing the interactive skills are predominant to be a culturally competent communicator. Additionally, a competent communicator dealing with people of different cultures should be sensitive towards the FL cultural aspects; s/he should adjust the message in an appropriate way depending on the context, and accepting and comprehending the principles and the basics of peoples' relations (Neuliep, 2000, p. 27). Dadfar (2001) noted that IC goes beyond messages transmission and reception by people of different cultures than ours. He was influenced by Lusting and Koester's (1993) definition in which he described IC: "as a symbolic, interpretative, exchange, reciprocal and contextual process in which the degree of differences between people is large and important enough to create similar interpretations about what are regarded as component behaviors that should be used to create shared meanings" (p. 7).

It is common today that people of different cultural backgrounds work in the same workplace that requires non-native speakers to develop IC skills to accomplish some assignments and interact easily among each other (Dadfar, 2001, p.5). Further, Dadfar(2001, p.9) distinguished between IC and cross-cultural communication. He stated that IC is about communication between people who are culturally different while cross-

cultural communication aims at comparing the act of communication within people of the same culture to those people who are from another. Consequently, IC is interested in communication among people from various cultures and it examines the influential factors of culture on communication. Similarly, Gudykunst (2003, p. 1) believed that that cross-cultural communication is based on comparison of interaction across-cultures; however, intercultural communication includes communication between people from various cultural backgrounds. Thus, IC is the act of transmitting and receiving messages from different languages and cultures; also, it is the discussion of humans' experiences and the messages' meanings across different societies.

Referring to other cultures does not include only people with different speaking languages and backgrounds; rather, it involves those who live within the same community and territory but belongs to different groups (Arent, 2009, p. 2). Hence, some barriers may result out of these situations because people choose not to know about others or simply they have absolutely no idea the TL culture is. Accordingly, Barna (1997, as cited in Keles, 2013, pp. 1515-1517) developed a list of barriers that can encounter people in IC. These are summarized as follows:

1. *Anxiety*: It is the feeling that results from unawareness of others. People will keep thinking how to act, what to do, and what to say, etc. This constant thinking keeps the communicator absent mind, which may hinder the process of interaction.

2. *Assuming similarities instead of differences*: Focusing only on similarities leads to a lack of knowledge of the most important differences that can cause serious problems. On the other hand, assuming differences instead of the common points can prevent people from discovering the universals between the different cultures. Thus, it is better not to assume but rather to discover things.

3. *Ethnocentrism*: It is concerned with judging other cultural features based on the standards of the mother culture, and it is the act of thinking that one's culture is better and superior than others.aa

4. *Stereotypes*: It is a type of beliefs that is based on generalization and it is a random feeling that evolves over time. Stereotypes can be negative and positive standpoints but they are built on half of the truth. These over generalizations and exaggerations may mislead people because it can be factual or fake especially negative stereotypes.

5. *Prejudice*: It is described mainly as the biased behavior and positive or negative opinions towards others. This act is based on unfound truth in which the discrimination can be according to gender, religion, and ethnicity, etc.

6. *Language*: It is the most known block. People with different languages may face many problems and difficulties in understanding each other. However, having the same language does not guarantee sharing mutual understanding such as the use of idioms that can be understood only by those who have common background.

7. *Nonverbal communication*: It is the kind of communication which is accomplished via gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions, etc. These can be interpreted differently and vary from one culture to another.

Additionally, Sociolinguists and anthropologists contributed with various studies on IC including Hymes (1962), Gumperz (1964), Bernstein (1966), and Goffman (1971; 1976). The primary focus was on the socio-cultural aspects and the factors that have an impact on language use in communication over linguistic elements (Romanowski, 2017, p. 12).

1.7. Intercultural Communicative Competence

In the beginning of the 1960s, people travelled for political and business reasons and this raised interest in investigating ICC. In the late 1970s, ICC became one of the main objectives in English language teaching as it was no longer limited to governmental and commercial issues. In this regard, sociolinguists, psychologists, and sociologists conducted research to help speakers enhance ICC (Xue, 2014, p. 1494)

Hymes (1972) came up with the concept of Communicative Competence (CC) by criticizing Chomsky's (1965) idea that acquiring the first language (L1) relies only on the grammatical competence. Hymes believed that the sociolinguistic competence is another important aspect when acquiring a language by making use of language appropriately in a specific context (Byram 1997, p. 9)

Accordingly, Van EK (1986) as cited in Byram (1997, p.9-10) proposed a model of communicative ability that contains six competences and it is adopted in FL teaching. The model is summed up as follows:

- *Linguistic competence*: It is the capacity to utter and transmit utterances that make sense and this ability is in accordance with the system of language.

- Sociolinguistic competence: It is the act of being aware about the ways on how to choose the forms of language.

- *Discourse competence*: It is the ability to select the useful strategies to interpret texts and understand what these pieces of writing convey.

- *Strategic competence*: It is what is needed when facing hard situations in order to figure out what to do exactly.

- *Socio-cultural competence*: It refers to the degree of familiarity with a particular socio-cultural setting.

- *Social competence*: It includes the will and the proficiency to communicate with others, including stimulation, attitude, confidence in oneself, sympathy and the capacity in various situations.

However, Van EK's work was criticized by Argyle (1983) as cited in Byram (1997, p. 13) mainly because he excluded the non-verbal behaviors that functions in:

- Revealing people personal emotions and internal attitudes;

- It is a representation of one's identity;

- It presents rituals; and

- It works as an ally for the verbal communication.

In another attempt, Fantini, (2000) claimed that ICC has been given various meanings by researchers (p. 26). He explained that three main themes and capacities may identify ICC. First, it is the capacity to create and improve relationships. The second deals with the ability to minimize the distortion and the block of communication by communicating in an effective and appropriate way. The third one is to collaborate with others (p. 27). In the same vein, the Council of Europe (2001) - the international organization that was established in 1949 and which calls for human rights - described ICC as the acquisition of certain aspects by the students including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness that are essential in the process of communication.

Additionally, Fantini (2003) viewed ICC as the complex capacities that are required in order to communicate with others who are different in terms of language and culture, in which interaction should be in an appropriate and effective manner (p. 1). In this regard, he suggested alternative terms to ICC as global competence, international competence, and multicultural competence (p. 2). According to Fantini and Tirmizi (2006, p. 11), people speaking their native language develop a CC which paves the way to

communicate, each with his/her group members who share similar cultural values, and without facing any problem in conveying meanings or causing misunderstandings. Therefore, when learning FL besides the mother tongue, communication will eventually take place. At this phase, learners need to improve a second CC to tackle cultural differences and this is what is meant by ICC which evolves whenever the speakers are learning a new language.

Similarly, Byam and Zarat (1970) as cited in Georgiou (2011) designed a model of ICC that comprises objectives to serve as dimensions for ICC assessment. These are:

- "Attitudes (savoir être): curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.

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

- Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre): ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own.

- Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/savoir faire): ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

- Critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager): ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries." (pp. 81-82).

ICC acquired a wide popularity in EFL context; yet, its components are still debated (Yunlog, 2014, p. 98). The Common European Framework of References for

Languages (CEFR) - which provides trainees, teachers and administrators, and course designers with the needed requirements to help students in overcoming the complexity of the use of language - asserts on the significance of shifting towards teaching and learning intercultural aspect. CEFR stated that the focal aim of intercultural approach in language learning is to build learners' confidence, improve their personality and identity as a result of frequent confrontation with others of distinct cultural background (2001, p. 1, as cited in Penafort, 2015, p. 17).

ICC makes use of knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a medium between cultures, in addition to the learners' identity and those of the target country. As a result, the improvement of ICC comprises learners' experiences that they picked up in their mother culture and which allow them to represent their propositions that serve as an integral part in enhancing their skills and knowledge when communicating with FL (Romanowski, 2017, p. 1). In the same vein, Romanowski pointed out that linguists and anthropologists consider ICC as an important component in FL learning. He added that attention is directed recently to the methods that are used in FL teaching which enable the learners to achieve successful communication, and who are expected not only to transmit information and exchange messages but also to preserve relations with their speaker (p. 1).

To sum up, ICC witnessed a great development recently as FL teachers and learners tend to follow researchers' guidelines to improve the process of communication with different people from various cultures, and to take advantage of the interactive situations in maintaining new strong relationships that are built on correct sphere. Consequently, misunderstandings, stereotypes, and prejudging, etc., are minimized due to the incorporation of culture in FL teaching curriculum.

Conclusion

The reviewed studies revealed that teaching the linguistic aspects alone is not sufficient to achieve an effective communication because just knowing the language does not guarantee that the learner is able to assimilate EFL input. As a result, a call was made for the integration of cultural aspects in FL curriculum as an important component that serves hand in hand with the linguistic competence. Thus, the chapter presents the importance of FL culture in building ICC and tackles some of the barriers that may block people from interacting with others.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE
THROUGH THE TEACHING OF LITERARY TEXTS

Introduction

Literary texts have been employed for decades in EFL classroom to ameliorate the learners' ICC since it is an effective tool to reflect, represent, and portray the TL cultural values, traditions, behaviors, and ideologies, etc. Literature is considered to be the mirror of culture representing the people's way of living and thinking. The chapter reports on how literary texts can be employed for the purpose of developing ICC, the challenges encountered by FL teachers in this process, how literary texts are selected, and how to raise cultural awareness among FL learners.

2.1. Literature

Many attempts had been carried out to define literature, for instance, Valdez (1986) described it as the "unabridged fiction, drama, poetry, or essay, written for an educated audience of native speakers of the language in which it is written, purporting to present life as it really is" (p. 138). According to Meyer (1997), definitions assigned to literature are based on the standards which differentiate it from any other work. Recently, literature is described in relation to prototypes that are characterized with the precise use of language and written in a literary manner including poetry, fiction, and play, etc. Understanding what literature stands for has been a challenge due to its complexity that leads people to reduce its meaning sometimes. For example, it has been defined as "anything is literature if you want to read it that way" (p. 1). This can be explained as English language is used by countless number of people who belong to different cultural

backgrounds and have various experiences with the concept of literature, which makes it difficult to provide a standard definition that would be accepted by everybody (Meyer, 1997, p. 1).

It was stated that the word literature is originated from the Latin word *Littera*which refers to the word letter that indicates the tiny element of the alphabetical writing (Klarer, 2004, p. 1), and it is considered as the form of the verbal and documented works like novels, poetry, etc. These works are used in order to trigger people or readers' phantasm and take them to a different world and make them standup with a matchless sight. Additionally, literature is identified as the documented codes; however, not all the documented writings are considered as literature. More precisely, it involves the works that are characterized as being aesthetic and artistic in style which distinguishes this type of writings from everyday works such as newspapers, scientific papers, legal documents, and telephone books, etc. In this respect, literature represents the affection, soul, and what matters to people.

In 1994, John McRae drew the distinction between Literature with a capital *L* and literature with a small *l*. He referred to the former as the classical texts that are famous among authors in America and Britain, and the latter as the recent fiction that is popular among people. Moreover, he explained that the teaching of literature in EFL classroom should not be limited to traditional texts but also include contemporary works of different cultural backgrounds (as cited in Dimitrova-Gyuzeleva, 2015, p. 22).

2.2. Teaching Literature in English Foreign Language Classroom

Despite the fact that literature has faced many problems since its emergence, people were skeptical on whether to use it or not. In light of this, literature has not being ignored and the dispute has always been on how, when, and where to be applied, and what are the reasons behind its integration in the educational system and EFL learning context

(Sage, 1987, p. 10). Savvidou (2004) claimed that the teaching of literature in EFL classroom is beneficial to the learners. It helps the students to be open in order to comprehend and embrace their own and others culture; in addition, it allows them to express themselves and form new grammatical and lexical information. Furthermore, it gives them the opportunity to know when and how it is used in different contexts. Literary texts are one of the means that are used to improve first the EFL learners linguistic and communicative competence, and second it provides them with knowledge about the use of language in various types of discourse, that is, literature plays a significant role in the educational realm.

In grammar translation method, the main focus was on the form of language, learning its grammar, and how it appears in texts; however, the literary and artistic natures in addition to the content were ignored. With the growing interest in the functional-national method, literature was neglected and considered only as a source of authentic materials because the main concern was in fostering communication. Yet, literature as a learning material proved its efficiency over the decades by aiming at developing the communicative function and presenting authentic language (Llach, 2007, p. 9). Accordingly, Van (2009, p. 2) explained that literature cannot be separated from FL teaching due to many reasons which are summarized as follows:

- It supplies the learners with a meaningful and useful context.

- It provides a large amount of vocabulary in the form of dialogues, texts, etc.

- It develops the learners' creativity and imagination.

- It improves learners' awareness towards other cultures.

- It helps the learners to be better critical thinkers.

In another study by Alemi (2011) that took place in one of the public schools, she reported that the teaching of literature in many EFL classrooms has not been given much

importance and many teachers believed that it is not significant for the educational system. She observed that the tasks assigned to the students focused on ameliorating their linguistic knowledge including the grammar which is memorized by heart and little time was devoted to develop their reading abilities. Furthermore, she pointed out that the teaching system is a teacher-centered and students' practices are limited to memorizing information which may result in speaking and writing hurdles (p.177).

Based on the previous studies, the teachers were constrained with the teaching of literature to serve linguistic competence and they overlooked the role played by cultural information in communication. The early attempts of teaching literature in EFL classroom were restricted to translating these pieces of literature from the TL to the mother language. In the same manner, the direct method and the audio-lingual method aimed more on improving the FL learner's language structure and grasping new vocabulary. Recent trends in the field of EFL teaching shifted from developing the linguistic competence towards improving their communicative skills that would help the learners to interact effectively with the native speakers of the TL. In this respect, teachers investigated the applicability of new techniques to include literature in EFL classroom and test its usability (Saricoban&Kucukoglu, 2011, p. 160).

