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**The Effect of the Foreign Culture on Learners' Reading
Comprehension through the Secondary School Textbook "Getting
Through".**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
'Master Degree' in Sciences of Language.**

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This work is dedicated specially to my family members, who have shown me what nobody else would ever have, and have provided me with their encouragement, love and understanding.

To my "fiancé" for his patience and care.

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To all who were there for me, thank you for ignoring my faults and encouraging my merits

To all those who have been supportive, caring and patient, sometimes beyond their strength, I dedicate this work.

Abstract

The present research attempts to examine the effects of the foreign culture introduced in the reading materials on learners' reading comprehension, and the way culture is actually dealt with foreign language classes in the Secondary School level. Throughout the study, we tend to explore teachers' as well as students perspectives and opinions towards the issue under investigation through diagnosing test contain two texts which involve foreign cultural clues to the students from second year textbook, and designing teachers questionnaire. In other words, this study focuses on whether reading materials incorporating foreign cultural clues facilitate learners' reading comprehension. In addition, the teachers' cultural knowledge, methods techniques, activities, materials currently used to teach and integrate culture into English foreign classes. The results show that texts include foreign cultural clues hinder the process of reading comprehension. Likewise, the results of teachers' questionnaire confirm the idea of reading materials incorporate foreign culture type hinders learners reading comprehension. Moreover, language and culture are closely related and the unavailability of resources and materials which might have helped teachers to introduce the target culture in their classes. On the basis of this findings, a set of recommendations for both students and teachers in order to offer useful ways of reaching culture in English foreign classes.

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List of Abbreviations

ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
BA	Bachelor of Arts
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
Q	Question

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General Introduction

Culture is said to be the core of teaching and is seen in an inseparable relationship with language; the need to integrate culture and its teaching in foreign language is not a new debate, and has been long highlighted by many approaches and researchers in the field of foreign language teaching like Kramersch, Hinkel, Bonvillain...etc. Culture teaching, actually, may be problematic in the sense that it may have some undesirable effects on foreign language learners. That is why teachers should have a clear vision of the set of objectives to be achieved through its teaching. In the teaching learning process, specifically at the Secondary School level, the most available tool for presenting culture is the textbook and more precisely the text. Yet, it seems to be a common practice that English textbooks designers in Algeria, frequently overlook the conclusion drawn in such studies, and neglect the essential information about the target language culture that would help student reach a cultural understanding to complement their linguistic one. In fact, the major purpose motivating this study is that examine the quality of materials used in teaching culture in Algeria. In this study, we attempt to highlight the issue of the effect of foreign culture on learners' reading comprehension onto the Algerian context. Hence, we intend to take the Algerian English foreign classes textbook *Getting Through*; meant for second year as a case study. Taking into account the aim of this study, we have chosen to design tests for learners, and a questionnaire for teachers to consolidate this work, and both of them the tests and the questionnaire aim at diagnosing whether foreign culture type enhances learners' comprehension or hinders it.

Statement of the Problem

Learning a foreign language means learning its grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and culture. This research will be devoted to the important role of the foreign culture on learner's reading comprehension. The problem we are confronted with is the impact of the foreign culture on reading materials. In other words, the problem is about the effects of the foreign culture on learners' reading comprehension Secondary School textbook *Getting Through*.

Significance of the Study

The concern of this study is to highlight the role and the importance of culture and its effects on learners' reading materials secondary school textbook for effective reading comprehension and understanding. Moreover, the effect of foreign culture type on learner's reading comprehension secondary school textbook is a necessary and worthwhile process for

teachers many context and not only an exercise to be carried out for language learning purpose. We consider that the result of this study will provide students, teachers and others who have an interest in teaching culture in English classes, in Algeria, and its effects on their reading comprehension to show the important role of culture in reading materials.

Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate whether foreign culture type in reading materials in the secondary textbook *Getting Through* affects learners' reading comprehension. This study attempts to examine more precisely, whether foreign culture content facilitates learners' reading comprehension or hinders it.

Research Questions

The research question can be stated as the following:

1. Does the foreign culture content in the reading materials in the secondary school textbook *Getting Through* affect learners' reading comprehension?
2. Does the foreign cultural type in the reading materials facilitate learners' reading comprehension, or hinder it?

Research Hypotheses

We hypothesize that the foreign culture content types in the reading materials in *Getting Through* affect learner's reading comprehension. We expect that foreign culture hinders learners reading comprehension.

Research Methodology

Taking into account that different types of research call for different research methodology the latter depends mainly on the aim of the research work, the type of the data needed, and the population under-investigation. Since the aim of this research is to examine the current situation of the effect of foreign culture on learners' reading comprehension Secondary School textbook *Getting Through*, the descriptive method seems to be the appropriate one. This method will be useful in getting insight into the current ways. The role of the foreign culture content on learners' reading comprehension in reading materials. Moreover, this method is also relevant in collecting data about subjects under- investigation.

Research Tools:

First, a test will be administered to student in order to examine the effect of cultural clue incorporated in reading materials on learner's reading comprehension. In the test, we are going to present two texts with foreign cultural type to learners followed by some comprehension questions to examine their reading comprehension. Learners' scores determine how much foreign cultural content is more comprehensible and understandable.

Second, a questionnaire will be used in the present study to teachers. So because using the questionnaire in the current study seems to be appropriate. Since, it is quick to administer and can be distributed to a large population in the same time. The questionnaire as a research tool should satisfy factors, to determine their presence, or absence, or to assess the relevance, frequency and generalization of information obtained.

Research Limitations

The current study is mainly concerned with investigating to what extent foreign culture affects learner's reading comprehension in teaching English as foreign language during the school year (2012/2013). In order to shed light on the issue, both teachers' and students' opinions in the secondary school will be investigated. Hence, any conclusions drawn from the study will be limited to the targeted population, and the findings are not over generalization but just an attempt and an ultimate insight into the situation. Furthermore, consuming time in administering the students' test. It can be difficult to have a permit since our test takes more than one session.

Research Structure

The study consists of three chapters. Since this diagnosing the effect of foreign culture content in the reading materials of second year textbook *Getting Through*, we devote the first chapter to define culture from different viewpoints. We also attempt to present the existing relationship between culture and language, the importance, approaches, techniques, and the effects of culture teaching. The second chapter, contains language textbooks classifications, reading, reading materials in addition to culture in reading materials. The third chapter deals with the analysis of the data as well as the quantitative and the qualitative interpretation of the results that are obtained from the test and the teachers' questionnaire. It also includes suggestions and recommendations which stress the necessity of the innovation in the textbook *Getting Through* and the importance of teachers' role in culture teaching.

CHAPTER ONE
CULTURE AND
LANGUAGE TEACHING

CHAPTER TWO

READING AND LANGUAGE

TEXTBOOKS CLASSIFICATIONS

CHAPTER THREE

FIELD WORK

APPENDICES

Introduction

A language is an aspect of a culture and a culture is an aspect of a language; both are so intimately interwoven that they cannot be separated. Teaching a foreign language entails teaching its culture, and without teaching culture a foreign language is losing essence and significance. Therefore many scholars suggested that an effective teaching syllabus should introduce cultural knowledge. That is why teacher should set certain objectives to be achieved as help his students to improve both linguistic and cultural knowledge using particular method and techniques. Then students master the foreign language and its culture easily.

This chapter is devoted to the exploration of the subject matter of the research work. It starts with the definition of the concept "culture" in general, and tries to shed light how different scholars from different disciplines explain it and gives the interrelationship between language and culture. This chapter will also trace the methods and techniques of teaching culture within the field of foreign language teaching and its importance. An attempt will be made to show how the target culture effects on students.

1.1. The Concept of Culture

Culture has been defined in many ways by different scholars and researchers representing some disciplines. Since it has a complex nature, the concept culture is very difficult to define. It is preferable to start with the clearest and simplest definition is the one given from a normative perspective and which usually distinguishes between a small " c " that refers to the way of life of a group of people and this brooding of little" c" refers also to which called (behavior culture).However, a big" C" culture which refers to products and contributions of a society (Tomlin and Stempleski 7). It can be expressed through the following diagram:

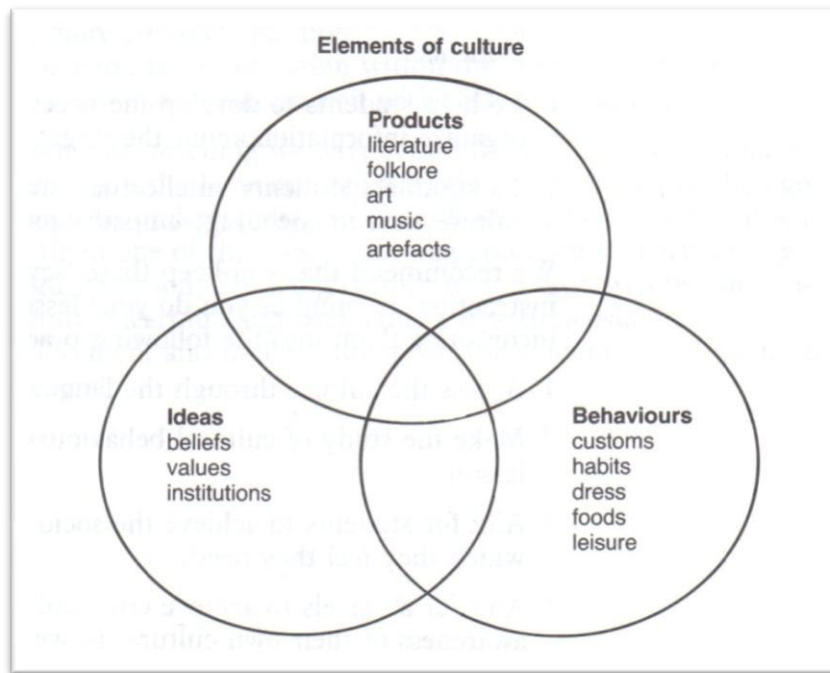


Figure 1: Elements of culture

Moreover, culture is a general term that refers to things, it may refer to the customs, values codes and beliefs that marks a particular group, or to the appreciation of literature, music or art .In addition, culture is the reflection of the total behavior of a society so culture is the sum of knowledge, attitude, and habitual models of particular people. In this context, Hinkel argues that“ It may not be an exaggeration to say that there are nearly as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities”(1).