Since the 1960s, the incorporation of English literary texts in the EFL curriculum has been discussed and it has been the main concern of researchers. Many efforts took place especially in discourse analysis to set the reasons behind using literary texts in FL teaching as it was believed that literature enables the students to improve cognitive and linguistic skills (Lazar, 1993, p. 19, as cited in Bobkina, 2014, p. 249). The first attempt to include literature in English language teaching was launched in the educational day on King's college conference (1963), Cambridge. At the conference, many questions were raised over the weaknesses associated with the old methods in improving language skills

and fostering the communicative capacities. However, despite all these endeavors, literature has been eliminated from EFL classrooms for years to come and limited works have been conducted about the subject of inquiry (Bobkina, 2014, p. 249).

Despite the fact that the history of literature in EFL teaching syllabus was not stable, we cannot ignore the progress that has been witnessed by researchers. For instance, Hasan and Kheder (2017) noted that the teaching of literature in EFL classrooms functions as a motivator for the students to be permissive when dealing with different values of FL cultures, and helping them not to form any prejudice about the TL culture. Additionally, they pointed out the efficiency of raising learners' creativity and linguistic competence that can be achieved with the employment of literary pieces as a source of materials. However, they argued that literature can be criticized for the difficulties that the readers may encounter when reading this type of materials (p. 141).

2.3. Literary Texts

Literary texts are highly recommended for promoting intercultural understanding because it makes people aware of the potential problems that they may face in intercultural communicative situation, and serves as a source of reliable FL cultural background. In light of this, Tevdovska (2016), in his paper *Literature in ELT Setting: Students' Attitudes and Preferences towards Literary Texts,* mentioned three common genres of literary texts that can be utilized in EFL classroom. The short story facilitates the reading process due to the simplicity of language and shortened nature that both allow the learner to construct text meanings with less difficulty (p.163).The argument behind using novels in EFL is not quite different from the short story. Novels introduce FL learners to other cultures and attract their attention to be involved when reading these pieces. However, the length of novels may influence negatively the learners' willingness to get engaged in the reading process. Furthermore, poetry is characterized with the use of sophisticated words and it

may not serve as a helpful medium because it may hinder the learning process as a result of its complexity (p. 164).

Hanauer (2001, p. 395) explained the difficulty of understanding literary texts due to the complexity and ambiguity that may be associated with its content. Literary texts are a significant source of multiple uses as to provide the materials to develop learners' awareness of their own and others' culture. Hanauer suggested an approach that is called *focus on- cultural understanding* in which the most important role is assigned to the language teachers. In this regard, the learner tries to interpret first the text based on his own life experiences and culture. Then, s/he is provided with native speakers' interpretation about the text, and finally the teacher takes control over the discussion in order to make the students more aware of the impact of cultural differences when interpreting a literary text.

Accordingly, Long and Carter (1992) summarized the reasons behind using literary texts under three main models that are as follows:

1) *The Cultural Model*: It is a teacher-centered model that considers literary texts as materials that offer the learners the opportunity to be aware of what makes them different from others' and valuing these differences. In addition, it preserves the cultural traditions from disappearance over time.

2) *Model of Language*: It aims at enhancing learners' language depending on the vast artistic language use embedded in literary writings. However, such approach may not motivate the students to be engaged in this process.

3) *Personal Growth Model*: It is a student-centered focus model that motivates the learners to get involved in the task as literature permits to foster their understanding, evaluation, and appreciation of cultural facts.

As a result, each of these models is based on different methodologies and has various aims to be achieved. Long and Carter believed that literary texts materials are tools that comprise stimuli and pleasure; hence, improving students' language learning skills and FL cultural perception (as cited inDymešová, 2006, p. 11-12).

2.4. Approaches to the Teaching of Literature in EFL Classroom

One of the major utilized approaches in the teaching of literature is the constructivist approach that enables the learners to construct new knowledge through socializing, interacting, and communicating with their classmates and teachers (Schcolnik&Kol, 2006, p. 12).The socio-constructivist approach is the most suitable tool to be adopted in EFL classroom because it helps the students to grasp meanings embedded in literary texts. Therefore, the students would pick up the linguistic information in parallel with the cultural knowledge expressed in the literary texts' content.

Other approaches connected to the constructivist approach aim at extending the teaching of the text content to focus more on the cultural input. Gellis (2002, p. 29) stated that the *Inquiry-based* approach takes out the learners from learning through instruction to learning via construction. This approach is about motivating the learners to think critically, analyze, discuss, and express their opinions about the piece of writing (Gomez, 2012, p. 54). Another approach named The *Dialogic* has been supported for allowing the students to interact with their peers in order to discuss meanings which results in improving their competencies to communicate effectively Amer, 2001; Gomez, 2012; McKay, 2001; McRae, 1996 (Gomez, 2012, p. 54). In another study, Rosanblatt (1995, p. 379) asserted that the *Transactional* approach is centered on providing new insights about the world realities via literary texts; thus, to enhance their tolerance towards other cultures and to prepare the learners communicating efficiently in cross-cultural situations (Gomez, 2012,

p. 55). Consequently, adopting one of these approaches by the FL teacher in the classroom should aim at ameliorating both the linguistic and cultural abilities that would help the students to construct their ICC.

2.5.The Selection of Literary Texts

Teachers attempting to make use of literary works in EFL classroom should be aware of how to choose the best materials that is easy to be manipulated and intelligible for the learners. In this regard, Zacharias (2005, p.32-33) suggested some principles that should be taken into considerations when selecting literary texts. These are summed up as follows:

1) The cultural background knowledge of the FL should be accessible in the chosen materials.

2) The text should be interesting to motivate the students to keep reading.

3) The selected material should be exploited in terms of knowing the discussed theme and whether or not the cultural competence is targeted.

Similarly, Alemi (2011, p.178) proposed a criteria for teachers to select a literary text, in order to facilitate the process of grasping FL culture. These are summarized as follows:

1) *Learners' language capacities*: It is important to select texts that its language is relevant to the students' proficiencies. The language should be straightforward because if the students find it difficult they will not continue reading.

2) *Time*: Teachers should be aware of the allocated time devoted to reading the text, for example, a drama is an interesting material to attract students' attention but it may be hard to accomplish this task in a class session due to time constraints.

3) *Cultural Competence*: The selected texts should match the students and teachers' cultural competence.

4) *Short Texts*: Texts should be brief to motivate the students and the cultural information should be taking into account when choosing these materials.

5) *Self-inclusion*: Teachers should select texts that drive students' attention to participate in the learning process.

2.6. Challenges of Teaching Literary Texts

Researchers and educationists in the past decades reported that Literature proved its efficiency in developing learners' linguistic and communicative capacities in the educational realm due to its rich nature of language and cultural information. Yet, learners may face some hurdles caused by the type of the literary texts used in FL classroom. According to Sage (1987), the blocks occurring between literature and learners, which can be a language barrier or a word heard for the first time, should be minimized (p. 80). However, the most challenging difficulties that the learners' may face are those linked to cultural information which require teachers to select carefully literary texts accompanied with a simplified explanation regarding the FL cultural norms (p. 82).

The major argument behind refusing the use of literary materials in EFL classroom is time constraints because school syllabus is overloaded and teachers barely can find time to finish textbooks' contents (O'connell, 2009). However, teachers should be aware that literature is a flexible material as:

- It does not require a training to be able to teach it.

- It is not a must to be a lengthy content; it can be brief, modern, and relevant.

- It can serve as a rich source for designing curriculum objectives.

- It develops learners' reading and speaking skills.

- It enables the learners to be open-minded towards learning new linguistic elements and to develop their critical thinking about FL cultural values.

In the same vein, Alemi (2011) added that teachers and students expressed a little enthusiasm about the employment of literary texts by claiming that these pieces of writings may be complicated and not easy to be understood. For instance, the context may not be common to the students' way of living as Shakespeare's stanza can be very difficult to the students and it may lead them to leave the classroom (p.177). Moreover, another reason for the inclusion of literature in EFL classroom is culture. It is commonly known that language is composed not only of grammatical structures but most importantly it holds certain cultural features. Each culture is unique and distinct from other cultures and some of these standards may result in a cultural clash (p.177). In this regard, Alemi stressed the importance of being acknowledged enough to select the appropriate literary materials that aim at enhancing the students' ICC.

2.7. Foreign Language Cultural Awareness and Literature Connections

It is commonly known that people who keep themselves up-to-date regarding FL cultures are more aware of the differences that distinguish theirs from others' cultures. Valdez (1986) confirmed that literature is seen as an applicable component in FL learning as it serves to transfer and demonstrate the cultural identity of the TL speakers (p. 137). Literature is a human production that deals with short stories, poems, and drama describing what is important to people and portraying their needs. He added that uncertainty, skepticism, loneliness, happiness, ordering meals, accepting, and refusing appointments or requests, etc., present ordinary life and it can be traced back to literature. Such events of daily life routines are what FL learners need to know and be familiar with (Sage, 1987, p.13).

Furthermore, it is argued that reading literary works raises the students' awareness towards the history and policies of the FL community (Lazar, 1993, p. 6-7). However, it is not that simple as it implies because a limited number of novels and poems

can be considered as a reliable source presenting cultural facts about its society since some of these are rather fictional (Widdowson, 1984, p. 149, as cited in lazar, 1993, p. 16).

According to Thanasoulas (2001), the teaching of literature allows to develop the FL learners' four skills - writing, reading, speaking, and listening - and it functions as the mirror of culture (p. 17). Zacharias (2005) supported the claim that literature and culture cannot be separated from one another as the former portrays better the latter (p. 27).

In a similar manner, Dimitrova-Gyuzeleva (2015) explained that fostering ICC necessitates to extend the objective of developing language skills and translating literary texts but also to encourage learners to evolve critical appreciation towards others when expressing their opinions (p. 22).

Oktan (2017) described the relationship between literature and culture as a bridge that links the English language to its *soul* and what makes it alive. Moreover, literature serving as an authentic tool for EFL cultural knowledge can help the students to ameliorate their ICC. Thus, this bound helps the students to get involved with less difficulty in communicative situations with the TL speakers (p. 73).

2.8. The Relationship between Intercultural Communicative Competence and the Use of Literature

Learning literature offers the students the opportunity to develop their ICC to communicate effectively. However, Kramsch (2001) stated that educators are not totally comfortable with the use of such materials in FL classroom context (p. 7). By contrast, the Council of Europe claimed that the most substantial benefit gained when learning FL through literary works leads to developing learners' intercultural capacities that would permit them to get involved easily in cross-cultural situations. The Council of Europe declared that the nature of the literary texts as imaginative and artistic enables the FL

learners to shape opinions about the daily activities of the TL speaking groups (2001, p. 56).

Similarly, Melzer (2001) pointed out that fictional texts serve as an appropriate tool for enhancing non-native speakers' ICC. In this regard, this type of materials provides insights about the FL speaking countries that have different cultural backgrounds by presenting the values, preconceptions, and stereotypes, which gives the reader a chance for cultural exchange by being stimulated and inspired by the story heroes (p. 29).

The utilization of authentic short stories that are integrated in the syllabus proved its efficiency as these tools motivate the learners by being centered on developing the FL linguistic and communicative competencies, and critical thinking. Moreover, literary texts may have an impact on the students' ways of thinking, raising their intercultural awareness, and embracing the cultural differences (Ghosn, 2002, p. 172).

According to Alemi (2011, p. 178)), there are four main features of literature that can help the students in the FL communication process. These are summed up as follows:

- *Enriching language*: The language in literary texts is linguistically rich as it provides a large amount of vocabulary. When the students examining the language of literary texts they will get new knowledge about its uses.

- *Enriching culture*: It is an entrance or a gate to cultural information in which the students will explore the TL culture and this will enable them to be knowledgeable about the divergences compared to their native culture.

- *Materials authenticity*: Literature deals with various themes that can be enjoyable for the students in EFL classroom.

- *Personal participation*: Literary works can link the readers' life realities with facts portrayed in texts as it may resemble, contradict, or differ from the FL learner norms.

Following the same line of thought, Lázár (2003) suggested that many ways can be used to develop EFL learners' ICC such as communicating orally with the TL native speakers, or using reading materials and multi-media tools. However, creating such opportunities for EFL learners in classroom context may be difficult if not impossible to achieve (as cited in Gómez, 2012, p. 50). Therefore, literature is a powerful tool that can help learners to build social and cultural images. In addition, it is a mirror of how people experience the world differently. Some researchers advocated the possibility that fictional texts promote and offer to the readers the chance of improving their critical understanding of their identity depending on the cognitive and the affective dimensions to ameliorate intercultural comprehension and consciousness (Phipps & González, 2004; Zacharias, 2005, as cited in Rodriguez &Puyal, 2012, p. 108).

Authentic texts are a board for creativity and its use opens the doors for discussion between the reader and the text itself or with the teachers and peers (Dimitrova-Gyuzeleva, 2015, p. 20). According to Kotsompou (2015), the main reason behind using literary texts in EFL classroom is to create an interactive environment where the students can discuss and communicate with each other to develop their communicative competence (p.75).

In the same vein, Gómez (2012) chosen an English class of the Modern Language Program at *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional* (UPN) during 2010, at a Colombian University, to read a short story. This program involved EFL learners who work as English teachers in public and private schools. Gómez reported that the subjects who read the short story using the English language succeeded in developing the communicative competence, enriching their intercultural knowledge, and took serious attempts in the discussion phase. Consequently, reading the short story encouraged them to share and compare opinions, events, and cultural information.

Finally, the utilization of literary texts as a source of materials would enable the EFL learners to shape attitudes and to be open to their peers, which allow them to improve their intercultural communicative competence.

Conclusion

The chapter provided an account about the usefulness of literary works that portray the TL society values, customs, behaviors, etc. These pieces of writing reflect parts of the writer's culture, convictions, and the ideologies of the FL society. In addition to the cultural enrichment, these materials serve as an effective authentic source for FL linguistic knowledge. Moreover, literary texts enable the FL learners to enhance their creativity, critical thinking, and learn how to embrace other cultures which leads to the development of ICC.

CHAPTER THREE

CAPTER THREE

EXPLORING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEVELOPING

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH

LITERARY WORKS

Introduction

Chapter three describes the adopted methodology that allows testing the research hypotheses. The quantitative procedure investigates the employment of literary texts in portraying the EFL cultural aspects and its efficiency as a means to develop the students' ICC. A questionnaire was administered to second year students during the second semester, at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. The compiled data were analyzed and explained for the purpose of achieving a thorough understanding of students' standpoints towards the use of literary works in ameliorating cultural and intercultural awareness.

3.1. Methodological Approach

The present research adopts the quantitative design that involves students' questionnaire employed to gather data about their attitudes regarding the development of ICC through the teaching of literary texts. This research method will enable to confirm or disconfirm the research hypotheses.

Golafshani (2003) explained the function of quantitative research as it "allows the researcher to familiarize him/herself with the problem or concept to be studied, and perhaps generate hypothesis to be tested" (p. 597). In the same vein, Mujis (2004) pointed out that quantitative research is the act of "explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)" (p. 1).

Therefore, this method permits to present numerical statistical results that are interpreted for a better understanding of the phenomenon.

3.2. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

According to Mathers, Fox and Han (2007, p. 19),questionnaires are very useful data gathering tools which are considered to be suitable techniques for having a comparable data collected from a considerable population. The questionnaires are known for the validity and meaningfulness of the results; however, this can be achieved only if the asked questions are comprehensible for the respondents. Thus, designing a questionnaire should be given a great attention in which this form is "a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis" (Babbie, 1990, p. 377, as cited in Acharya, 2010, p. 2).

A questionnaire is often seen as an effective tool to be used due to many advantages that it offers to the researchers. This medium is objective in nature because its standard form involves identical questions administered to the whole population; in addition, it is a quick instrument for gathering information especially with a large sample size. Moreover, questionnaires can be cheaper in comparison with other tools.

Therefore, the current study makes use of a questionnaire in order to get reliable, accurate, and objective results. This device will enable to clear up the picture about the importance of literary texts in depicting EFL cultural aspects within its content, and to examine how students would react if these materials are implemented in EFL classrooms.

3.2.1. Aims of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire in this study aims are threefold:

1) To determine students' attitudes about the teaching of the English language culture.

2) To figure out students' perspectives towards the role of literature in portraying cultural aspects.

3) To find out the students' opinions towards the efficiency of literary texts teaching in EFL classroom to improve their ICC proficiency.

3.2.2. The Students' Questionnaire Administration

The questionnaire was administered to second year students during the second semester, at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. The questionnaire was surveyed by the teacher and the researcher at the end of the course session. The questionnaire includes 30 questions organized into three sections in which each section investigates and targets a particular kind of information. The students were asked to tick the appropriate box or to provide further clarifications whenever it is necessary to two open-ended questions, 19 closed-ended questions, and 9 follow-up questions. The first section deals with the *students' Background Information* and it contains five questions. The second section is about the *English Foreign Language Intercultural Communicative Competence* and it covers 14 questions. The third section focuses on Intercultural Communicative Competence and Literature Connections and it has 11 questions.

3.2.3. Population and Sampling

The participants involved in the research are second year students, at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. The chosen sample consists of 140 students selected randomly. This specific population was chosen because the informants possess the required knowledge to take part in the research; since they have dealt with this type of writings in first and second year levels. Thus, the learners would be aware of the role played by literary works in enriching their cultural knowledge and enhancing their intercultural awareness.

3.3. Findings

This section describes the main results that were gathered from the questionnaire, and the questions are organized into three sections. The collected data were analyzed, interpreted, and presented in figures.

a. Section One: Students Background Information

The aim behind the questions in this section is to collect basic information about the respondents.

Question 1: What is the reason behind choosing to study English?

. Personal ☐

. Imposed ☐

. Advised ☐

. Others ☐

The majority of the students (N=118, 84%) revealed that the reason behind choosing to study English was personal. Others (N=12, 09%) said that it was not their choice and they were imposed to study English. Few students (N= 08, 06%) were advised by other people, and only two (1%) had other reasons behind their choice of this major (Figure 3.1). This implies that the students' perspectives may be influenced as if they were imposed they will have a negative attitude towards the subject under inquiry and they would not be interested.
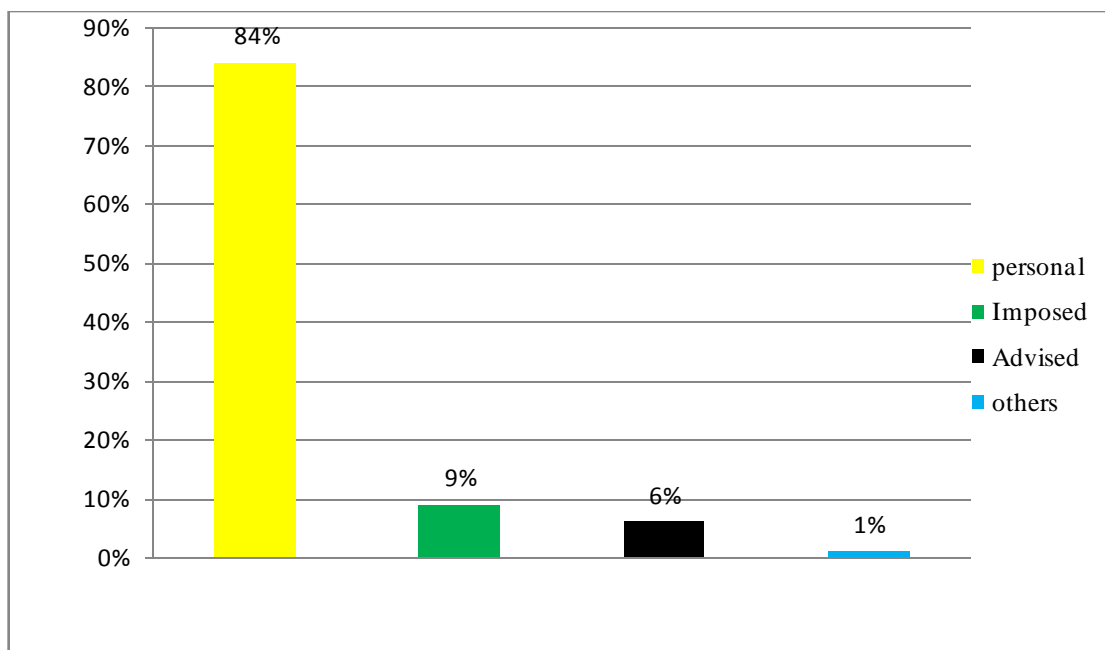
Figure 3.1. Students' Reasons of Choosing to Study English

Question 2: If others, please justify your answer.

Few arguments were collected regarding the choice of English as a specialty. Two students claimed that:

- His/her average did not allow him/her to choose the offered branch.

- His/her parents refused to let him/her study another branch.

Question 3: How long have you been studying English?

The results show diverse answers about the time devoted to study English ranging from nine to 12 years. A large group of respondents (N= 107, 76%) have nine years, others (N= 26, 19%) have ten years, and six (04%) students declared that they have 11 years. Only one informant (01%) has spent 12 years in studying English (Figure 3.2).
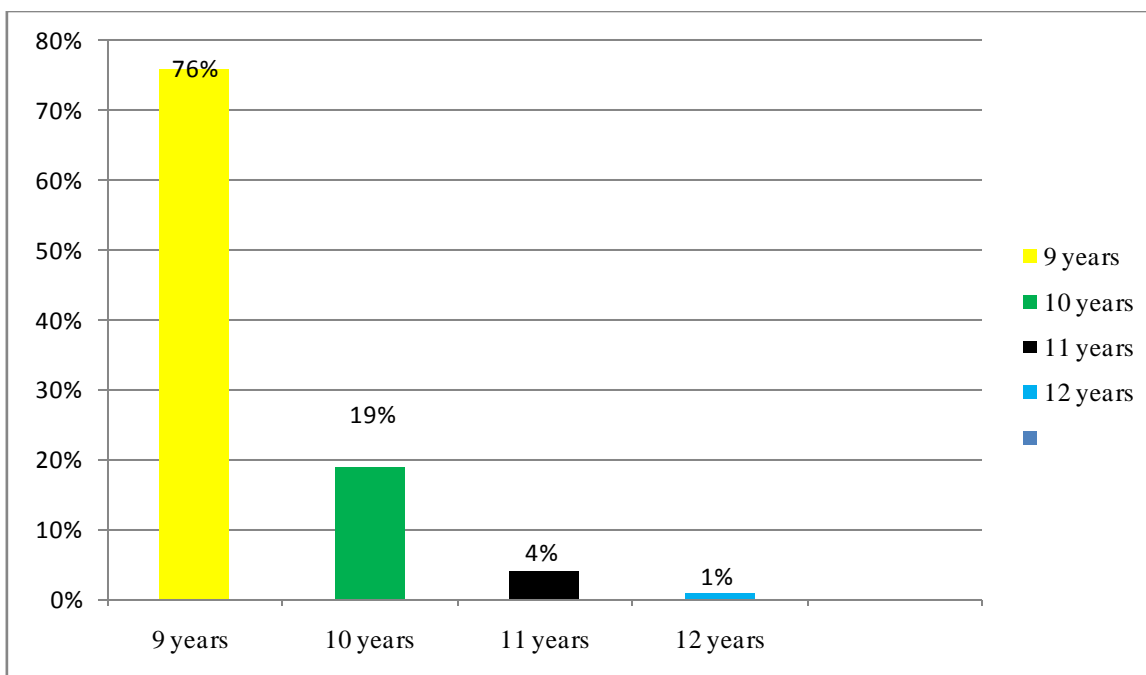
Figure 3.2. Students' Years of Studying English

Question 4: What is your aim behind learning English?

.To carry on my studies abroad ☐

.To communicate with English speaking people. ☐

.To get a job ☐

.To grasp English cultural knowledge ☐

.To be able to understand the content of movies, ☐

programs, and music presented in English.

.Others ☐

The purpose behind asking this question is to figure out why the students are learning English language and what motivates them to improve their level. As demonstrated in Figure 3.3, a significant number of participants (N= 54, 39%)) claimed that they are learning English for the sake of getting a job, while others (N= 32, 23%) reported that they want to finish their studies in foreign countries. Furthermore, 25 students (18%) declared that communicating with English speaking people is their ultimate aim. Some students (N= 14, 10%) explained that they want to grasp English

cultural knowledge, which can be considered as a small amount of people compared to the other previous choices this may be a result of the life needs for instance getting a job and finishing their studies is more important, and they may think that grasping English cultural knowledge does not need that much attention and they may not need in their jobs, they need to know only the basics of language and develop their linguistic abilities. 13 respondents (9%) desired to understand the content of movies, programs, and music presented in English. Few respondents (N=02, 01%) did not provide a specific reason.
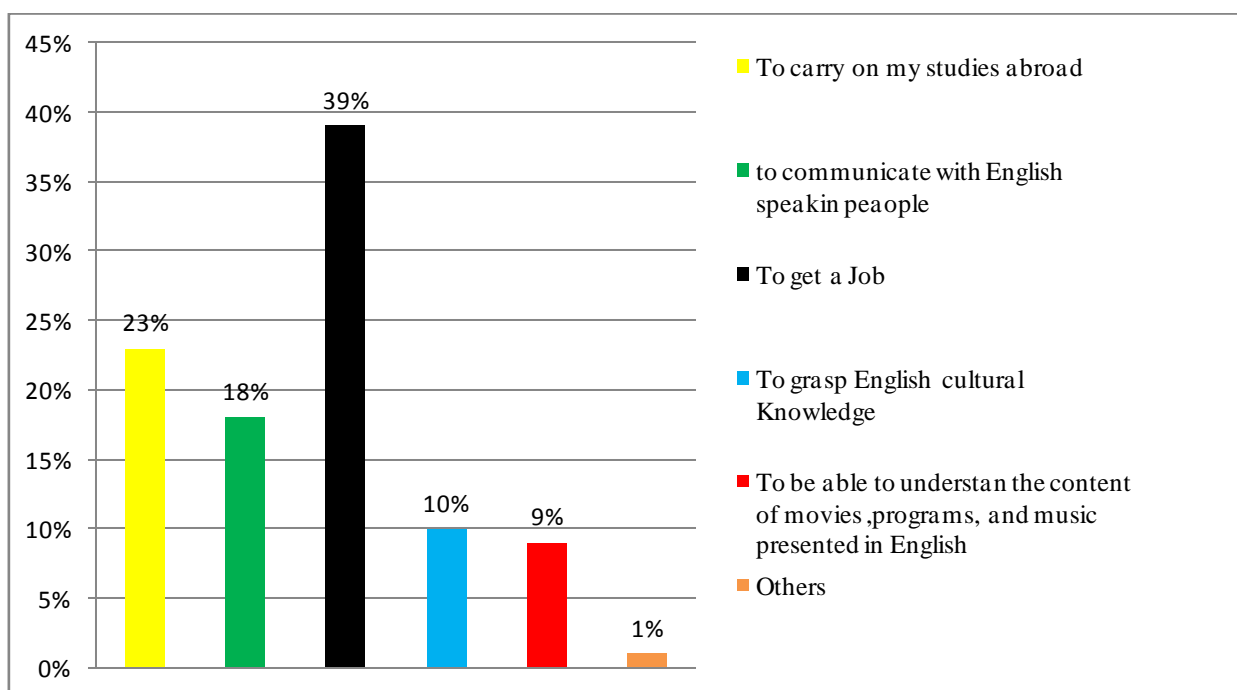

*Figure 3.3.*Students Desire behind Learning English Language

Question 5: If others, please justify your answer.

In relation to the previous question, two students added that they are learning English language for other reasons. The answers are summed up as follows:

- *I'm passionate towards this language, I was interested on it since I was young, and so I just want to know more about it and to be able to use it. And,*

- *I'm not interested in learning, I have other interests, but since I need it in my future work I have to learn it to be able to achieve my dream.*

b. Section Two: Cultural and Intercultural Communicative Competence

This section is intended to determine the extent to which the students are aware of the importance of culture in EFL curriculum.

Question 6: Do you think that the teaching/learning of cultural aspects of English is?