Referring to Adler, who has synthesized many definitions of culture, she stated that:

Culture is something that is shared by all or almost all members of same social group. Something that older members of the group try to pass on to the young members. Something (as in the case of moral, laws and customs) that shapes behaviors, or structures one’s perception of the world(15).

That is to say, culture refers to the knowledge, skills, values and customs that the members of a given nation generally have, then move from one generation to another. In other word, culture means all what man can do and produce so it is embraces all the aspects of human life. In this sense Sapir notes that “culture is technically used by ethnologists and culture historians to embody any socially inherited element in the life of man, materials and spiritual.” (79).

Moving to Seelye's point of view who claims that:

Culture is the systematic, rather arbitrary, more or less coherent, group invented, and group shared creed from the past that defines the shape of "reality"; and assign the sense and worth of things; it is modified by each generation and response to adoptive pressure; it provides the code that tells people how to behave predictably and acceptably, the cipher that allows them to derive meaning from language and other symbols. (23)

All in all, culture is a representation of the world and a way of making sense of reality. This later still has six meanings which can be summarized in the following:

1.1.1. Anthropological Sense

On their perspective anthropologists agree on the first most elaborated definition which has given by Tylor :“culture...is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”(1).In his book *primitive cultures* Tylor describe culture as" the whole complex" which refers the shared knowledge, values and physical products of a group of people. In other word, it refers to the fall range of the characteristics of the human being in a given community, focusing more on the social aspects and behaviors that are learned and acquired by man. In addition, this definition based on the assumption that culture is a kind of knowledge consisting mainly of rules which man must know in order to operate successfully within a particular society or which enable him to operate in a manner acceptable to members of their society.

In brief, culture is the whole way of life style of the society member's and the social combination that change within a group, the ways of believing, behaving, thinking are that are imported to members of group in the socialization process (Hinkel 3).

1.1.2. Sociological Sense

In this context, sociologists concentrate more on the body of theory with asset of basic concepts for the analysis of society and schemes of classification. Moreover sociologists operate with such notion as social institution, role, group, status, function, social structure, culture, social group, kinship group and satisfactions (Stern 149).From this view sociologists insist on the social aspects of culture and this later cannot be reached in isolation from its social values. As Sapir argues that culture is “the socially inherited assemblage of practices

and beliefs that determined the texture of our lives” (cited in Trivedi 92). This socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs may be classified into three categories:

- a) Static unites such as man, woman, horse, teacher etc.
- b) Processes like to study, to think, to read, etc.
- c) Qualities such as good, bad, cold, hot, etc.

In fact, a person should be aware of cultural norms and has the ability to use appropriate cultural patterns which are viewed differently by societies according to their cultures. To support this idea, Soler and Jorda claimed that “language embedded in culture such that the meaning of any linguistic item can only be properly understood with reference to the cultural context developing it” (15). Hence culture is the social legacy that organizes people’s lives everywhere. As Kramsch points out that culture can be defined as “a membership in a discourse community that shares a common social place and history, and common imagining”.

To conclude, culture from sociologists point of view, is the social acquired knowledge which refers to the social and paralinguistic skills and language code which are important to integrate a target culture.

1.1.3. Psychological Sense

Psychologically, culture becomes among its main subject matters. Along the twentieth century psychology like the other disciplines expands different definitions. One is given by Alptekin explained that culture “includes artifacts of a given community and involves socially acquired knowledge” (136). In other words, what someone has by virtue of his being a member of particular society.

1.1.4. Linguistic Sense

From the linguist’s perspective, culture is closely related to language; it is considered as a social phenomenon and culture cannot be taught and understood separate from language. According to Soler and Jorda stated that “language as being naturally and inextricably intertwined with culture” (15).

1.1.5. Aesthetic Sense

Here culture is represented with capital letter “C” including: cinema, literature, music and media.

1.1.6. Semantic Sense

Refers to the whole conceptualization system, which conditions our perceptions and thought processes.

1.2. Culture and Language

A difference in the purposes for which English is being taught to students in any particular situation determines the amount of emphasis upon the cultural content of a course. When English is taught as a means of communication, there is a little need of or a systematic treatment of culture and civilization. However, even in this situation, it is important to establish a relationship between the language and its culture because the meanings expressed in a language are largely determined by its culture and civilization. In fact, one cannot fully understand language without understanding at least, some of its cultural meaning. According to Brooks “language is the most representative, and the most central element in any culture. Language and culture are not separable” (Qtd. in Atamna 29). In other words, language and culture are perceived as two closely related entities and language is the most important element through which can express and represent our thought and ideas. So, language as a social fact and a main part of culture and one of the characteristics of culture is its language, also culture is considered as a component and a part that cannot be separated from the language.

For Kramersch, language is the principle means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in three various and complex ways: language expresses cultural reality, language embodies cultural reality and language symbolizes reality. First, he stated that:

The words people refer to common experience. They express facts or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect author’s attitudes and beliefs, their point of view, which are also those of others. In both cases, language expresses cultural reality. (3)

Language enables individuals to express their ideas, beliefs, facts, attitudes, assumptions, point of view about the world that are shared by people within a specific cultural community. Second, since language is a system that is inherently creative, people of the same social community create experience through language; they interact with each other in different ways: verbal ways such as speaking face to face, speaking on the phone, reading

/writing messages. Nonverbal ways like facial expressions, gestures, the tone, accent in speech. Therefore, using language through those aspects create a variety of possible meaning which are understood by the members of the same social group. Third, language itself symbolizes individual's identity; since language can be considered as the symbolic guide to culture, it enables speakers to identify themselves as members of the same social community sharing the same culture. Thus, language always symbolizes cultural reality. In the same context, Fishman puts three links between language and culture which can be summarized as follows: Firstly, "language as a part of culture", language cannot be separated from culture and one of the most important parts of any culture is the language. Hence, it is impossible to understand a particular culture without studying its language. Secondly, language as an index of culture" here language expresses the members of a given culture how they think, behaving, believing and social norms which are common and shared in the culture. Thirdly, "language as symbolic of culture" that is each language symbolizes its culture. (cited in Risager 13,14).

Still according to Kramsch claims that "the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis makes the claim that the structure of the language one habitually uses influences the manner in which one thinks and behave"(11). That is to say, that hypothesis advanced by the linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf in (1940), his name associated with the theory of "linguistic relativity principle". It focuses on that words determine thought, believe that language is determined and shaped by culture; hence language is dependent on the cultural contexts into which different languages offer different ways of perceiving and express the world around us. Thus leading their speakers to conceive of the world in different ways. In addition, the hypothesis postulates that a particular language's nature influences the habitual thought of its speakers; that different language patterns yield different patterns of thought. This idea challenges the possibility of perfectly representing the world with language. In fact, it postulates a systematic relationship between the grammatical categories of the language and a person speaks and how he/she both understands the world around him/herself and behaves in it. In this context, Sapir argues that:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become that medium of expression for their society. The fact that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group (Qtd. in Bonvillian 50).

Generally speaking, Sapir's theory ranged over language, culture, and society; therefore, he argues different thoughts are brought about by the use of different forms of language. One is limited by the language used to express one's ideas. Different languages will create different limitations, and then people who share the same culture but speak different languages will have different world views. In fact, he acknowledged language as a valuable guide to the scientific study of a given culture, because the network of cultural patterns of a civilization is indexed in the language which expresses that civilization. It was largely due to Sapir's influence that Whorf studied the relations between language, culture, and thought more closely (Stern 202,203).

1.3. The Importance of Teaching Culture

Culture traditionally occupied a prominent position. More recent models have tended to stress the behavioral aspects of culture, and in particular its role in communication. Indeed, the concept of culture has become something of a fashionable cliché in language teaching circles in recent years. Since language and culture are inseparable ignoring one of the two will be the detriment of the other. Then, teaching language without culture is like teaching the alphabet without the vowels; the students will learn something but not enough to make the language useful. As Omaggio said "teaching culture is considered important by most teachers but it has remained "insubstantial and sporadic" in most language classrooms" (357).

Teaching culture is a valuable component of foreign language programs which may allow learners to increase their knowledge of the target culture in terms of different ways of life, traditions, customs, and laws. In so doing, teaching culture may raise awareness of cultural factors.

1.4. Teaching Culture Methods

Culture has always been present in language instruction which is not something new throughout the history of language teaching. Since the main aim of language courses is teaching about another culture, Brooks is the famous mover who focused on the importance of teaching the culture of the target language. He argues that:

Language is most typical, the most representative, most central element in any culture. Language and culture are not separable; it is better to see the special characteristics of a language as cultural entities and recognize that language enters into the learning and use of nearly all other cultural elements."(Cited in Kumaravadivelu 92).

That is to say, teachers should incorporate and introduce all the cultural aspects in language teaching through particular methods which are:

1.4.1. Grammar Translation Method

This method appear in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ,it deals with teaching foreign learners how to understand foreign literature .One of its goals is that the interpretation and the presentation of correct linguistic forms, perfect translation and reading comprehension. It is the most common teaching method used until the 1960's.It was through reading that students learned of culture associated with the target languages, that is to say, the exposure students had to culture was being that their main tool for learning it was through reading. In this context, Murcia (6) summarized the principles of (GTM) as follows:

- a) Instruction is given in the native language of the students.
- b) There is a little use of the target language for communication.
- c) Focusing on grammatical parsing, the form and inflection of words.
- d) There is early reading of difficult texts.
- e) A typical exercise is to translate sentences from the target language into the mother tongue and vice versa.

1.4.2 .Audio-Lingual Method

Traditional methods of teaching culture in the foreign language classes have been focused on formal culture and passive learning .Students need both geographical and historical perspective in order to understand contemporary behavior patterns but this can be done with hands on activities focus on grammatically correct speech such as dialogues. ALM emerges in the 1940's and become very popular in the 1960's, it based on:

- a) Lessons begin with dialogues.
- b) Pronunciation is stressed from the beginning.
- c) Mimicry and memorization.
- d) Culture and communication.
- e) Aspects of everyday life (little "c") culture. (Murcia 7)

Furthermore, within the (ALM) the foreign language teaching and learning culture was often taught within the frame work of situations and setting of the dialogue in the foreign country, and is subordinated to the memorization of useful phrases and the reproduction of typical social roles. This may include topics such as, shopping in the supermarket, asking the

way in the restaurant, etc. In fact, the importance of culture not for the study of literature but for language learning and communication take place in spoken language rather than written one. So speaking become more important than only reading and translating and the main exposure learners had to the culture of the target language was through controlled activities and materials by teachers.