. Not necessary   ☐

. Somehow necessary   ☐

. Very necessary   ☐

The aim of this question is to detect students' perspectives towards the inclusion of culture in the EFL teaching/learning process. The given answers reflected students interest and awareness towards the significance of English culture as a large number (N= 67, 48%) declared that it is very necessary to integrate it in the language curriculum. Others (N= 63, 45%) revealed that it is somehow necessary, while few respondents (N= 10, 07%) believed that it is not necessary to study the cultural values of English (Figure 3.4).
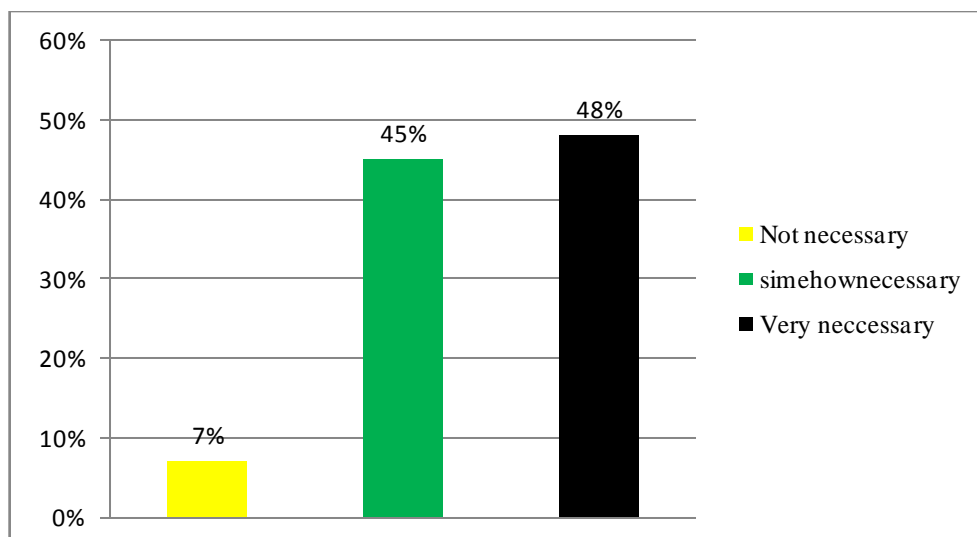
*Figure 3.4.*Students Conscious about the Necessity of Culture and its Integration

Question 7: please justify your answer.

The students were asked to provide arguments regarding the previous item. The majority, who consider culture to be very necessary when learning English the answers revealed that learners are conscious about the interconnection between learning English language and being aware of the cultural aspects that are related to the learned language, and its significant role in facilitating the communication between the interlocutors that are taking part in the communicative process, explained that:

- *Culture and language are related, one is dependent to the other you cannot learn language without culture and vice versa. They are highly connected to each other. It helps in improving the language.*

- *It helps the speakers of language to understand each other; and it facilitates the process of communication no matter what is the topic.*

- *Language is culture, so to master any language you need to know its cultural aspects in order not to be in awkward situations in the future.*

- *Because you cannot learn a language of a certain country without its cultural elements that allows you to be in a full touch with the learned language.*

- *It is very necessary, since English is the language of technology nowadays, and it became the global language, for that reason it is very important to know everything about it.*

- *Because it is a way that can help me to improve my level, and reaching the background that I'm looking for.*

- *Language itself is a part of culture, also it help you to understand the origin of words and their special use.*

- *It facilitates the use of language.*

- *Every nation has its own tradition, customs and it is very important to know these points, especially peoples' way of thinking.*

The informants who found that the teaching of cultural aspects is somehow necessary pointed out that the ultimate focus should be on teaching the language and culture supports it only, this shows that respondents are aware that culture is important but its role is limited only to support the learning of language; if it is there it would help, and its' absence may not effect that much the learning of language. They argued that:

- *It is not highly recommended.*

- *We need to learn the languages aspects not culture*

- *Because it helps us to flourish our mind with other cultures, but I don't think that we really need it in the future.*

- *I don't see it necessary that much, but it is okay to learn a little about from where the language came.*

- *We do not need it always we need it sometimes.*

- *You cannot learn the language without being informed about the culture.*

The students reasoning, who think that integrating culture in EFL teaching is not necessary, may be because they are not aware of the role played by culture, also they were not exposed to foreigners before this is why they did not have the chance to figure out the importance of cultural aspects and the incompleteness of communication depending on the language alone, their answers are presented as follows:

- *We study foreign language to acquire just the basic rules that we need to communicate with other English people, concerning culture we can watch a documentary and the problem is resolved.*

- *Because we need only to study the language itself as grammar and vocabulary.*

- *Because the English language is not related with the culture, so we can study it without the cultural aspects.*

Question 8: Do you think that the teaching/learning of culture in EFL classroom in Algeria is?

. Given a great attention ▭

. Given little attention ▭

. Completely ignored ▭

As it is displayed in Figure 3.5, more than a half of the students acknowledged that the teaching and learning of English culture in EFL classes is given a little attention (N=100, 71%) students did not deny the slight importance given in Algeria to the integration of culture in the teaching/learning process, moreover it reveals that they wanted it to be included more in the Algerian curriculum. However, others (N= 26, 19%) observed that culture is given a great attention while a minority (N= 14, 10%) witnessed the complete disregard of English cultural elements.
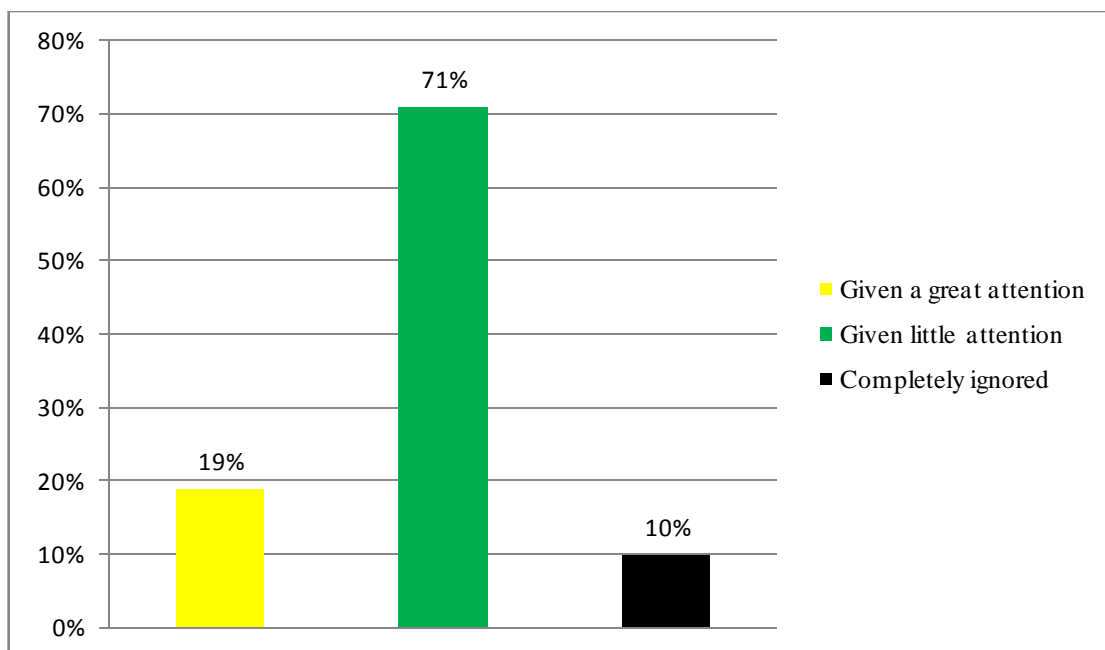
Figure 3.5. The Extent to which EFL Culture is Given Attention

Question 9: Do you think that the integration of cultural content in English learning curriculum should be applied?

Yes ☐   No ☐

The question seeks to determine students' opinions and perspectives concerning the application of EFL culture in language curriculum. The results demonstrated in Figure 3.6 shows the students' (N= 132, 95%)agreement (yes) regarding this item which shows that they are eager to grasp the culture of the language, and it shows learners' willingness and openness towards the learning of culture, while a minority (N= 8, 05%) expressed their disfavor (No) towards the integration of culture, this negative attitude can be traced back to the respondents who thinks that culture is not important and knowing the language is enough.
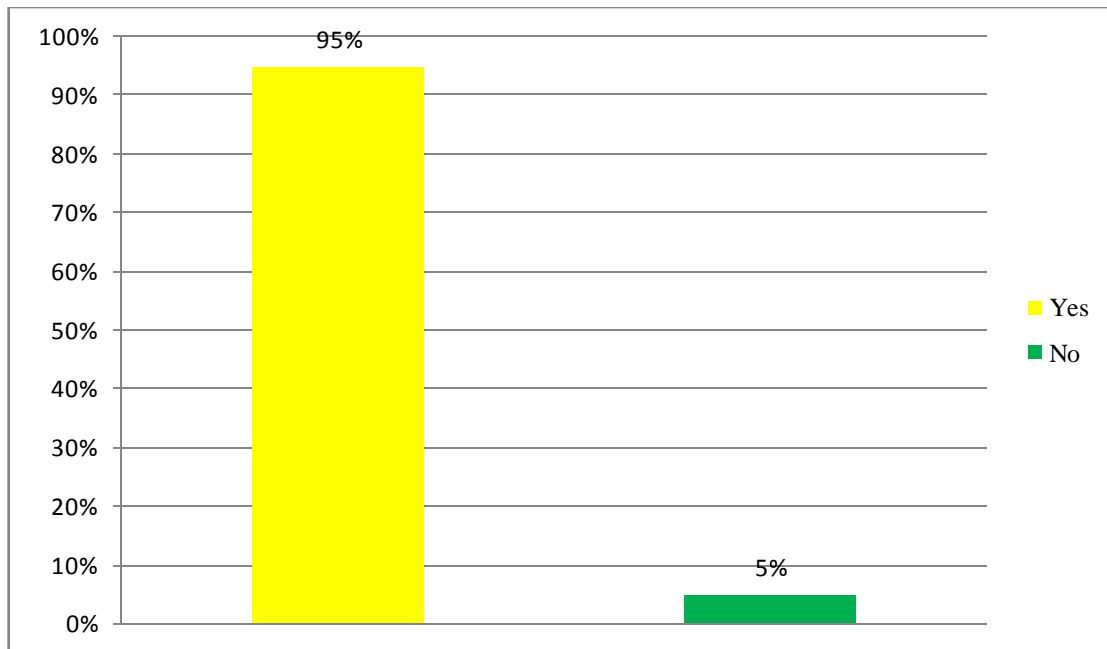
*Figure 3.6.*Students Attitude towards the integration of English Culture in English in the Curriculum

Question 10: Does the learning of English culture have a negative influence on your own culture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

The compiled information revealed that a large number of the participants (N=101, 72%) believed that the learning of EFL culture may not affect negatively their own cultural identity (No) that is to say they are able to differentiate between the two cultures and they are able to know about it and not adopt it in their life instead of their own culture, and they would preserve their own identity. However, few informants (N= 39, 28%) opted for,*yes* which implies their demotivation in learning English culture (Figure 3.7).
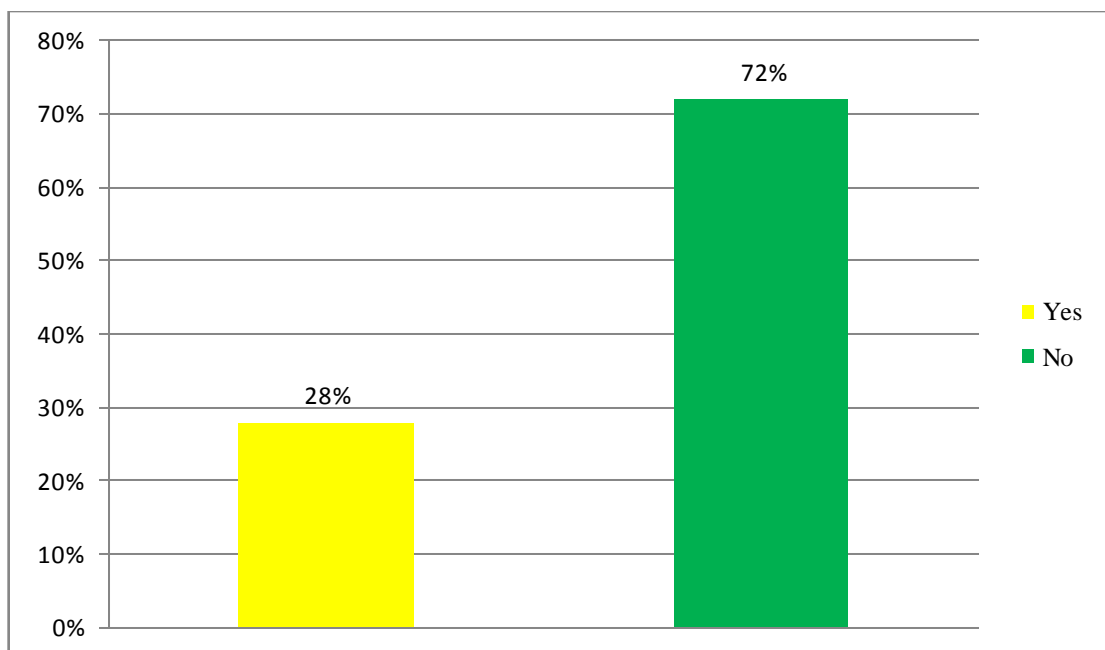
*Figure 3.7.*Learners' Perspectives towards the Influence of English Culture on their Mother Culture

Question 11: To what extent does the learning of culture in EFL classroom have an influence on shaping students communicative competence?

. Very low ▭

. Low ▭

. Average ▭

. High ▭

. Very high ▭

The Figure 3.8 represents the efficiency level of culture in forming the students' communicative competence. Many considered (N= 65, 46%) that the role played by culture is average; while others (N= 45, 32%) believed that it is high. Some respondents (N= 16, 12%) pointed out that the effectiveness of culture is very high, compared to the previous answers the number is somehow low which denotes that the majority believes that culture has an influence on shaping students' communicative competence but its' role

is not very high, but they did not deny its usefulness in helping them; eight students (06%) stated that it is very low, and six (04%) found it low.
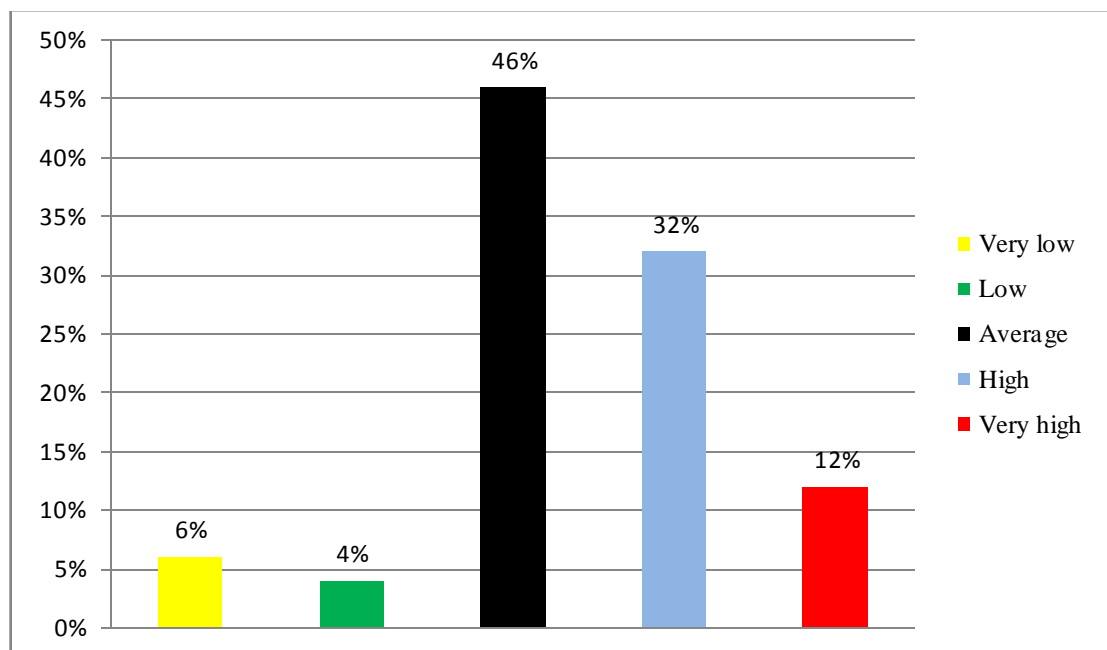
*Figure 3.8.*Cultural influence on Shaping Students' Communicative Competence

Question 12: Is intercultural communication important to know what to say and what not to say to others of different cultures?

Yes ☐   No ☐

The majority of the students (N= 133, 95%) reacted positively (Yes) that intercultural communication is significant to be aware of what to share with others of distinct cultural background in the sense that the permanent confrontation with foreigners makes them familiar with different conditions that may face them in future communication they will know what to say exactly in specific circumstances, how to say it and what they should avoid, learners will learn their intercultural experiences. Only a minority (N= 07, 05%)) disagreed with this item (No) as shown in Figure 3.9.
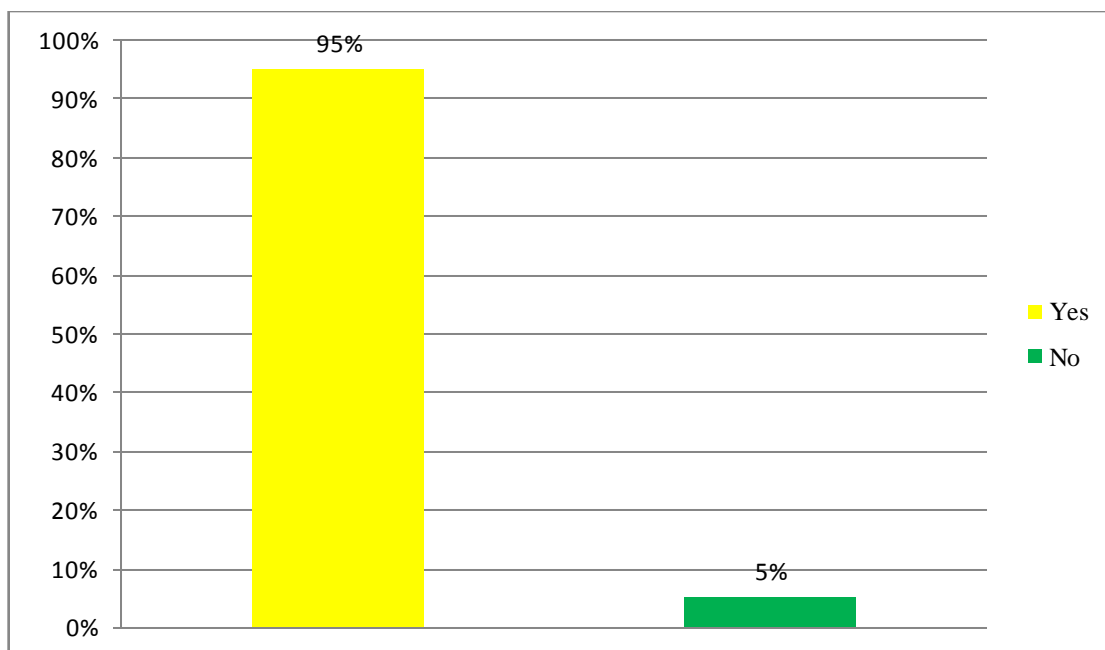
*Figure 3.9.*Importance of IC in the Communication Process

Question 13: Is it important to learn about the similarities and differences between the native English culture and Algerian culture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

The results illustrate that a large number of the students (N=128, 91%) are in favor of the learning of the similarities and differences between the TL culture and Algerian culture (yes) because they may believe that this awareness will help them communication because if they are aware of them they will know what to day and what to say exactly, and they will act according the foreign culture to guarantee the success of communication. Few students (N= 12, 09%) declared that it is not important (No) as it is presented in Figure 3.10.
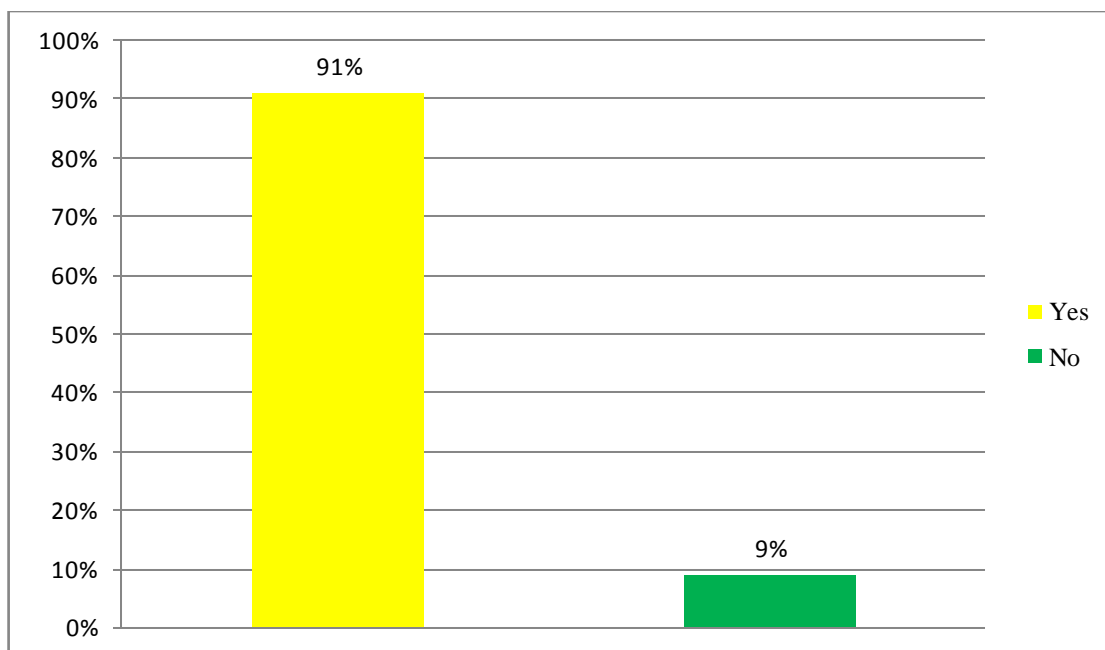
*Figure 3.10.*The Importance of Recognizing Similarities and Differences between Algerian and English Cultures

Question 14: please justify your answer.

In relation to the previous question, the collected reasons of those who answered with 'yes' about learning the similarities and differences between the target culture and mother culture are built on two main arguments:

1) Avoiding confusion and misunderstanding between the two cultures and preventing the cultural clash.

2) Makes us aware of how others live, believe, speak, etc., and it raises our consciousness.

The provided arguments are illustrated as follows:

- *To get a good idea about how to talk and how to act appropriately.*

- *To know how to treat others who are different from us.*

- *To know that every culture has its own features that distinguishes it from others.*

- *In order not to mix between the two cultures, because each one has its own values*

- *To be aware of the weaknesses and strengths of the two cultures.*

- *If we are going to talk to native speakers it would be good to know about their culture to know how to react/ answer them.*

- *English culture and Algerian culture are very different; some things might be acceptable in one culture yet unacceptable in the other.*

- *Because it helps us to recognize the English language itself*

- *To avoid word for word translation while communicating with others, rather to look for appropriate terms that suits the target situation.*

Alternatively, those who answered with 'No' argued that no need for the comparison because no culture is superior to the other. Some students specified that:

- *It is not important, it may be in some aspects of language such as phonetics and pronunciation, but in culture it has no relation and not very necessary.*

- *Not important we can learn it outside the classroom.*

- *Each country has its culture and we should not mix them or compare them, we need just to learn each culture separately.*

- *Because it does not matter and it will not help us in the learning process.*

- *We should know our Algerian culture first, then the English culture. After that we may be able to compare.*

Question 15: Does developing awareness about cultural differences minimize misunderstanding between people of different cultures?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Nearly most of the participants (N=114, 81%) affirmed that being aware of the cultural differences reduce the misunderstanding that may occur when interacting with people of different cultures (yes) which implies that participants are aware that being aware of other cultures helps people to understand each other which results in having a positive attitudes with each other. Only few respondents (N= 26, 19%) claimed that it has no role (No) as it is presented in Figure 3.11.
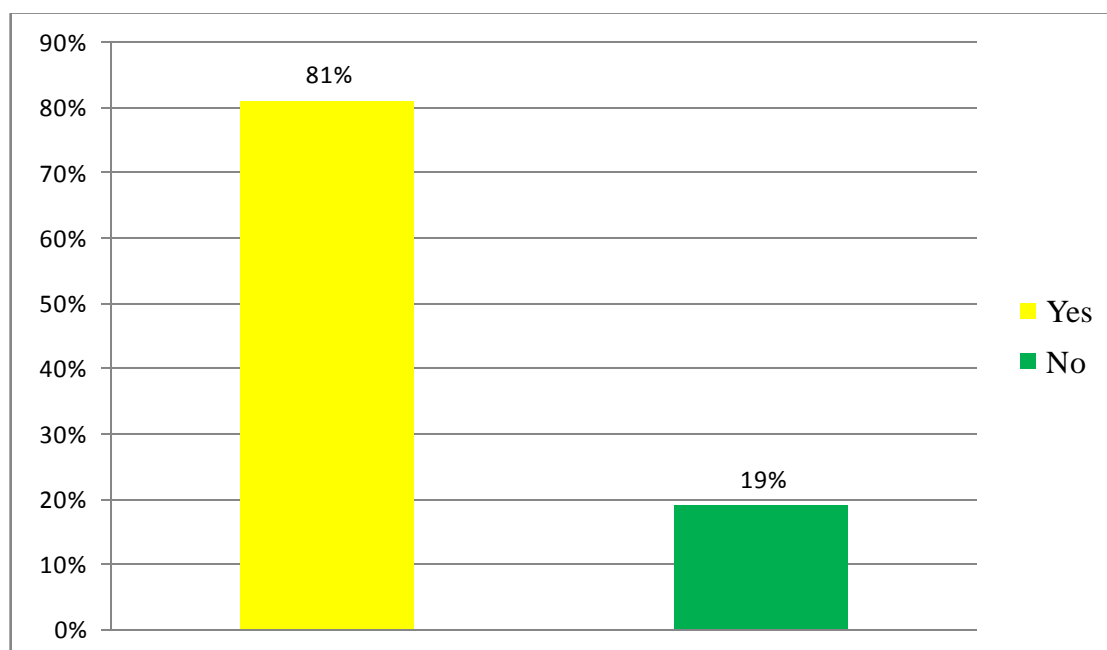
*Figure 3.11.*The Efficiency of Cultural Awareness in Minimizing Misunderstanding

Question 16: are you culturally competent to deal effectively with native speakers of English?