1.4.3. The Communicative Method

Language and culture are more naturally integrated in this method. Culture instruction is connected to grammar instruction. Its main goal is to teach students how to use the target language when communicating in a cultural context. Culture is used to make comparisons and connections about communities and in doing so students can have meaningful communications within those communities. For Murcia, communicative method was an outgrowth of the anthropological linguistics. It is assumed that the goal of language teaching is learner ability to communicate in the target language, skills are integrated from the beginning, classroom materials and activities are often authentic to reflect real life situation. Students regularly work in groups or pairs to transfer meaning in situation and they often engaged in role play a dramatization to adjust their use of the target language to different social context (7).

Foreign language teachers should make culture more of a central role in the class, be aware of cognitive and effective influences on the students, engage students as active participants and they should teach culture in such a way that students can be cross-cultural here and abroad.

1.4.4. The Schema Theory

Schema theory describes the process by which learners should acquire both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of the target language to master this later and its culture. The schema theory is based on the belief of “every act of comprehension involves one’s knowledge of the world as well” (Anderson et al 73). In this process, learners combine their own prior knowledge with the text to understand that text. Each target culture enrich different schemata/background information that includes two types; the formal schemata which involves the knowledge of reading materials and the form of those texts, and the content schemata which is based on the knowledge of the world and the texts of subject matter.

In brief, the schema theory and its types are important in all understanding, because it depends on the learners’ predictions and expectations in the target culture.

1.5. Techniques of Teaching Culture

Culture can be taught through various activities that involve participation on the part of learners in language classroom. It is not easy to find good techniques for teaching culture because many of them overlap in that they are based on the same principles. Though many educators gave some practical ones which are familiar to language teachers such as: culture capsules, culture clusters, culture assimilators, mini-drama, genuine materials, and role playing.

1.5.1. Culture Capsules

Culture capsules are one of the best established known techniques to teach culture .It is generally prepared out of class by students during the lecture in 5 or 10 minutes; it is a brief description of some aspects of the target culture followed by contrasting information from the students' native language culture such as greeting, customs, marriage, etc. Moreover, this technique is usually done orally with the teacher giving a brief lecture on the chosen cultural point and then students ask questions to stimulate discussion about the differences between cultures (Seelye 174).

1.5.2. Culture Clusters

A culture cluster is simply group of two or more illustrated culture capsules on related themes/topics about the target culture. In other words, it is a combination of conceptually related culture capsules; two or more capsules which belong together can form cluster .In addition, a cluster should be conclude by some sort of activity such as a dramatization and role playing. So teachers can develop culture clusters themselves by thinking of a slice of target life then work backwards to identify two or three components it contains (Seelye 178).

1.5.3. Culture Assimilators

Culture assimilator consists of short (usually written) description of an incident or situation where interaction takes place between at least one student from the target culture and student from the native culture (usually that native culture being taught). The description is followed by four possible choices, or words of the participants in the with emphasis on the words, behavior, actions of the target language, that is to say, after reading the description of the incident, student are presented with four possible explanations, from which they are asked to select the correct one. Thus students are given feedback why one explanation is right and

the others wrong in certain cultural context and then teachers can find numerous culture assimilators (Tomalin and Stempleski 89, 99).

1.5.4. Mini-Drama

It is based on series of plays scenes (usually from three to five) of everyday life that illustrate culturally significant behavior the play is read, viewed on a video or acted out. Each play is followed by a discussion, the teacher asks students what the actions and words of the characters in the drama mean and lead them in non-judgmental atmosphere, it is also important for the teacher to ask the right questions; open-ended questions should rather be used than yes/no question. It aims at presenting a problem situation as well as to promote knowledge and understanding the target culture. It works best if deal with highly emotional issue (Seelye 71).

1.5.5. Genuine Materials

The using of authentic materials sources from the native speech community helps to engage students in authentic cultural experiences. Sources can include: films, news, broadcasts, television shows, web sites, photographs, magazines and other printed materials. Teachers can adapt their use of authentic material to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it is produced in both written and spoken form (Herron et al 4). Adding authenticity to foreign classroom, this means have facilitated the task of the teacher and have extended learning opportunities, whatever the methods used. They stimulate the learners' sense of creativity and imagination; they develop their inferential skills, critical thinking, and aesthetic appreciations. They expose them to a vast range of authentic language, with different aspects used in the context of real life situation.

To conclude, the teacher has to consider factors as the learners' cultural background, objectives and interests, when selecting teaching materials. He should, thus, very careful and opt for informative cultivating materials. For example a picture that may cause culture shock should better be disregarded even if it is important to represent the target culture. They should assess whether the picture they reflect of the target culture is authentic or not, objective or biased. In this context, not any foreign language article of press or television shows can be considered as an authentic source of the target culture.

1.5.6. Role Playing

Role play is a good technique for providing interaction between students in the classroom. For Revell explain role playing as “an individual’s spontaneous reacting to others in a hypothetical situation” (60). This indicates that the student creates a new identity with new views, and then role playing provides spontaneous use of language during interaction and acting requires the use of language, hence students will develop their ability of communicating. Role play must take place after an exposure to authentic conversation which involves the in real life communication and help them reduce their fears of performing in front of others. Students could role play a situation in which an inappropriate greeting is used and other students observe the role play and try to identify the reason for miscommunication then they role play the same situation using a culturally proper form of address. For example ,the teacher ask his student to describe the school and daily routine to a French student in a lycée; here the student will emphasize in particular points like state what he knows about the French school system and his public or private school (Herron et al 4).

1.6. The Effects of Teaching Culture

While the language and culture teachers’ task is merely to impart knowledge about the target culture, and one of the aims of cultural studies teaching should be to produce change at of learners towards the target culture (Byram 22). Consequently, learners’ impressions towards the target culture are recognized to affect their learning. Learners compared their native culture to the target one and they fear of loss of ones’ cultural identity for those reasons, the teachers’ role is that should be aware of the target culture effects.

1.6.1. Acculturation

It refers to a cognitive process that is similar to Piaget’s “assimilation”. The process of assimilating of cultural features; it is also the process through which an individual under goes the action of the assimilation of new ideas into existing cognitive structure. Moreover, it is asocial process that occurs in a context in which newcomers and member of the host culture are in dynamic contact with each other. In other words, it occurs when individual from different cultures come into the continuous contact with each other, and subsequently there are modifications of individuals as a result of that contact of different cultures.

Acculturation is seen by Schuman as governing the extent to which learners achieve target language norms; the target or second language learners’ acquisition is just one aspect of

acculturation and the degree to which a learner adapt the target language and culture group (cited in Zaid).

1.6.2. Stereotyping

Often, stereotyping has been defined as the fixed over generalized belief about a particular group that affect both those who use them and those whom they serve to characterize; a stereotyping enables learners to respond rapidly to the situation, they are already exposed to it because they may have had a similar experience before. It makes them ignore differences between individuals. Therefore, they think things about people that might not be true. In other words, it is the general desire to place a person in categories according to some easily and quickly identifiable characteristic as age, sex, ethnic membership, national concepts or occupation and then to attribute him/her qualities believed to be typical of members of that group. Stereotypes are handed down from one generation to another as fixed truths about "otherness". They are, hence, more likely to be reinforced than questioned or modified. Along these lines, Kramsch defines stereotypes as conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and culture. She believes that stereotyping is, anthropologically speaking, a "diffusing", "focusing" process, that is stereotypes are formed by "extending the characteristics of one person or group of persons to all", and by "focusing on certain classificatory concepts prevalent within a certain discourse community " (127,128).

All in all, stereotyping is the conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and cultures.

1.6.3. Culture Shock

Conventionally, culture shock is that the reaction of astonishment, rejection or even revolt, it is an emotional and intellectual experience relevant to those who themselves for one reason or another outside their native culture that is, it is an important element in inter cultural interactions when interacting within a foreign culture. In so doing, foreign language learners are culturally chocked because they imposed to tow different cultures which are totally opposite and they are not in agreement at all; learners feel against their native culture such as values, beliefs of his native culture is against the target culture and then the foreign learners face some barriers that made them feel fearing of the target culture, they do not know how to interact and they are completely lost.

In short, culture shock is caused by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse and the extent to which foreign language learners feel unconscious and disoriented upon entering a new culture.

1.6.4. Prejudice

Prejudice towards a culture is essentially caused by ignorance of or preconceived ideas about this culture. It was defined by Clarke and Clarke as: “aversion fuelled by ignorance, and although this is not the terminology used by Krashen, it is clearly cognate with those negative feelings on the part of a learner towards a target language / culture which trigger, in Krashen’s model of second language performance, the raising of the affective filter and the consequent hindering of language learning / acquisition”. Learners may suffer at worst from misinformation and ignorance leading to prejudice in their relationship with a culture which they meet partly or uniquely in the illustration and materials in textbook (33).

1.6.5. Misunderstanding

Misunderstanding is that foreign language learners unable to decode symbols to construct and understand meanings in written language which including some elements of the target culture as using metaphor slang. Therefore, in order to misunderstand learners had to discuss those gaps with their teacher and avoid any other negative attitudes towards the foreign culture as misinformation and language barriers through creating a good foreign language learning atmosphere.

1.6.6. Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness was defined by Tomalin and Stempleski as “the term we have used to describe sensitivity to the impact of culturally induced behavior on language use and communication.”(5). Simply, cultural awareness refers to the recognition that not all people are from the same cultural background. It also refers to recognizing people have different values, different behavior and approaches to life. Moreover, it is the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of foreign language learners to standing back from themselves and becoming aware of the target cultural values, beliefs and perception. It is the ability of learners to look outside of themselves and be aware of the foreign cultural value, customs and noticing our native culture and the target one. In brief, cultural awareness becomes central when learners have interacted with native speakers. They see, interpret and

analyze things by comparing what is appropriate behavior in their culture is frequently inappropriate in the foreign culture.

1.6.7.Cultural Tolerance

According to Byram explained cultural tolerance as “language is inseparable from culture. Thus, as learners learn about language, they learn about culture and as they learn to use a new language, they learn to communicate with other individuals from a new culture...one of the aims of cultural studies, teaching should produce changes of attitudes in pupils towards other cultures” (23).