Yes ☐   No ☐

The answers to this item showed that a large number of the students (N= 61, 44%) confirmed that they possess the ability to communicate with TL natives as competent speakers. However, others (N= 79, 56%) confessed their incapacity to interact

effectivelyand the lack of cultural competence which is a result their unawareness towards the cultural aspects (Figure 3.1.2)
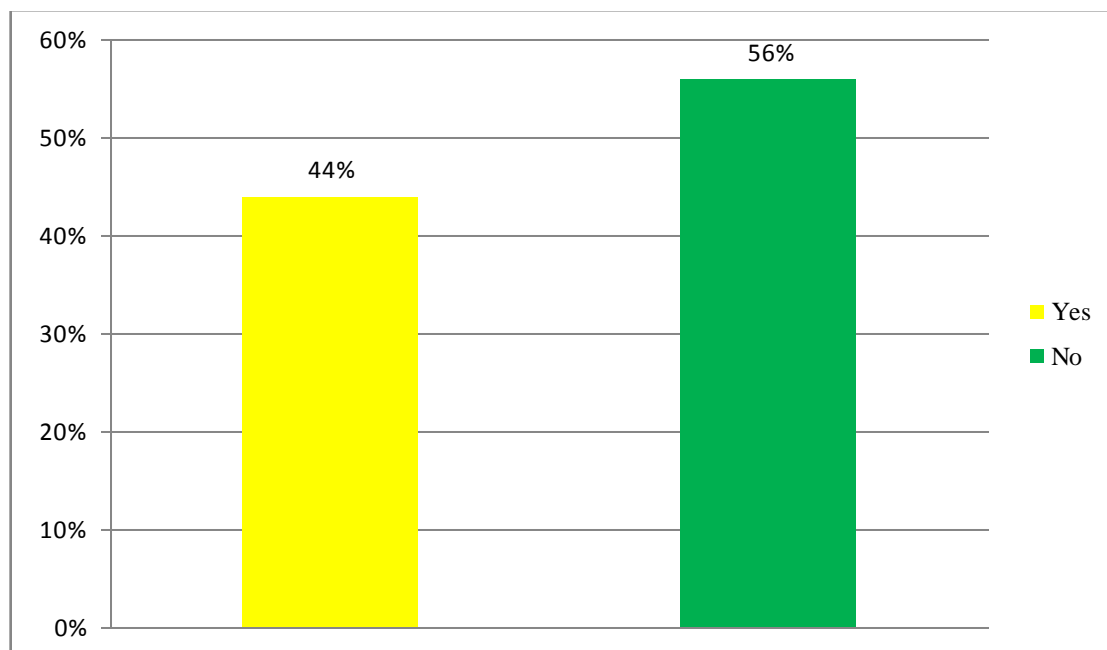
Figure 3.12.Students Aptitude in Communicating with TL Natives

Question 17: please justify your answer.

According to the preceding question, the respondents who replied with 'Yes' provided some arguments presented as follows:

- *Because we study the language and we have information about their culture.*

- *Because I understand them.*

- *I have a large knowledge about my culture (Algerian), also I speak English without problems, and I have some general ideas about regions that speak English.*

- *I already have some background knowledge that would enable me to communicate.*

- *If I ever would meet a native English speaker I would be competent.*

- *Because I'm aware of their culture.*

- *I watch many movies, listen to music, internet and keep up with their news, I'm cultural competent.*

- *Personally I have been interested in natives' culture and I made my effort to know how to appropriately communicate with them.*

- *Well, I have a lot of friends from UK and USA whom I speak with them a lot and they fully understand me.*

- *I'm familiar with them mainly because of social media.*

- *Because I'm studying in a private school with high level and experience professors.*

- *Because I'm a member in many groups of USA in face book and we debate about different themes.*

On the other hand, those who answered with 'No' shared a common argument of "I am still learning and I don't have the required knowledge especially cultural information and skills". The rest of the respondents added further answers:

- *Because we have only dealt with old civilization, I may have some background information but I do not know if it is correct to be used.*

- *Their culture is totally different from ours and their way of thinking is so complicated.*

- *Because they speak quickly.*

- *I do not have the cultural background.*

- *Because I have never experienced such situation and even so, I think it would be difficult unless with deep preparation.*

- *Because I am just depending on study I don't develop myself outside the classroom by other means.*

Question 18: Do stereotype and pre-judging affect the process of communication among speakers of English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The majority of the students (N= 108, 77%) pointed out that communication can be hindered because of the pre-assumptions that are formed before getting involved with native speakers that may block the process of communication. Others (N= 32, 23%) chosen 'No' as a response because they think that stereotypes and pre-judging have no effect on the process of communication(Figure 3.13).
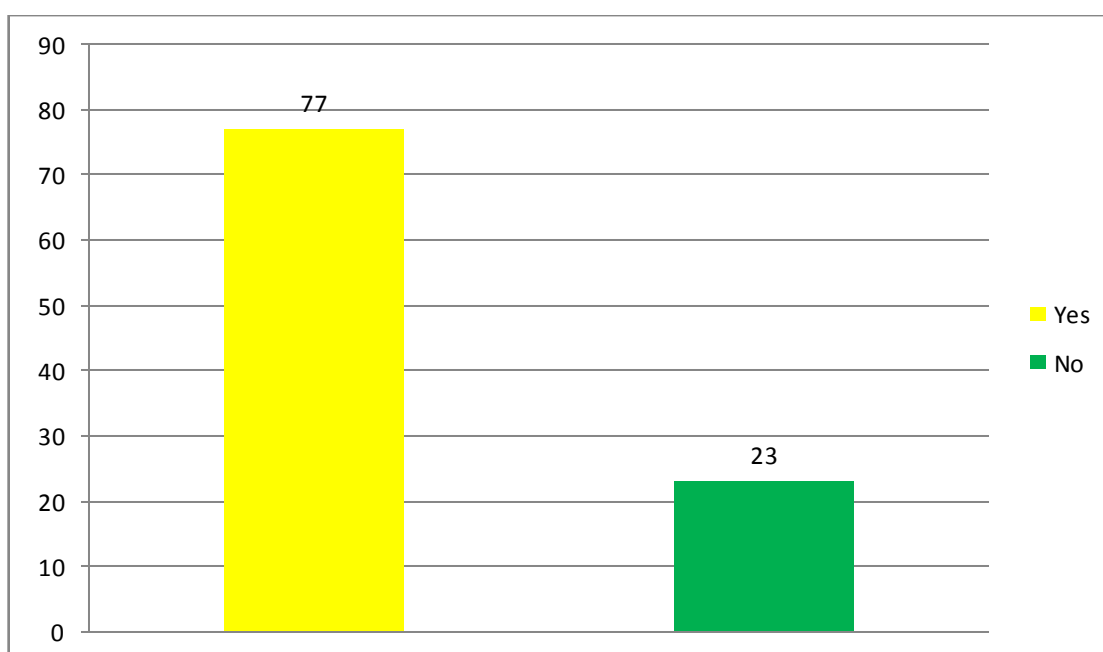
Figure 3.13.Stereotypes and Prejudging in Communication

Question 19: Please justify your answer.

In harmony with the previous question, those who agreed about this item that the stereotypes and the prejudging may influence the process of communication; explained that:

- *Judging people before knowing them may harm the process of communication negatively, because it may make the speakers feel uncomfortable while talking and this will block the conversation.*

- *Because sometimes these pre-made assumptions may not be correct, so people have to be open mind and judge them only after knowing them.*

- *British and Americans are known for arrogance, so they always assume all other ethnicities are inferior to them and that puts certain barriers.*

- *We should listen, know then judge.*

- *Because we do not know his/her culture or level, so it is unfair to prejudge them before dealing with them.*

- *First impressions are always wrong.*

Concerning 'No' responses, all participants ignored answering this question. Only one participant clarified that "*Once you start communicating with foreigners, the stereotypes will be broken*".

c. **Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence and Literature**

This section is intended to figure out the extent to which the students read literary texts, what types of texts they prefer to read, and to determine if they are aware of the function of literary pieces in portraying the culture of a given society.

Question 20: what type of literary texts you prefer to read in order to develop your intercultural communicative competence?

. Narratives as short stories and novels

. Poems and songs

. Essays about different fields as magazines and journals

. Others

As it is illustrated in Figure 3.14, the most preferred choice selected by the students (N= 69, 49%) was narratives such as short stories and novels. Others (N= 35, 25%) were in favor of reading poems and listening to songs, while some (N= 26, 19%)

selected essays about different fields including magazines and journals as their ideal

pieces. Few (N=10, 07%) expressed that they have other preferences.
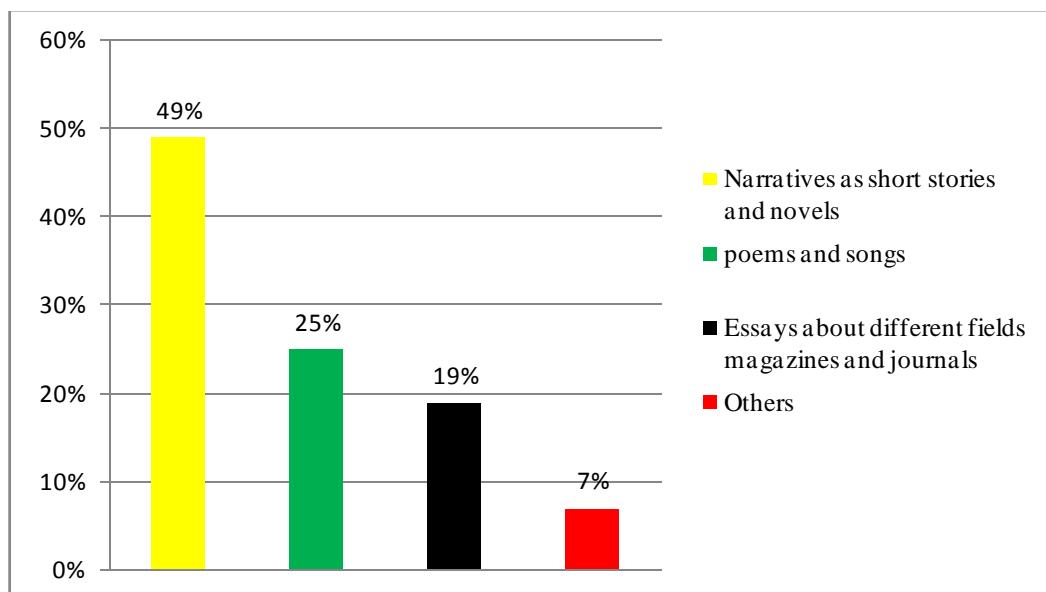
Figure 3.14.Preferred type of literary texts

Question 21: If other preferences, please justify your answer.

In relation to the previous question, learners provided other types of literary texts

and activities that are not among the suggested choices and which are of interest to them.

These are:

- *Scientific books,*

- *Watching YouTube*

- *Watching TV especially France 24 English*, and

- *Educational books such as the textbooks.*

Question 22: How often do you read literary works?

. Always

. Very Often

. Sometimes

. Rarely

. Never

The results presented in Figure 3.15 show that most of the participants (N= 66, 47%) tend to read sometimes, and others (N= 32, 23%) revealed that they perform this act very often. Some informants (N= 30, 21%) stated that they rarely involve themselves in such activity while a small number of people (N= 12, 09%) expressed that they are always interested in reading literary texts. From the collected answers it is obvious that even participants expressed that they don't read all the time but they make attempts concerning reading which can be considered as a positive point in applying the literary texts, since the majority are used to read before.
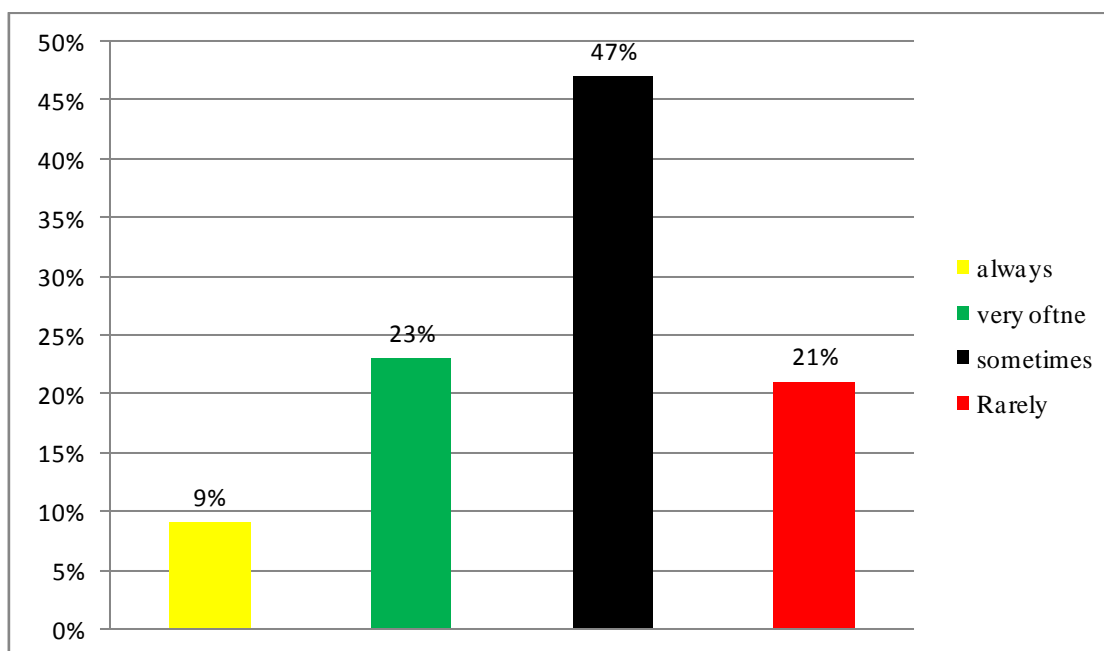
Figure 3.15.Students Attempts in Reading

Question 23: When you read literary texts, do you think that these materials represent