Because language are intertwined and language is usually used as of communication with others from different culture and expressing thoughts and beliefs, a mutual understanding the differences between cultures and cooperation between individuals with different ethnicities, values and religions. In short, cultural tolerance is that exchanging of attitudes in learners towards different cultures.

1.6.8.Cultural Understanding

Cultural understanding is considered to be the most important objectives of teaching culture in foreign classes. If learners reach the target language culture they will reach a cultural understanding. Teachers ought to help their students and raise their cultural understanding through the quality of materials used in teaching culture and the appropriate selection of genuine/authentic sources and then provide sufficient content for students’ cultural understanding and make learners ready for communication. In fact, developing learners’ ability to communicate with each other and they not only achieve effective communication in the target culture but foster their knowledge about their own culture as well as the target one.

Though, it is the ability to explain cultural information or patterns. The learners need to comprehend a cultural pattern in terms of its meaning, origin and interrelationships within the larger cultural context. This goal presupposes not only factual knowledge, but also implies reasoning ability. Learners should see the logic of patterns in its own cultural context.

Conclusion

As a conclusion of this chapter, culture is considered as an important subject; because language and culture are closely related then teaching culture in the foreign language classrooms should always be present. In fact, teachers should be aware of the cultural content which given to the students to reach the positive effects of teaching culture on students such as cultural understanding, cultural awareness and tolerance.

Introduction

The second chapter includes the classifications of textbooks, definition of reading. As the foremost purpose of reading is understanding and comprehension, we will present the definition of reading comprehension. Since reading is existing through reading materials, and in well cases through authentic resources, we will introduce both notions by shedding light on the definition of reading and authentic materials, types of materials and culture in reading materials.

2.1. Language Textbooks Classifications

On their view, Corttazi and Jin distinguish further between three types of textbooks depending in the information presented; textbooks based on the source culture, textbooks based on the target culture, and textbooks based at international target cultures.

The first category includes textbooks which are produced at a national level for particular countries, which focus on the learners own culture, rather than target cultures. Students are expected to learn English to talk to visitors to their countries, rather than to encounter other cultures. In such textbooks, learners see members of their own cultures, in their own context, who are not different from themselves, except that they all speak English. Such textbooks help students to become aware of their own cultural identity. However they do not develop students' intercultural awareness.

The second category includes textbooks that focus on target culture. It is easy to assume that textbooks should reflect the target culture. However, such textbooks are considered to commercial. The third category includes textbooks that include a wide variety of cultures set in English-speaking countries or in other countries where English is not a first or second language, but it used as an international language, the rational for such international target cultures is that English is frequently used in international situations by speakers who do not speak it as a first language (cited in Hinkel 209).

Broadly speaking, in order for foreign language textbooks to be efficient, the cultural information included in them should be correct and recent. It should not to be biased and should reflect background cultures of English-speaking countries; it should also include visual aids to help students understand the cultural information.

2.2. Definition of Reading

Learning Foreign language focused on communication skills involves student performance of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. For reading, language learning can be divided into process and product. As Alderson argues that the process of reading is the interaction between a reader and the text. During that process, many things are happening-what students do before, during, and after reading –not only is the reader looking at print, and the result of that process, the product-what students get from the reading of textbook (3). In this field, the students read and get information or meaning from written material with full understanding. Reading has been shown to be an important component of foreign language acquisition. According to Taylor, reading is an attempt by students to interpret what a textbook is saying from their own standpoint and from that of the text question they are attempting to answer (54).

The field of foreign language has been refreshed in recent years in understanding of the nature of reading. On the one hand, reading means reading and understanding; it is focused on decoding and translating written symbols into corresponding sounds. In addition, reading is no longer viewed as a process of decoding, but rather as construct meaning from a text. In the other hand, it is widely acknowledge that reading is a complex act. Varied factors such as biology, cognition, culture, emotion intertwine to a large measure to either enhance or hinder reading skill. In addition, reading refers to the decoding of graphic symbols to create meaning. Differently stated, readers attempt to interpret as faithfully as possible what the writer has encoded through a written system (Ur 138). However, the term reading means a complex system of deriving meaning from print that requires all of the following:

- a) The skills of knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech sounds are connected to print.
- b) The ability to decode unfamiliar words.
- c) Sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster reading comprehension.
- d) The development and maintenance of a motivation to read.

In fact, in the field of reading a number of researchers have emphasized on their attention on how readers construct meaning as they read. For Grabe reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print that it is to say, reading is an interaction between the reader and the writer. The text provides

information that the author wants the reader to understand in a particular way the reader construct the meaning of the text by interpreting (14). In the same context, Alderson argues that reading process as “the interaction between a reader and the text. During that process, presumably, many things are happening .Not only is the reader looking at print...the reader is presumably also thinking about what he is reading” (3). In addition ,researchers have focused on readers themselves and have sought to identify the strategies employed by successful readers as they interact with a text during reading such using think aloud students perform reading tasks and verbalize their thought processes. in other words ,reading is an interaction between the reader and a text ,a process which includes looking at the print ,decoding the marks on the pages ,deciding what they mean and how they related to each other ,and also thinking about what the reader is reading.

Furthermore, Vacca et al claim that: “psycholinguistic inquiries into the reading process suggest that readers act on and interact with written language in an effort to make sense of a text. Reading is not a passive activity; it is an active thinking process that takes place behind the eyes” (22).the reading process starts with a visual activity ,when the reader has the text in front of him/her and uses his/her eye movements to get input .It is an active process which needs more concentration and attention. As Harmer stated that, reading is a cognitive activity/process controlled by the movement of the eyes which receive messages, and the brain which has to understand the meaning of these messages (53).

Though, Widdowson describes reading as “not simply a matter of extracting information from the text. Rather, it is one in which the reading activates a range of knowledge in the readers’ mind that...may be refined and extended by the new information supplied by the text” (56). So reading is a complex exercise to assess the learners’ knowledge of grammar and vocabulary .foreign language learners treat written texts only as a source of information about the target culture .In the first case ,the emphasis is on reading to learn that is to decode forms in texts. In the second ,the main thing is learning to read that is to decode information from texts and to make sense of the text despite a deficient knowledge of forms (Kramsch 7).In other words, reading is not just decoding linguistic forms and symbols but more importantly ,is the understanding and master a particular meaning in particular context. The reader needs to use not information from the text in front of him, but should imply his prior knowledge to understand the new one.

As a result, reading can be understood as an active, complex and creative mental process where the reader engages in the construction of meaning from a particular passage. It

is not simply activity that involves both word recognition, the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to ones' spoken language and comprehension/understanding, the process of words, sentences and connected paragraphs (Baudion et al i) .In other words, reading is the process whereby looks at and understands what has been written .He emphasizes on the word understanding/comprehension so because it is an important key word during the act of reading. Reading is considered as an important skill for foreign language learners. During reading, students are facing with reading comprehension which is grasping meanings and information offered in a text. The text has to be within the students' level. In other words, its words and structures have to be familiar to students.

2.3. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability of a reader to construct meaning from text. When students first learn to read, the emphasis is on understanding the meaning of words and how they form sentences to communicate simple ideas. After that, reading comprehension progresses to include semantic and symbolic understanding of written text. In this section, we introduce the definitions based on text, reader and activity.

The definition of reading comprehension that seems more relevant to our concern about readability is that of Snow. She describes reading comprehension as the process of “Simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (11). This definition expresses the value of the text and at the same time, it draws attention to text's deficiency to achieve comprehension on its own meaning. Likewise, three components for comprehension can be identified, “The reader, the text, and the activity” (Snow 11). There is an active interrelationship between these three elements to achieve successful understanding.

The initial factor in the reading comprehension course is the reader. The reader is person who reads the text, using his/her cognitive capacities and motivation in order to build the different text representations that are essential for comprehension. The next and second element is the text. It should contain words and grammatical structures familiar to the students. The words in the text represent the meaning of the encoding surface of the passage. According to the words and the grammatical structures, the passage can be complicated or uncomplicated. The last element is the activity; students perform the activity of reading to realize a particular purpose, which is affected by the factors of motivation such as interest. In

addition to decoding, during acting this activity, the reader applies a number of linguistic and semantic methods.

In accordance to what is said by Snow, the consequence or the result obtained by the reader refers to one of the reading activity features, this result relies on the purpose of the reader, and to all the changes of the result that may take place during the reading activity (15).

In making sense of a text, Hedge, on his part argues, the reader is engaged in a dynamic interactive relationship with the text. He becomes involved in a "struggle" to extract the required information from the text as efficiently as possible (188). Furthermore, he is undoubtedly involved in an active process, a process which Goodman called "a psycholinguistic guessing game" (Qtd in Hedge 188). In playing the game and engaging in the struggle, the reader combines information from the text and knowledge he brings with him to reading.

Therefore, reading comprehension is not a mere process of letter decoding, as we already stated it. Instead, it is an active process of extracting meaning depending on the interaction of the new information with old knowledge. That is to say, reading comprehension is a process in which readers filter understanding through the lens of their motivation, knowledge, cognitive abilities and experiences. Effective readers have a purpose for reading, and use their background knowledge and experiences to relate to the text: readers don't comprehend unless they draw connections between what they read and their background knowledge.

Furthermore, reading comprehension as an active process a reader made to construct meaning from a text. This process which consists of using an interaction between a prior knowledge, and drawing inferences from the different words and expressions the writer uses, in order to comprehend information, ideas and viewpoints. Koda also believes that reading comprehension involves bringing prior knowledge as repeatedly noted, results from the integrative interaction between derived textual information and preexisting knowledge. What the readers know essentially determines how much information can be extracted from the text. moreover, texts relying on extensive cultural knowledge for their interpretation ,also can compound second language comprehension difficulty, particularly when they lack explanations of culture; specific events and other information which the author presumed would be general knowledge among their first language audiences(118) .In fact, Background knowledge affects the almost all aspects of text and information processing. texts

unfortunately, do not uniformly provide all necessary information for meaning construction and a fair number of gaps ,both conceptual and relational, are likely to occur to close these gaps through prediction and prior knowledge (ibid 206,261).

2.4. Reading Materials

Materials are essential elements in the teaching/learning process. One of the main factors in how students read is their attitudes to the reading material itself, as this will greatly influence how they read. In turn, what they are reading will influence their attitudes towards it. If they are reading material that they do not want to read or if they are reading material that they have to read, and they have got lots to get through, then they may not feel particularly positive about it. If they do not have a positive attitudes towards their reading then this will influence how they actually read the material. There are different types of Materials: Paralinguistic (for example pictures), oral/aural, and the reading materials.

Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to employ vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts. Thus students gain a more complete picture of the ways in which the elements of the language work together to convey meaning. According to Smith, reading material is “a meaningful or potentially meaningful instance of written language: These can range from a word to an entire book” (7). Any piece of written material which includes one word or thousands of words is considered as a reading material, but it should be meaningful. The reading materials are generally in the form of stories, plays, letters, poems, songs, newspapers and magazine articles.

2.4.1. Paralinguistic Materials

Paralinguistic materials are all the non-linguistic materials. They can be manners ,gestures and facial expressions such eye contact, postures, body positioning in speech, but in writing their collaboration lies in pictures, diagrams ,maps...etc. So, fifty percent of communication through body language, and it is an important social and cultural cue.

2.4.2. Aural-Oral Materials

On the visual-aural-oral class in the new era, multimedia should be given to full play to offer students as various authentic input materials as possible .in the meantime, corresponding teaching activities should be supplied as well. This is in line with the principles of social constructivism, and is also a learner-centered practice in the aim of training students’

communicative abilities. The selection of aural-oral materials can be based on movies, TV series, TV music video, along with materials from other textbooks. In this way, students not only find themselves exposed to authentic context, but feel motivated and interested which should be the central goal of the aural-oral course.

2.4.3. Authentic Materials

The term authentic has been used as a reaction against the produced artificial language of textbooks and instructional dialogues; it refers to the way language is used in non-pedagogic natural communication. As Little and Singleton point out that “an authentic text is a text that was created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced”. In their written form, every day texts of information need reads to assume the communicative reading strategies of native speakers; skim and scan for chosen information, exploit on the natural redundancy of a text and get signs from its perspective, distinguish authorial purpose and act upon it. For example, stop at a stop sign or bake a cake according to recip. As spoken exchanges, authentic texts involve members to react with behaviors that are socially correct to the setting, the status of the speakers, the purpose, main genre, and instrumentalities of the interchange (Qtd in Kramsch 177,178).

Since the language classroom is proposed as a planning for being in the real world and since real communication is a defining characteristic of communicative language teaching, an issue which soon was the relationship between classroom activities and real life. Some claimed that classroom tasks should as far as possible reflect the real world and use real world or authentic sources as the basis for classroom learning. Thus, Clarke and Silbertstein. Thus argued: “classroom activities should parallel the real world as closely as possible. Since language is a tool of communication, methods and materials should concentrate on the message and not the medium. The purposes of reading should be the same in class as they are in real life.” In addition arguments in favor of the use of authentic materials include:

- They provide cultural information about the target language
- They provide exposure to real language
- They relate more closely to learners’ needs
- They support a more creative approach to teaching

However, other researchers such Widdowson argued that it is not important if classroom materials themselves are derived from authentic texts and other forms of input, as

long as the learning processes they facilitated were authentic. Critics of the case for authentic materials point out that:

- Created materials can also be motivating for learners
- Created materials may be superior to authentic materials because they are generally built around a graded syllabus
- Authentic materials often contain difficult and unrelated language
- Using authentic materials is a burden for teachers

Though since the advent of communicative language teaching textbooks and other teaching materials have taken on a much more authentic look, reading passages are designed to look like magazine, articles and textbooks are designed to similar standard of production as real world sources such as popular magazines (Qtd in Richard 21, 22).

For Harmer, authenticity it is when students come into contact with "real" language that they have to work hardest to understand. Authentic material is language when no concessions are made to foreign speakers. It is normal, natural language used by native or competent speakers of a language. This is what students encounter in real life when they come into contact with target language, and precisely because it is authentic, it is unlikely to be simplified, spoken slowly, or to be full of simplistic content as some textbook language has a tendency to be. Authentic material which has been carelessly chosen can be extremely demotivating for students since they will understand it. Instead of encouraging such failure, therefore, teachers should let students read things they can understand (204).

According to Wallace, it is often assumed that authentic texts are generally more interesting than those written for pedagogical purposes (76). Teachers need to show the characteristic of true discourse; having something to say, being coherent, and clearly organized. Composed or simplified texts do not always have these qualities. Wallace, however, claims that for many students' fully authentic texts may be linguistically too complex, and it is therefore worth considering the role of the simplified material in the foreign language classroom, whether this is specially prepared by the teacher or takes the form of published material (76). The reading material must be authentic; it must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom. "Systematic efforts will be made to ensure texts selected for inclusion will be interest to the widest number of students. Readers become more engaged in text..." (Driscoll et al 29). Rather than simplifying a text by

changing its language, teachers could make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks that are within their competence.

2.5. Culture in Reading Materials

Culture is one component which has an influence on foreign language readers' outcomes in comprehending reading passages. This concept is a real issue for reading theorists. Some view that reading helps foreign language readers to confront and grasp the target culture. As Rivers argues that foreign language readers and through reading works of literature are likely to get knowledge of the foreign culture, how people think and behave. It is an occasion to get a clear picture of foreigners' cultural heritage. Other reading theorists view the target culture as an obstacle for comprehension. The reader may reach high linguistic proficiency but he rarely possesses a full cultural background of what he is reading. Thus, problems of comprehension may arise with the lack of cultural knowledge which is considered as double edged component in foreign language reading comprehension (237).

The importance of the cultural content should also be born in mind when selecting the material to be read in class. Cameron Bacon states that what counts most is the authentic cultural content of the material rather than its grammar or other pedagogical emphases: “to insist on a pedagogical grammar focus in reading, however, may unduly restrict the kinds of readings that one should introduce to students. Rather, the authentic cultural message of each text takes precedence over the pedagogical focus.”(331).

Furthermore, Lee’s research findings (in Cameron Bacon, *ibid.*) indicate that grammatical structures, such as the subjunctive, do not cause difficulties of comprehension for beginning readers of Spanish, whereas what seems to be grammatically simple such as the language of a menu does not guarantee actual comprehension. A text is said to be authentic when it is intended for a native–reader audience.

Although readers may incorporate real-life cultural information, they are not necessarily authentic. It should be noted, however, that authentic texts may be deceptively difficult and challenging, thereby causing frustration for non–native readers. Foreign culture and target culture teachers should, thus, carefully select passages that are not only authentic, but also accessible to the learners. Beginner and intermediate learners may first begin with reading material as available in short documents such as train schedules, menus, announcements, advertisements, and television guides. The culture lessons that can

be learned from birth, death, wedding announcements, for instance, are various: they may relate to the system of first and last names, god parents, the importance of the extended family, the norms of Catholicism, customs surrounding birth and marriage. Then, lengthier documents such as news items, editorials, newspaper and magazine articles extracts from books, encyclopedias and printed media of all sorts would be gradually introduced. Eventually, literary texts (short stories, novels and other literary genres) could be enjoyed when the learners would have developed sufficient skill for such reading.

Selected passages to teach about the target culture should not contain only complex and implicit cultural information. On the contrary, focus should be on texts which deal explicitly with the target culture. In addition, they should be made open to encourage the learners to express their own opinions and interpretations. The teacher may elicit the learners' reactions vis-à-vis foreign behavior's, but also vis-à-vis their own behavior's, and the way these might possibly be viewed by foreigners. This procedure stimulates the learners' interpretation skills, going beyond the traditional mere listing of facts. The other equally important teacher's task is, thus, to guide the learners to discover and grasp the cultural content of a text, as they engage in the process of comprehending it. For this purpose, appropriate activities should be designed. Professionals recommend tasks prior to reading, in order to introduce relevant cultural elements that would make the passage to be read meaningful to the learners, and post-reading activities for fostering comprehension and for expanding the learners' appreciation of the target culture.

Every reading should be preceded by at least one culture-related pre-reading activity so as to set the scene and get the learners closer to the content of the reading passage. One suggestion is to ask the learners to reflect upon cultural phenomena as seen in the native culture, prior to reading about them in the target culture. According to the schema theory, the reading skill involves an interaction between the reader's schemata i.e., background knowledge stored in one's mind, part of which is cultural knowledge, and the text itself. So, if the cultural content of the latter is remote from the learners' background knowledge, it is likely not to be comprehended by them. To provide the learners with pre-reading cultural and linguistic explanations helps them understand roughly what the passage to be read is about. This preliminary introduction should be brief, to pave the way for a deepened study and discussion of the cultural issues embedded in the text, when the students are actually immersed in reading. Given the fact that foreign language classes are usually constituted of mixed-ability groups, the teacher may use different cultural readings, purported for different

levels, on the same topic. In this case, the same pre-reading activity would be used with the whole class, but post-reading would be done in small groups. Then, the content of the various passages could be compared among the groups.

The importance of cultural knowledge to understand written discourse is undeniable. Indeed, when the learners read in a foreign language, they decode what they read on the basis of their own cultural background and experiences. Harrison argues that: “the ‘message’ in any text does not flow unimpeded, as a constant, from the writer to the reader, but that each individual reader must wrestle with a given text, and will interpret it in the light of his or her sensibility, world-view and cultural experience, in whatever cultures”. And since the reader’s culture native culture is likely to be different from the writer’s target culture, what is understood may be quite different from what is intended (45). Thus, the reader should share the same cultural assumptions and norms as the writer, to be able to fill in the unstated inferences.

Valdes talks about a common schema: Even if the student follows the process of matching his schema to the material, he is likely to form false anticipations as he reads which will result in frustrating confusion and leave him puzzling over the meaning. Ignore the culture and read for factual information? The world is not made up of factual information, cut and dried. In order to understand the message, the reader must find a common schema with the author, who is trying to communicate by presenting the unfamiliar through overt or covert comparisons with the familiar in his own schema of the world. This can be accomplished only through the readers’ understanding, in some depth, of the culture of the author (28).

Conclusion

In sum, this chapter indicates that reading and reading comprehension skills are complex activities that involve several elements including culture particularly the foreign culture which may appear in some kinds of texts. Since a foreign culture is usually unfamiliar to most learners, its richness in a reading text may hinder adequate grasping of meaning. Thus, it is important to understand that for students to comprehend an author's written message requires them to be able to analyze and sort through various components of text meaning where they must be able to decode the words to construct meaning. Moreover, being exposed to real life situation may have a great deal of interest for learners so as to comprehend the target culture. Finally, students should have acceptable vocabulary, grammar and syntactical skills to organize and interpret the written message effectively.