. The author ☐

. The culture of the author ☐

. A work and a piece of art ☐

. Linguistic system of English ☐

The majority of the participants (N= 44, 31%) believed that whenever they read literary texts, these materials represent a piece of writing no more. Others (N= 38, 27%)

declared that literary texts are good materials that depict the culture of the author. Some (N= 28, 20%) assumed the important role played by these materials in portraying the culture of the English speaking society, while few respondents (N= 19, 14%) consider literary texts as materials that represent the author's ideas and way of thinking, etc. Only few students considered literary texts as a source presenting the linguistic system of English (N= 11, 08%).
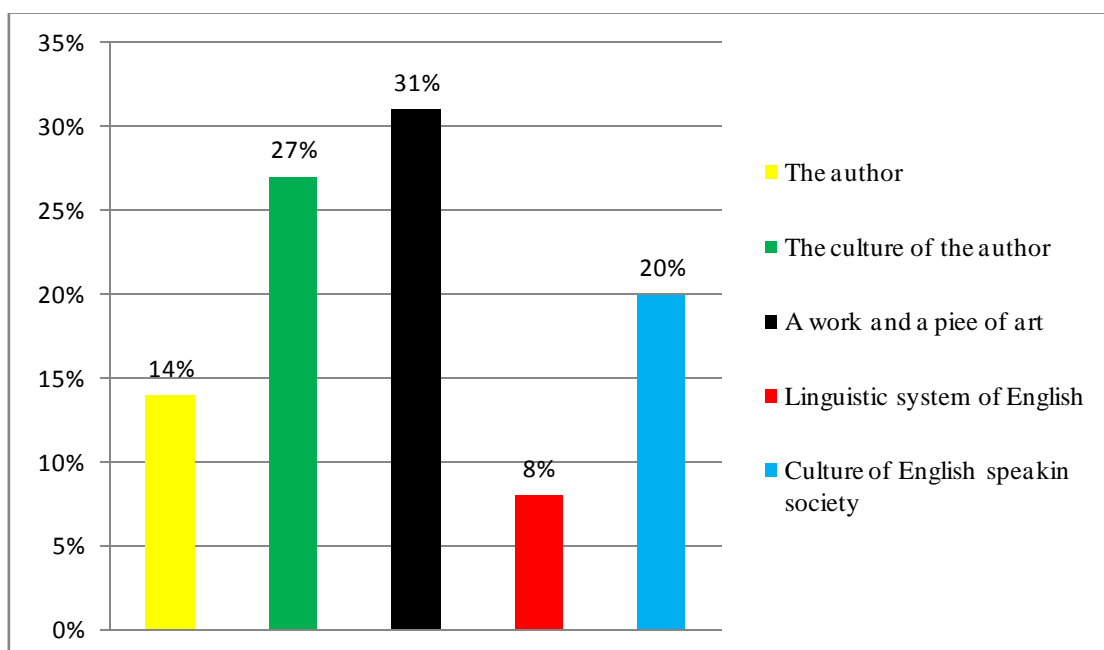
*Figure 3.16.*Learners Attitudes towards the Functions of Literary Texts

Question 24: Do you think that literary texts are good materials that can be used to make students aware of cultural differences**?**

      Yes   ☐   No ☐

The overwhelming majority (N= 123, 88%) agreed over the inevitability of literary texts in raising students' cultural awareness the compiled results affirms that students' are aware of the role played by literary texts in presenting the cultural aspects hence they would develop their awareness towards other cultures. However, the rest (N= 17, 12%) suggested that literary texts are weak sources that students can depend on in enhancing their

awareness this can be a result because the majority of students believe that these materials are just a piece of writing more than being materials that are full of cultural information
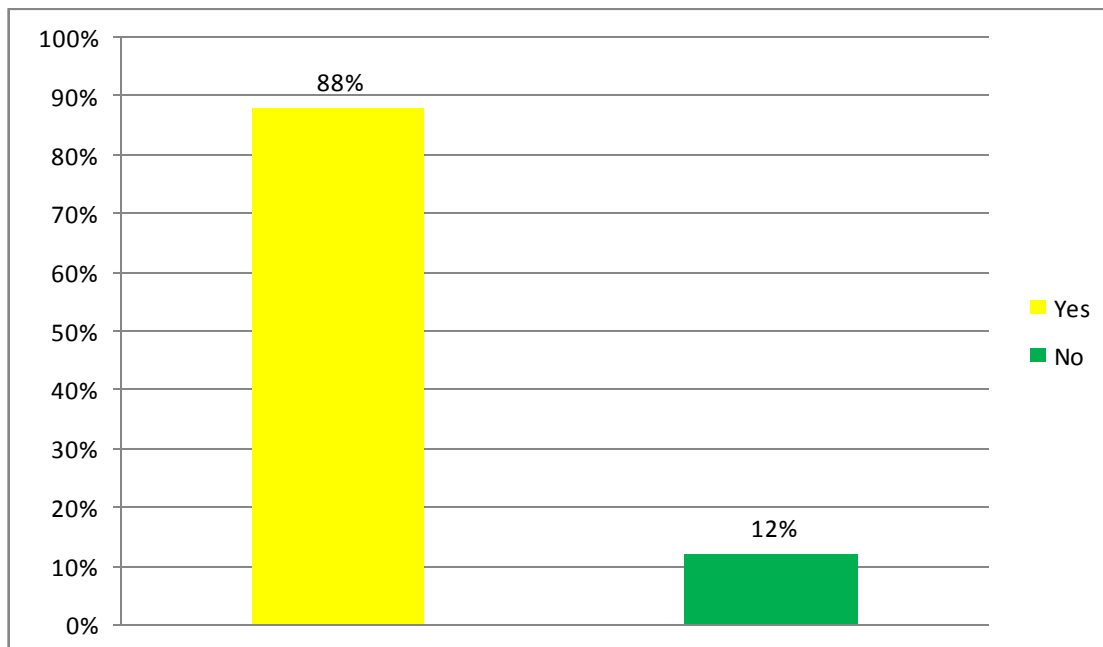
*Figure 3.17.*Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Literary Texts in Enhancing Perception of Cultural Differences

Question 25: Please justify your answer.

Based on the answer of the previous asked question, the learners who were in favor of this item (yes), argued that:

- *While reading we can enhance our background information, we may correct them, add to them some details or we may know new one, so we will be able to use them with confidence.*

- *They contain all aspects of the other society, changes relationship between all countries and societies, also some events of history. What give the reader general ideas.*

- *Literary texts usually represent the culture of the author and his society and this make students aware about the different culture.*

- *Because usually, literature deals with the historical background of communities and show the differences.*

- *Literary texts are the mirror of culture.*

- *Because literary texts portrays the culture of the language.*

- *They represent the daily life of the English society and it is so helpful to understand the culture from different stories and perspectives of the characters and also the author.*

- *Because every author integrates pieces of his culture in his work.*

- *The Great Gatsby is a master piece that made me aware of the American culture that time in addition to the others life introduced.*

By contrast, those who replied with 'No' did not provide many arguments and basically they based their assumptions of believing that these materials are not suitable for all learners because there are students who do not prefer reading such kind of writing and the literary texts that are used are too boring to grasp students attention; these are few retrieved answers:

- *You should teach us about real culture not dead writers and dead people.*

- *Because it is too old and not updated.*

- *Not all students will read them.*

- *They cannot help because literature represents the dreams of the author not the true facts.*

Question 26: How often do your teachers of literature teach you cultural aspects with the use of literary texts?

. Always   ☐

. Very Often   ☐

. Sometimes   ☐

. Rarely ☐

. Never ☐

Students' views are presented in Figure 3.18 in which most of the students (N= 63, 45%) recognized that their teachers *sometimes* teach them cultural aspects when they read literary texts. Other informants (N= 28, 20%) chose *very often*, 20 participants (14%) said that the teachers are *always* trying to teach them new cultural aspects, and 15 students (11%) claimed that they are rarely given information about English culture through the teaching of literature. Finally, another group of the students (N= 14, 10%) declared that their teachers never attempted to target enhancing ICC via the use of literary texts.
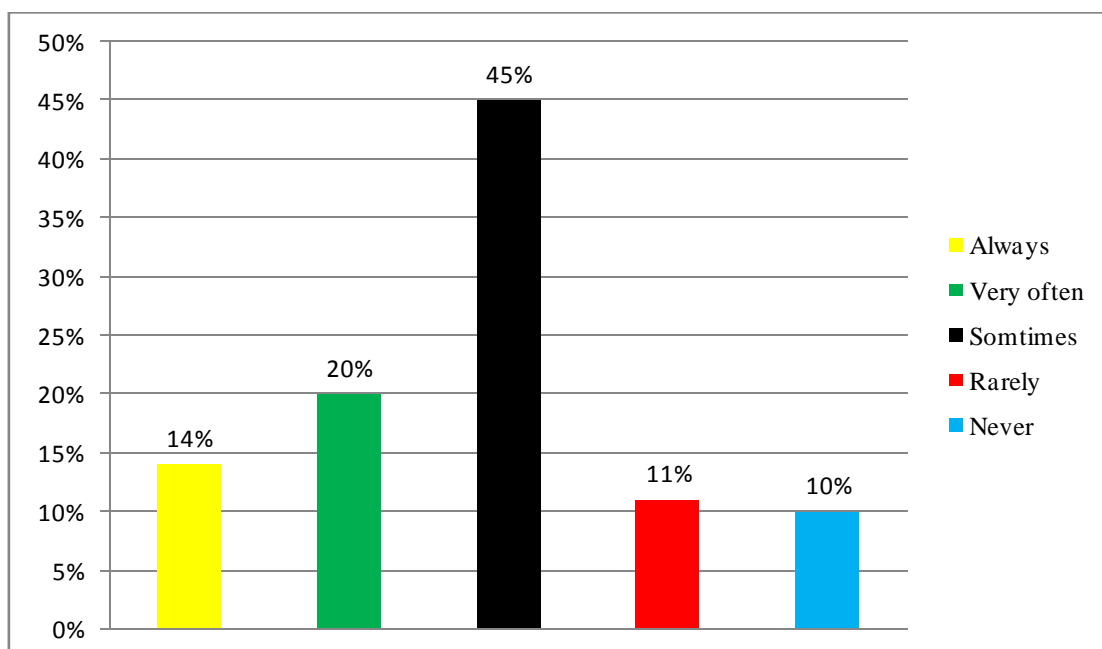
Figure 3.18.Teachers' Attempts of Teaching English Culture through Literary Texts

Question 27: Are you aware of the link between the development of intercultural communicative competence and the use of literary texts?

Yes ☐ No ☐

In response to this question, a considerable number of the students (N= 44, 41%) revealed that they were not aware of the link between the two and they have selected 'No'

as an answer. However, the majority (N= 83, 59%) expressed their awareness concerning the role played by literary pieces in enhancing their ICC.
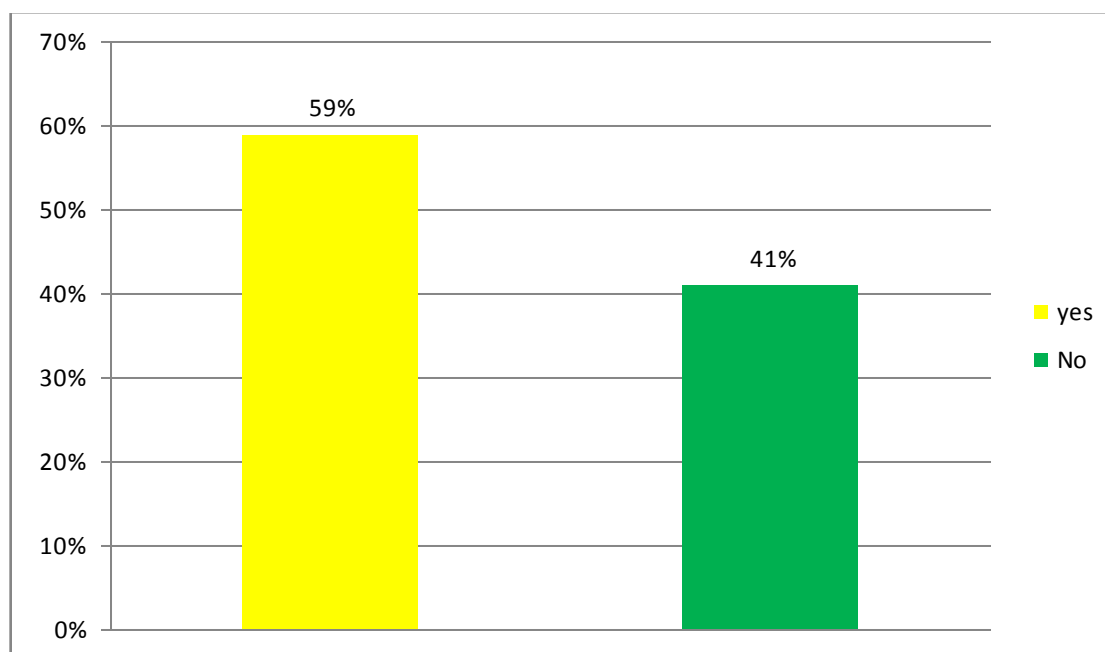
*Figure 3.19.*Students' Awareness of the Efficient Use of Literary Texts in Developing ICC

Question 28: Please, justify your answer.

In accordance with the previously answered question, the students were asked to clarify their choice and the most common argument is centered on the importance of literary pieces in representing the culture of different communities. Various answers were given by the respondents depicting the relationship between literary texts and ICC:

- *Especially in the dialogue of characters, and their psychological building.*

- *Literary texts explain culture, culture teaches the language, and language is the mean (s) of communication.*

- *If you read literary texts you will develop your language, then your communication.*

- *When we read literary texts we enrich our knowledge.*

- *I see that there is a strong link between the two whenever someone read a lot of literary texts he will rise and develop his intercultural communicative*

competence, because he will have a great knowledge and information to share and to learn about it.

- *Literary texts are a part of culture, understanding them, means understanding the culture.*

- *Literature contains cultural aspects that help in developing intercultural communicative competence.*

- *Because many modern stories include many useful dialogues for the intercultural communication.*

On the other hand, the students who believed that there is no link offered some responses that involve:

- *I'm not aware because no one told me about it.*

- *Because we do not have a module that talks about it.*

- *Simply because I'm not interested in reading literary texts, but I still want to know more about intercultural communicative competence.*

- *It is related with well education and comprehension.*

Question 29: Has your intercultural communicative competence been raised with the use of literary texts?