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first one deals with the analysis of the results obtained from the students' test then the teachers' questionnaire to elicit specific information.

3.1. Section One: Students' Test

The learners' reading comprehension can be examined by a test procedure. In this work, we have selected a test because of its two benefits which are: firstly, it allows us to gain data on the comprehensibility of passages without the time consuming item construction which would be otherwise necessary in both reading comprehension questions and multiple-choice questions. Secondly, it does not only predict the difficulty which a group might have with a text, but also it deals with difficulty directly, taking into consideration individual differences and background knowledge. In this chapter a full description is made of all the steps designed, participants dealt with and procedures used for making the test mentioned.

3.1.1. Test Design

In this section, a complete design of the test is presented. Before stating the design of the test, we have presented a small description of the textbooks from which we have chosen the two texts.

3.1.2. Description of the Textbook

Getting Through is planned for second year students in the secondary school submitting with syllabus of "the Ministry of the National Education" in December 2005. It adheres to the procedure followed in the first-year textbook, "*At the Cross Roads*", embracing the competency-based approach (CBA) which prioritizes learners' centeredness, project orientation, and most notably communicative competence. In fact, *Getting through* is the result of many academic assessments and researches that objected of the lack of the importance of foreign cultural content in language teaching and learning. Thus, we expect that the reading materials, and especially the texts, have sufficient suitable foreign cultural loads.

The book covers 208 pages. The first little pages represent the content of the book, a preface, and a "Map of the Book". The book is printed in colors, and consists of eight units successively: (unit1) "Sign of The Time", (unit 2) "Make Peace", (unit 3) "Waste not, Want not", (unit 4) "Budding Scientists", (unit 5) "News and Tales", (unit 6) "No Man is an Island", (unit 7) "Science or Fiction?" and (unit 8) "Business is Business". Each unit is divided into

three main sequences: "Discovering the Language", "Listening and Speaking", "Reading and Writing". At the end of the book, there is a number of a reading material named "scripts". Moreover, there is what is called "grammar reference" for helping the teacher to consolidate the lessons' activities, and helping the students with some grammatical rules. Finally, the last page is devoted to the acknowledgement.

3.1.3. Description of the Test

The test is a cloze procedure in which we design for each test two activities which are prepared, and the students are asked to answer from the texts that we have already have given to them without neglecting the use of their background knowledge. The two texts are taken from two different units: "Make Peace" and "No Man is an Island".

Unit two, "Make Peace", speaks about the United Nations such as UNESCO, UNSEF, FAO and other international organizations and their roles in the world. "Make Peace" unit also speaks about the human rights and duties and the importance of peace among people. Unit six "No Man is an Island " is about everything related to the organizations that helping people with medical care and collect food aids in emergence situation like the Algerian Red Crescent. It is apparent that *Getting Through* asks students to reporting, asking for advice and compare between the Algerian charities and the international ones.

The aim of this study is to examine whether foreign cultural content enhances or hinders learners' reading comprehension, we selected two texts incorporating foreign culture; these texts were followed by reading comprehension questions. The learners are required to answer each test during thirty minutes. Each test is divided into two activities. The first activity contains four questions ranging from Yes/No questions, 'Wh' questions, or questions that need individual answers, and the second activity contains six (6) multiple choice questions. Though, data analysis does not only provide the researcher with descriptions of the data obtained, but most importantly, it helps him in deducing interpretation to the data gathered. Thus, we will measure learners' answers by giving scores in order to be able to interpret the mistakes. We will give eight (8) points for the first activity; two points for each and twelve points (12) for the second; two points for each.

3.1.4. Participants

The study is conducted in three secondary school classes. It is about seventy (70) second year students who will be given the test. They will be from three different schools in the same Wilaya: a group from "Ahmed Djoudi Secondary School", and the other two groups

from "Ouanougha Eljadida Secondary School" and "BniIlmane Secondary School" in M'sila. We have chosen this sample (Second Year Secondary School Students) mainly because: First, they have been studying English for four years at the middle and secondary school. Second, they are supposed to be able to understand a text in English.

Concerning students' gender, there is an observable difference. Most of them are females about 65%, while males are not over 35%. This can be applied on each of those classes we dealt with. Their average age is about 16-18. Here we have no interest in age or gender, but rather we are interested more in their scores in the test.

As participants also, we have chosen three secondary school teachers. They were concerned with checking the test that is designed (pilot test, we are going to speak about) and to permit us apply the test with their students.

Text One

In the first text, we used the text **Charities** which introduces the organizations that offer help for people during the emergencies and disaster situations. The texts' source is that from *Oxford guide of British and American culture*, but it is adapted for reaching specific goals. The subject is very important because, through this passage, students are given the chance to be aware with some British and American charities, and most significantly they are familiar with some typical foreign cultural information; like: Christmas, thanksgiving, and charity cards....etc. the text is of the average length. It contains seven (07) paragraphs explaining the topic.

Text Two

The title of the second text is about **Martin Luther King, The Man of Peace**. It speaks about slavery, racism between blacks and whites, and peace. Obviously, the text is characterized by a short passage written by an unknown author, and a short extract from Martin Luther King's speech. The text is more interesting since it discusses a purely Afro-American cultural issue which is "Slavery". The text is short including just three (03) paragraphs with a simple language but not difficult and new words.

3.2. Data Analysis

This section deals with the results obtained from the two texts that will be analyzed. First, qualitatively; learners' responses and their repeated mistakes which may categorize it in tables as a result of lack, misuse of background knowledge, and language mistakes. Second,

quantitative analysis which involves numbers and frequencies of students' scores in the two texts.

3.2.1. Qualitative Analysis

3.2.1.1. Learners' Mistakes as a Result of their Lack of Background Knowledge about the Foreign Cultural Clues in Charities and Martin Luther King Texts

Questions	Mistakes	Answers
<p>1- Are the Oxfam and Amnesty International Only British Charities? Justify your answer.</p>	<p>- Yes, many charities that are well known throughout the world such as the Oxfam and Amnesty International.</p> <p>-yes, they are.</p> <p>-the Oxfam and Amnesty International are not only British charities also Americans support charities.</p>	<p>- No, they are not because they are originally British; started in Britain than spread all over the world.</p>
<p>2- Why do you think only Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having Charities?</p>	<p>-Because Britain and America include many charities material and moral</p> <p>-a charity for children run by the united nations</p> <p>-Because Britain and America a charity for children run by the united nation and big country.</p> <p>-because Britain and America know this.</p> <p>-because they are famous in the field of solidarity and charity.</p>	<p>- Only Britain and America are mentioned as examples because they are rich and the text is extracted from a British and American source.</p>
<p>3- At Christmas, people in Algeria buy Charity cards.</p>	<p>a-true</p> <p>b-false</p>	<p>c- Does not say</p>
<p>4- In Algeria, we celebrate annually Thanksgiving through which we collect Food to help people in need.</p>	<p>a- true</p>	<p>c- Does not say</p>

5- Halloween is a custom Where.....	a- people wear strange and scary customs. b- Children throw eggs on people who do not give them money.	c- Money collected by some children to help some children in need.
6- Who is Martin Luther King?	-martin Luther king blacks Americans can do a lot of things than their parents. - Martin Luther king is a hero in America, he is a black men.	- He is a black American leader who fought racism often named as the Man of Peace.
7- Whom king is addressing in his speech "I have a dream"?	-martin Luther king day -In memory of this great leader who was able to combat racism -in Georgia	- He addressing both blacks and whites.
8- were judged by their color.	a- White Americans b- Americans	c- Black Americans.

Table 1: Learners' mistakes as a result of their lack of background knowledge about foreign cultural clues in the texts of Charities and Martin Luther King

After the administration of the test some results will be shown. Therefore, from this latter we have categorized the students' mistakes in the tables according to the students' mistakes which are the lack and misuse of background knowledge and language mistakes to discover whether foreign culture hinders or facilitates their reading comprehension. Normally, students should use their background knowledge that may help them to guess and comprehend the content of the text. Though, most students lack it. In addition, the inability to understand the text happens particularly when students are missing the necessary background knowledge integrating foreign cultural content. This is the case with second year students answering the questions of our administered tests: "Charities" and "Martin Luther King, The Man of Peace".

The first question, **Are the Oxfam and Amnesty International only British Charities?** With giving justification was too difficult for students since their answers revealed the lack of the necessary background knowledge about Charities as originally foreign organizations. Thus, we got responses like: yes, **many charities that are well known throughout the world such as the Oxfam and Amnesty International, yes, they are.** Learners, also, found problems in responding the following questions: **why do you think only Britain and America are mentioned as examples as having charities?** Basically, they

lacked data about both the foreign countries and their charities. So, they relied on selecting some passages from the text or information that was not mentioned at all in the text. Their responses differently; **volunteers stand in busy streets asking members of the public to put money in collecting tin, Because Britain and America include many charities material and moral, because Britain and America know this.** Obviously, the following question provides to what extent learners employ their background knowledge of Algerian religious occasions where people help each other and collecting money and Christmas as a purely foreign religious occasion where people help each other. However, most of the learners did not answer the question correctly for they may be they did not know the word Christmas and charity cards themselves.

Many answered the question **At Christmas, people in Algeria buy charity cards with the options (a) (true),(b) (false)** whereas the right answer is the option **(c) (Doesn't not say)**. The same problem with the rest of questions that are: **In Algeria, we celebrate annually Thanksgiving through which we collect food to help people in need and Halloween is a custom where ...**learners replied with either the option **(a) (People wear strange and scary customs)**, but the correct answer with the option **(c)option (Money is collected by some children to help other children in need)**. These questions, clearly, involve some foreign cultural evidences such as **thanksgiving** and **Halloween** whose unawareness caused, in our case, a problematic for students to response. Concerning the learners' answers about Martin Luther King's test, we can say that learners have committed the same mistakes. We began with the question; **who is Martin Luther king?** Some students answer in such way, **Martin Luther king blacks Americans can do a lot of things that their parents, Martin Luther king is a hero in America, he is a black men.** While the correct answer; **He is black American leader who fought racism often called the man of peace.** Many students were unable to answer these kinds of questions so because they had no idea about cultural issue such as slavery, **whom King is addressing in his speech "I have a dream" and ...were judged by their color.** A likely reason to their incorrect responses as **Martin Luther King Day, In memory of this great leader who was able to combat racism, and white Americans or Americans** to the last question would be that they were unfamiliar with any information concerning the issue of racism.

3.2.1.2. Learners' Language Mistakes in the Texts of Charities and Martin Luther King

Answers	Mistakes	Questions
1- Are the Oxfam and the Amnesty International only British Charities? justify your answer	-no, because they begin Britain and American. -no, because in Americans. - no, you are the Oxfam and amnesty international only British -no, America also -no, you are not only because Americans are also enthusiastic supporters of charities.	-No, they are not because they are originally British; started in Britain than spread all over the world.
2- Are charity shop workers appointed and paid by the government? Justify	-charity shop are run by volunteers -no, aren't by human rights educations, medical research and the helps of children -no, shop workers appointed and paid by volunteers -no, they are -no, you are not.	- No, they are not paid by the government because they are voluntary.
3-Why do you think Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities?	-because America and Britain is strong country in the world and fames. -because in America is rich contri -I think reale, because it's a country most riche -Because America and Britain is bige contrys and developpe and famuse contry in the worlds.	-Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities because they are rich and the text is extracted from a British and American source.
4- Who is Martin Luther King?	-the America great leader who was able to combat racism and.....love. -is the man of peace is a black men from America.	-Martin Luther King is a black American leader who fought racism often called the man of peace.
5- Whom king is addressing in his speech "I have a dream"?	-king is addressing all people. -he is Martin Luther king. - to the children people and the people of America all.	- He is addressing both blacks and whites.
6-What's the aim of Martin Luther King' speech" I have a dream"	-MLK hope to live in freedom and in join by the duties to all American black .-MLK's of from every village from every state and live, to combat, and hatred with non-violence and love.	The aim of Martin Luther King is to spread peace and love all over the world.

Table2: Learners' language mistakes in the texts of Charities and Martin Luther king.

From this table we have remarked that the same students still producing mistakes when answering questions in the level of language such as incomplete and mixed sentences maybe because they don't master English grammar rules, spelling, and sentence structure. In the text of charities when the students answered the question: **Are the Oxfam and Amnesty International only British charities?** And providing it with justification, some students wrote: **no, because they begin Britain and American, no, and you are the Oxfam and amnesty international only British.** Likewise, the same mistakes were done by students while answering the following questions of the previous test such as: **Are charity shop workers appointed and paid by the government and why do you think only Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities?** Then these questions involve personal responses, students' answers have shown that they are unable to put their ideas in a correct, complete, and meaningful form. For examples, **no, aren't by human rights educations, medical research and the helps of children, and because America and Britain is strong country in the world and fames;** are incorrect answers that might be because of the students' misuse of the language rules In the same way, learners answered the questions of the text **Martin Luther King, the Man Of Peace**, they repeat the title with no addition and illustration most of them answered like, **the America great leader who was able to combat racism and.....love, Martin Luther King is the man of peace, is the man of peace is a black men from America.** These short and incomplete sentences are examples of learners' answers to the following questions **who is Martin Luther king?** And **Whom King is addressing in his speech 'I have a dream'?** Unfortunately, the same students have the right answer to respond the question but, they lack the right grammar and vocabulary to answer correctly. So, they are unable to produce complete, full and correct sentences. For instance, **MLK hope to live in freedom and in join by the duties to all American black.**

3.2.1.3. Learners' Mistakes as a Result of their Misuse of Background Knowledge in the Texts of Charities and Martin Luther King

Questions	Mistakes	Answers
1- Are the Oxfam and the Amnesty International only British Charities? justify your answer	-No, in British and American, because also enthusiastic. No, because in Americans.	-No, they are not because they are originally British; started in Britain than spread all over the world.
2- Why do you think Britain and America are mentioned as	-in my opinion, I think because of wealth which they have and they	- Britain and America are mentioned as having charities

examples of having charities?	have a lot of organization human like UNISEF, UNESCCO. -because America and Britain are the leader of the world -Because Britain and America is the big country in the world and it is the king	because they are rich and the text is extracted from a British source.
3- Charities are found....	a -Only in Britain and America c - all over the world.	b -originally in Britain
4- In Britain, charity shops are	a - rarely found b - never found	c - Found in every town.

Table 3: Learners' mistakes as a result of the misuse of background knowledge in the texts of Charities and Martin Luther King

Since one of the effects of teaching foreign culture is that cultural awareness as a result of learners' ability to differentiate and be aware of the existing differences between their own culture and the target one, some students lack it. After analyzing our information which resulted from the students' marks in the text of Charities, we have noticed another type of mistakes to one side from language mistakes and another side from incorrect use of background knowledge which is related to the incorrect use of their background knowledge. The same students answered the question; **Are the Oxfam and Amnesty international only British Charities?** The justifications that given by the students can be summarized as follows: **no, in British and America, because also enthusiastic, and no, because in Americans.** Moreover, the students answered the question **why do you think only Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities?** The majority of students have the same consideration concerning Britain and America; **in my opinion, I think because of wealth which they have and they have a lot of organization humanlike: UNISEF, UNISCO, because America and Britain are the leader of the world and because Britain and America is the big country in the world and it is the king.** While, the right answer to this question is **Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities because they are rich and the text is extracted from a British source.** We have noticed that the majority of the learners' answers have a negative attitude and impression towards the foreign countries especially America. Though, some students answered the question **Charities are found....**with either the option (a) **(Only in Britain and America,** or

the option (c) (**all over the world**), and the question **In Britain, charity shops are found...** as follows, **rarely found** or **never found**, this may be because of the students' lack of foreign background knowledge which leads them to a value judgment about the foreign culture.

3.2.1.4. Quantitative Analysis

Text One: Charities

Scores	Number of students	Percentage
10 and more	15	37.5%
Below 10	25	62.5%
Total	40	100%

Table 4: The number and frequencies of students' scores below and above ten in the text of Charities

Fifteen students **37.5%** got the average from **10** to **20**, their marks vary between **10** and **20**, while twenty five students **62.5%** marks were below ten, and they vary between **0** and **9**. The marks in the second column, in comparison to the first, are often due to the lack of comprehending some foreign cultural clues.

Learners having ten **10** and more can be said to have acceptable foreign background knowledge. Learners' mistakes can be attributed to the fact that both texts and questions are centered around British and American clues namely: **Oxfam** and **Amnesty international British Charities, Flag Day, Thanksgiving, and Halloween.**

Scores	Number of students	Percentage
0-5	11	27.5%
6-9	14	35%
10-15	15	37.5%
16-20	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Table 5: The number and frequencies of students' scores under and above ten in the text of Charities

Students are classified into two categories: from **0 to 5** and from **6 to 9**. In the first category. i.e.; students getting marks between **0 to 5**, most of the students **27.5%** did not completely answer the first activity, especially the fourth question which involves a personal view point concerning Britain and America as examples of charities in relation to the text. What can be noticed in this category of learners is their incomplete, meaningless sentences, spelling and grammar mistakes. However, learners' mistakes in the second activity reflect their lack of concentration on the text besides the unfamiliarity of the meaning of the previous mentioned foreign cultural clues. In the second category from **6 to 9** which is represented by **35%** of the student, the previous mistakes are less repeated.

This table above represents the students' scores beyond ten. They are classified into two categories: from **10 to 15** and from **16 to 20**. The fifteen **15** students who got marks between **10 to 15** who represent **37.5%** made some mistakes at the level of sentences form and some cultural clues. None of the students **0%** who did not get **16** may have found difficulty in answering the questions containing foreign cultural clues and the lack of understanding question two or three

The students belonging to the first category made mistakes such as; the ill-formed sentences, unawareness of some cultural clues in the text of **Charities** such as **Christmas, Thanksgiving, Flag Day** and **Halloween**, and the employment of their fixed ideas while answering no attention was paid to the text. In other words, the students have no background knowledge of foreign cultural clues. Yet the students belonging to the second category have problems in understanding some foreign cultural clues and the lack of attention while reading the text.

Text Two: Martin Luther King

Scores	Number of students	Percentage
10 and more	16	53.33%
Below ten	14	46.67%
Total	30	100%

Table 6: The number and frequencies of students' scores below and above ten in the text of Martin Luther King

Sixteen students **53.33%** got the average, while fourteen students **46.67%** got below ten. The analysis of mistakes of the students who got scores below ten indicates their misuse and lack of background knowledge.

The students who got the average did not have serious problems in understanding some foreign cultural clues such as **Martin Luther King, Black Americans, and Racism...etc.** Almost all those students got the full mark in the test. The latter can be said due to their rich background knowledge of those foreign ideas. Some of the students gave the correct answer, but they did not express it in the right way. Concerning the second category, learners showed a lack of foreign background knowledge from one hand, and on the other, they had serious problems in stating their ideas.

Scores	Number of students	Percentage
0-5	2	6.67%
6-9	12	40%
10-15	16	53.33%
16-20	0	0%
Total	30	100%

Table 7: The number and frequencies of Student's scores under and above ten in the text of Martin Luther King

Students' scores are divided into two categories. The first category includes a minority of **2** students **6.67%** having marks between **0** to **5**, and the second one consists of **12** students' **40%** getting marks ranging from **6** to **9**. Remarkably, students of the first category had no idea about the tested cultural things and they did not master the language, while students of the second group in comparison with the first one found difficulty to cope with the necessary cultural concepts and provide correct and comprehensive sentences.

We can deduce from the obtained results that the two students who got marks around **0** to **5** had neither understood the background knowledge of foreign concepts and names nor understood them in the text and the questions. Above all, they found difficulties in writing correct answers taking into consideration grammar and content. The other **12** students have done better because of their ability to comprehend, in comparison to the first group. In fact, still the same problem of lacking background knowledge about the previously mentioned cultural clues, and thus got scores under ten. This table also determines students' scores

between **10 to 15**. Sixteen students **53.33%** got marks between **10 to 15**, and no students **0%** got from **16 to 20**. This explains that the second category learners made few mistakes, in contrast with the first category, at the level of sentence structure. However, the first category's mistakes were both at the level of structure through making some ill-formed sentences and learners' difficulty in understanding some cultural items or mentioning in the text. The mistakes done by the first category of students are the result of being ignorant of some foreign cultural clues such as: the **Red Hills of Georgia**. On the contrary, the second category refers to the students who have committed a few mistakes in sentence construction and failure to understanding simply the foreign culture revealed in the text.