Yes ☐   No ☐

As it is demonstrated in Figure 3.20, approximately the majority of the respondents (N= 111, 79%) acknowledged that their ICC has been increased when reading literary texts. However, some of the informants (N= 29, 21%) stated that they did not benefit from the use of literary materials; therefore, their ICC has not been improved.
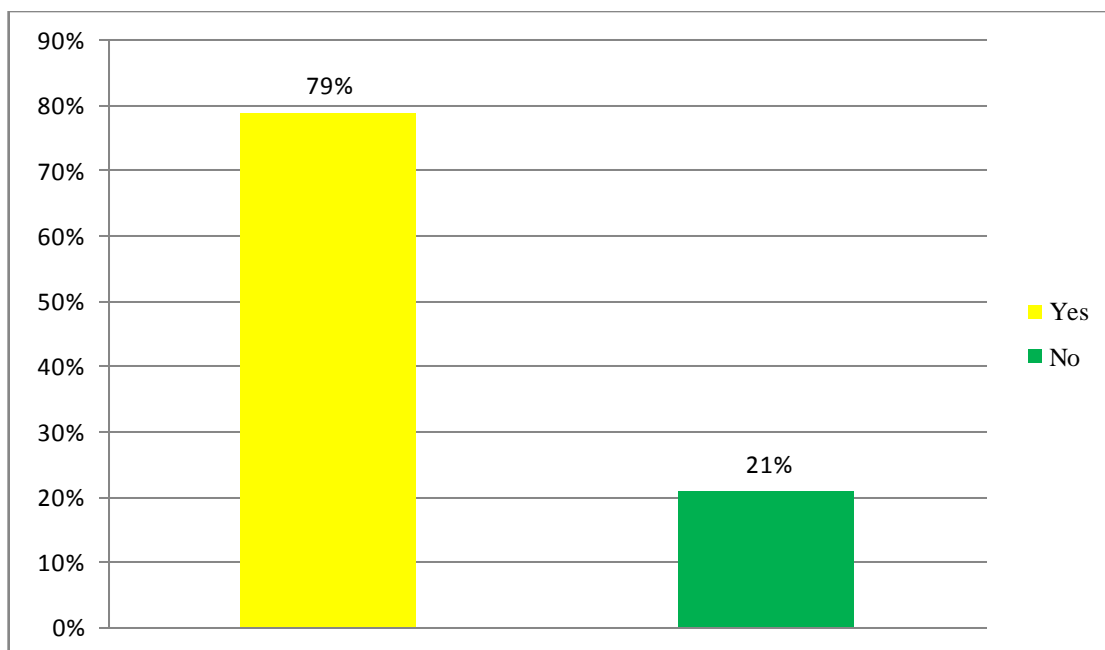
*Figure 3.20.*Literary texts Advantageous in Raising Students' ICC

Question 30: If you have any further recommendations about the subject of inquiry, please add.

The students' opinions regarding this item varied from one another in which some of them expressed their interest in learning more about the subject and others added further recommendations concerning the investigated theme. The subsequent statements are among the collected answers:

- *I think we should learn more about the subject because it is good for students.*

- *Very nice subjects it looks perfect for me.*

- *Let's add something new to the teaching of literature to not be boring.*

- *Why we learn about English literature not our literature.*

- *Personally, talking to native speakers in addition listening to American music, watching; movies, night show added to my vocabulary and fluency.*

- *Please, in your research include that as foreign language learners we need more materials of listening.*

- *Knowing the natives culture is really important in communicating with them, so we need like an additional course to know more about it, and watch English shows for a personal benefit.*

- *I liked the topic I have already talked about it in my oral presentation. Now I have realized that we really need to know the cultural aspects.*

3.4. Students' Questionnaire Data Discussion

The research points out the relationship between the uses of literary texts and the development of ICC, in addition to the significant function played by culture in the field of FL teaching as raising students' cultural consciousness and its effectiveness in facilitating the process of communication. The questionnaire aimed at determining learners' attitudes towards the implementation of culture in English language teaching curriculum and the use of literary texts as a source of materials. Through analyzing the statistical results of the questionnaire, the following points were confirmed:

- The majority of the students avowed that it was their decision to study English which would affect their opinions and how they would behave towards the TL language. This denotes that if the students were imposed to study English, they will not be interested in improving their level.

- Despite the fact that culture is somehow ignored in Algerian EFL classrooms as it was revealed in students' answers; many students expressed their positive attitudes towards the necessity of incorporating this component. Moreover, almost all the participants conveyed that dealing with EFL cultural aspects will not have a negative effect on their own culture, which reflects their awareness and their competences in having control over their learning process. Thus, the students are found to be open to pick up the existing cultural differences and embracing these features along with the Algerian culture.

- Students agreed that language culture shapes students' communicative competence and being aware of the similarities and differences occurring between English and the mother culture provides them with the required knowledge that would help to communicate effectively with others. As a result, this minimizes the chance of creating misunderstandings with people who are different from us, mainly because each society has its own beliefs, values, religion, etc.

- It is obvious that the learners are not totally aware of the meaning of stereotypes and prejudging concepts when communicating in English. Their answers reflect their unconsciousness regarding this item because the majority overlooked giving justifications for this question. This may be explained as they have never encountered the two concepts in their English learning process.

- The majority of the students believe that literary texts are just a piece of art no more; however, a considerable number of the respondents revealed that this type of materials is a rich source of cultural knowledge that presents the culture of the author and the English speaking society. Additionally, the students showed their preferences of literary genres as narratives including novels and short stories. The students noted the limited attempts of teachers in teaching the cultural aspects embedded in literary pieces and they focus more on discussing aspects as the characters, plot, setting, events, etc.

- The students recognize the link between literary texts and ICC, in the sense that, these materials are the mirror of culture which is depicted in the story. Furthermore, the students consider literary texts as a rich source of vocabulary and dialogues of real life situations.

Finally, the majority of the students' ICC was improved with the use of literary works which proved its efficiency. It is worth to mention that not all the students are interested in reading this specific type of writing.

Conclusion

The students' questionnaire findings reveal that the learners are conscious about the predominant role of culture in the process of EFL teaching and the interaction effectively with English native speakers. Furthermore, Thestudents have a positive attitude towards the integration of EFL culture in literature teaching curriculum and expressed their enthusiasm to learn more about it.

Limitation of the Study

The present dissertation revealed some remarkable and important findings; however, the research has some limitations. which are:

- The administered questionnaire was limited only to second year students. The fact that does not make the results applicable to other levels, because the students' opinions may differ depending on their learning level.

- Not all students were really engaged and interested in answering the questionnaire items,as some follow up questions were left unanswered, although the predetermined sample participated.

- The definitions regarding some linguistic terms were not consulted by the majority of the students and this influenced their responses.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

This research attempted to shed light on the importance of culture in developing EFL learners' ICC because it proved its success in helping students in intercultural situations where they confront other people from distinct cultures in a diverse world. Each individual is unique and different which makes it difficult or sometimes impossible for an effective communication to take place.

ICC requires more than learning the rules of language but also it necessitates picking upinformation about the sociolinguistic and social-cultural use of language. Moreover, language and culture teaching shouldgo hand in hand because effective communication cannot be achieved by relying on linguistic or cultural knowledge only. In addition, intercultural competence cannot be developed without being able to understand the intercultural differences.

Literature is becoming an integral part of EFL curriculumas it is considered a rich and an authentic source of language and cultural knowledge. However, many researchers, FL teachers, and course designers confirmed that the careful selection of literary texts materials raises learners' awareness about cultures that areportrayed within these pieces of writing. Literature can provide a solution to motivate students and it is a perfect medium for the illustration of language use and for presenting cultural assumptions. The research provides evidence that the teaching of literary texts in FL teaching helps students to enrich students their ICC.

On the light of the previously discussed ideas, the analysis of the questionnaire results speculate that the students are in favor of the utilization of literary texts in teaching EFL culture and in developing their ICC. The students' answers demonstrate their openness to such implementation since the majority of them are familiar with literary worksincluding

novels and short stories that are viewed as the mirror of other societies' cultures.Furthermore, it is important to highlight that some students are not interested in reading literary texts in particular but other genres of writing.

All in all, the students are aware of the important role played by ICC in shaping the process of communication, and they are open to the use of literary materials to enhance this important competence.

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Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Investigating EFL Students' Attitudes towards the Improvement of Intercultural Communicative Ability through the Employment of Literary Texts

Dear students,

You are kindly invited to answer the following questionnaire which is a part of a Master dissertation research. It investigates EFL learners' perspectives on enhancing their intercultural communicative competence with the use of literary works as a source of materials dealing with English cultural aspects. The collected information is going to be treated with great confidentiality and care.

For the definitions of the important linguistic terms, please check the final page. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

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Guelma

2018

Section one: Students'Background Information

1. Is the reason behind choosing to study English?

    . Personal ☐

    . Imposed ☐

    . Advised ☐

    . Others ☐

2. If others, please justify your answer.

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3. How long have you been studying English?

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4. What is your aim behind learning English?

.To carry on my studies abroad   ☐

.To communicate with English speaking people.   ☐

.To get a job   ☐

.To grasp English cultural knowledge   ☐

.To be able to understand the content of movies,   ☐

programs, and music presented in English.

.Others   ☐

5. If others, please justify your answer.

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Section Two: English Foreign Language Intercultural Communicative Competence

6. Do you think that the teaching/ learning of the cultural aspects of Englishis

. Not necessary ☐

. Somehownecessary ☐

. Very necessary ☐

7. Please, justify your answer.

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……………………………………………………………………………………………

8. Do you think that the teaching/ learning of English culture in EFLclassroom in Algeria

is

. Given a great attention ☐

 . Given little attention ☐

. Completely ignored ☐

9. Do you think that the integration of cultural content in English learning curriculum

should be applied?

Yes ☐   No ☐

10. Does the learning of English culturehave a negative influence on your own culture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

11. To what extent does the learning of culture in EFL classroom have an influence on

shaping the students communicative competence?

. Very low ☐

. Low ☐

. Average ☐

. High ☐

. Very high ☐

12. Is intercultural communication important to know what to say and what not to say to othersof different cultures?

Yes ☐   No ☐

13. Is itimportant to learn about the similarities and differences between the native English culture and Algerian culture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

14.Please, justify your answer.

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15. Does developing awareness about cultural differences minimize misunderstandings between people of different cultures?

Yes ☐   No ☐

16. Are you culturally competent to deal effectively with native speakers of English?

Yes ☐   No ☐

17. Please, justify your answer.

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18. Do stereotypes and pre-judging affect the process of communicationamong speakers of English?

Yes ☐   No ☐

19. Please, justify your answer.

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Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence and Literature Connections

20. What type of literary texts you prefer to readin order to develop your intercultural communicative competence?

. Narratives as short stories and novels ☐

. Poems and songs ☐

. Essays about different fields as magazines and journals ☐

. Others ☐

21. If other preferences, please justify your answer.

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22. How often do you readliterary works?

. Always ☐

. Very Often ☐

. Sometimes ☐

. Rarely ☐

. Never ☐

23. When you read literary texts, do you think that these materials represent

. The author ☐

. The culture of the author ☐

. A work and a piece of art ☐

. Linguistic system of English ☐

. Culture of English speaking society ☐

24. Do you think that literary texts are good materials that can be used to make students aware ofcultural differences?

Yes ☐   No ☐

25.Please, justify your answer.

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26. How often do your teachers of literature teach you cultural aspects with the use of literary texts?

. Always   ☐

. Very Often   ☐

. Sometimes   ☐

. Rarely   ☐

. Never   ☐

27. Areyou aware of the link between the development of intercultural communicative competence and the use of literary texts?

Yes ☐   No ☐

28. Please, justify your answer.

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…………………………………………………………………………………………………

29. Has your intercultural communicative competence been raised with the use of literary works?

        Yes   ☐   No   ☐

30. If you have further recommendations about the subject of inquiry, please add.

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Thank you for your collaboration

Definitions of Important Terms

Communicative competence: it is a term used to refer to the use of the grammatical information asphonology, morphology, syntax, etc., in addition to the use of social knowledge about how and when to use utterances in an appropriate way.

Culture: refers to the collection of traditions, values, norms, language, way of living, literature, music, customs, and common experiences, etc., that shape humans' identity. Culture is shared among a group of people within a particular society.

EFL: English Foreign Language.

Intercultural communicative competence: is defined as the capacity to understand other cultures, with having first awareness towards own culture. This understanding is going to be used in order to communicate with other people who have a different cultural background in a successful way.

Prejudging: from a judgement on (an issue or person) prematurely and without having adequate information.

Stereotype: is an over-generalized belief about a particular category of people, it is generalized because one assumes that the stereotype is true for each individual person in that category.

Résumé

La présente dissertation examine les points de vuedes étudiants vers l'amélioration de la compétence communicative interculturelle avec l'utilisation de matériaux littéraires. La culture de la langue anglaise est mieux représentée dans des écrits qui servent comme sources authentiques illustrant les comportements et les coutumes des communautés anglophones. En conséquence, la recherche vise à déterminer l'importance de l'incorporation d'œuvres littéraires dans le programme d'enseignement de l'anglais langue étrangère et à déterminer comment ces matériaux peuvent enrichir les connaissances communicatives interculturelles des élèves. Les données ont été recueillies par moyen d'une méthode quantitative(N= 140) élèves, au cours du deuxième semestre au département d'anglais, Université du 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. Les résultats confirment l'hypothèse de recherche selon laquelle les étudiants ont des attitudes positives envers l'application de textes littéraires pour améliorer la compétence communicative interculturelle. Les résultats ont révélé que les élèves sont conscients du rôle joué par l'enseignement de la culture de l'anglais langue étrangère dans le développement de leurs compétences pour interagir efficacement avec les autres.

Mots clés: Attitudes des étudiants, compétence communicative interculturelle, textes littéraires.

ملخص

تتطرق الرسالة الحالية إلى دراسة آراء الطلبة حول تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات باستخدام النصوص الأدبية.
إذ تبين أن هذه النصوص هي أحسن ما يعرض ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية من سلوكيات و عادات المجتمعات الناطقة بتلك
اللغة. وبناءً على ذلك، يهدف البحث إلى التعرف على فعالية دمج الأعمال الأدبية في مناهج تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية
كلغة أجنبية وتحد يد كيفية تمكن هذه المواد من إثراء معرفة التواصل التعددية بين الثقافات. وقد تم جمع البيانات من
خلال منهج كمي تم فيه طرح استبيان على140 طالب من السنة الثانية خلال الفصل الدراسي الثاني في قسم اللغة
الإنجليزية ، جامعة8 ماي1945 ، قالمة. حيث أكدت النتائج فرضية البحث على أن الطلاب لديهم مواقف إيجابية تجاه
تطبيق النصوص الأدبية من أجل تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات. فقد كشفت النتائج أن الطلاب على وعي
بالدور الذي تلعبه تعليم ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في تطوير قدراتهم للتواصل بفعالية مع الآخرين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مواقف الطلاب ، الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات ، النصوص الأدبية.