To conclude this first section, the close relationship between language, culture and reading comprehension in the theoretical parts leads us to conclude that reading comprehension is not only affected by culture type teaching, but by students' language mastery as well. In other words, their wrong answers showed clearly that reading comprehension and culture teaching are hindered and/or improved also by language mastery. Moreover, after exploring these wrong answers, we can deduce that we cannot separate culture, language teaching and learning, and reading comprehension because of the significant effect they use on one another. In fact learners' background knowledge can threaten their reading comprehension about texts including foreign culture. In other words, teaching foreign culture, in our case, affects learners' reading comprehension negatively because of their background knowledge raising either acculturation which is the assimilation of the American and or the British culture by English foreign language learners, or prejudice when learners build a negative representation of the foreign culture.

3.3. Section two: Teachers' questionnaire

This part is concerned with the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire. A description of the questionnaire with its different questions. The obtained data will be presented in the form of tables containing the percentage, followed by discussion of the results.

3.3.1. Participants

This study was conducted with a group of 12 teachers in three different secondary schools in M'sila. In each school there are four English language teachers, all of them have taught second year students. They were selected mainly for the easiness of access. In other words, for the ability to get in touch with most of them in their Secondary School or through

their colleagues. We tried to be present while the teachers were filling the questionnaire in order to be sure they did not check any source to get information. Yet, some teachers insisted on taking the questionnaire with them and fill it at home.

3.3.2. Description of the teachers' questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was designed with the aim to find out how much teaching a foreign culture is an important issue to learn English as a foreign language as well as the way culture is taught, methods and materials are used for teaching culture, and difficulties that teachers may face in teaching the foreign culture to their students. The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions which can be described as follows: the first five questions needed personal information; (Q1) Gender, (Q2) Age, (Q3) qualification (s), (Q4) teachers' experience at Secondary School level, (Q5) asking teachers whether they have visited foreign country, (Q6) deals with relationship between teaching a foreign language and its corresponding culture, (Q7) With providing justification, (Q8) Here teachers are asked to give definition to the concept culture, (Q9) teachers are asked to give their opinion about learning the foreign culture whether it is an interesting component of teaching English as a foreign language or not?, (Q10) If "Yes", they are to justify their answers, (Q11) What does it mean teaching a foreign culture for them, (Q12) teachers methods in teaching a foreign culture, (Q13) they are also asked about the importance of teaching a foreign culture, (Q14) after that it is important to know how often do teachers of secondary schools discuss cultural topics in class, (Q15) If they face difficulties when dealing with foreign cultural content, (Q16) and if they organize specific tasks rather than those activities and materials which are included in the textbook, (Q17) If so, they will mention it, (Q18) Using authentic materials in classes, (Q19) If "yes", which ones?, (Q20) Do you think that a teacher should use the appropriate technique to teach culture to the students, (Q21) It is important also to ask them whether the teacher is familiar with the content of the second year or not, (Q22) With providing justification, (Q23) as a part of the study teachers are asked if the textbook is sufficient and offers enough reading materials introducing the foreign culture, (Q24) They are also asked whether reading materials that introduce target culture enhances or hinders learners' reading comprehension, (Q25) teachers suggestions is a space given for teachers to express their suggestions and expectations concerning the topic of the research work.

3.3.3. Data analysis

Q1: Gender

Male Female

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Male	3	25%
Female	9	75%
Total	12	100%

Table8: Teachers' gender

It is clear from the table above that the majority of respondents are females. Among the 12 teachers; nine are females 75% and just three males 25%. Thus female over-representation is remarked. That's why it is assumed that in the field of secondary education that the overwhelming majority of the teaching community is based on females.

Q2: Age

Concerning the teachers' age, the results have shown that is various between 25 and 41 years old. So the average age of the teachers is 16 years old. In fact the majority of them have no long experience for teaching English language. This result demonstrates that most of them are inexperienced in teaching English and its corresponding culture.

Q3: Degree(s)

The results indicate that the qualifications are different among teachers. The majority of them have got a licence degree 41.67%, and 33.33% have got a master degree while only three teachers have got a BA 25%. Though, most of the teachers have studied English ranging from three to five years at the university they are considered to have the required degree for teaching English in the Algerian secondary schools. In fact, this is sufficient in order to be linguistically and culturally competent in a foreign language, especially the case of English in Algeria where learners need to study at list five years to build a good level in English.

Q4: How long have you been teaching English?

Teachers' respondents indicate that those who have been teaching English for a short period for example six teachers who have experience from one to four years 50%. Among these six teachers three only 25% who are considered as inexperienced teachers simply because this is their first time to teach English. 41.67% between five and ten years. Whereas, only one teacher who has more than ten years 14 years.

Q5: Have you ever visited an English-speaking country?

-Yes

-No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	1	8.33%
No	11	91.67%
Total	12	100%

Table 9: English speaking countries visited by teachers

This table demonstrates that the majority of respondents **91.67%** have never been in an English-speaking country. This result leads to the lack of information of teachers and knowledge about the foreign language culture since they did not experience in real life situations. Moreover, this would probably influence their transmission of the target cultural knowledge. However, one of the respondents has visited an English speaking-country this result possibly indicates that she is aware of some foreign cultural aspects and would have knowledge and ideas about the foreign language culture since she experienced it.

Q6: Does teaching a foreign culture mean learning its culture?

-Yes

-No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	7	58.33%
No	5	41.67%
Total	12	100%

Table 10: Teachers' views on learning foreign language and its corresponding culture

The results shown in the table above that **58.33%** responded positively and they believe that there is a relationship between teaching the target language and learning its culture. In contrast, **41.67%** responded negatively because it seems to them that there is no strong relationship between them.

Q7: Whatever your answer, please justify?

The justifications provided by the teachers confirm the results obtained in **Q6**. They can be summarized as follows:

Teacher (a) stated “we will have the opportunities to discover how people think, feel, and interact i.e. we learn their customs, traditions, literature, art...”

Teacher (b) said “Language and culture are related to each other because, when people learn a new language, they also learn its culture.”

Teacher (c) said “It is necessary to learn the culture of a foreign community that might help students understand how people live, behave and even speak.”

Teacher (d) “I think it is not necessary but we should have an idea about this culture to facilitate the teaching learning process.”

Teacher (e) “you can use local culture contexts and you will have better results with reading.”

What is noticed among the teachers’ responses is that most of them relate culture to its aspects like: language, speaking, and ways of living. This reveals that they are aware of the interrelationship existing between language and culture. In contrast, the rest of teachers believed that teachers are not obliged to be exposed to all the aspects of the target culture, but particular information and ideas. In fact, they did not neglect the role of culture, and local culture is also more effective to facilitate the learning teaching process.

Q8: How would you define the word "culture"?

Due to the fact that culture is a complex concept to define, the teachers’ answers to this open question was different and not completed and in some cases they did not provide any personal definition they may use the dictionary to copy the given definition such as:

Teacher (a) “culture is the whole way of life of people or the general beliefs and customs of a particular group of people at a particular time.”

Teacher (b) “it is the set of values, customs, history, norms and beliefs that distinguish one social group from another.”

Teacher (c) “culture is a general term refers to the way in which people of a given community live, think...”

Teacher (d) “culture is something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next through human actions.”

In fact the total majority of teachers define culture linking it to the following aspects: beliefs, customs, values and norms. Thus, culture is related to both observable and unobservable features. Some aspects of it are literary, what is known as big "C" culture.

Q9: Do you believe that learning the foreign culture is an interesting component of teaching English as a foreign language?

-Yes

-No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	7	58.33%
No	5	41.67%
Total	12	100%

Table 11: Teachers’ opinion on learning culture as an important element to teach English

As the above table demonstrates, **58.33%** considered that learning the foreign culture is an important part of teaching English language. In addition, they agreed that culture is an interesting element in teaching English which indicates their awareness of integrating culture in English language. While, **41.67%** did not agree with the idea of the importance of integrating culture to teach the target language.

The justifications provided by the teachers ensure the results obtained in **(Q9)**

Q10: If "Yes", please justify your answer

They can be summarized as follows:

Teacher (a) "language and culture are related to each other because, when people learn a new language, they also learn its culture."

Teacher (b) "yes, because the English language is part from their culture, so I think we need to be knowledgeable about it."

Teacher (c) "teaching a foreign language is learning another culture, so teaching a foreign culture makes that foreign language more attractive to the students"

Teacher (d) "because learning target culture makes the learners feel as if they are members of this culture, that will push them to learn more about it."

Q11: What does teaching foreign culture mean to you?

This item seeks to investigate teachers' views concerning the meaning of teaching foreign culture. Teachers' views can be summarized as follow:

Teacher (a) teaching the different aspects of life of a given or particular group of people (life style...).

Teacher (b) "teaching a foreign culture means learning how to deal with the different aspects in society"

Teacher (c) "exchanging and understanding different cultures which will provide and help student with information about the target culture that is different to their native one."

Teacher (d) "to make the students familiar with a foreign culture features."

As demonstrated in the theoretical part, culture teaching has to do with all the aspects. It also means increasing the foreign language learners' cultural awareness.

Q12: What kind of methods do you use in teaching foreign culture?

a- Audio-lingual method

b- Grammar translation method

c- Communicative method

d- The schema theory

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Audio-lingual method	2	16.67%
Grammar translation method	2	16.67%
Communicative method	8	66.67%
The schema theory	0	0%
Total	12	100%

Table 12: Using methods to teach culture in classes

According to the results recorded in this table none of the teachers' respondent chose the option(c) despite the fact that the schema theory is an effective method to teach culture. While the majority **66.67%** of teachers agreed that communicative method is the most appropriate method to teach the culture, **16.67%** the same percentage has been given to either the option(a) or (b) this is probably due to the unfamiliarity of teachers with the schema theory.

Q13: What is the importance of teaching a foreign culture?

This open question is intended to examine the teachers' views of the significance of teaching foreign culture. Teachers' respondents were various. For example, to enrich students' culture, to increase their awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the foreign culture and their own. All in all, to be aware of the cultural diversity and to be acknowledgeable about the norms, literature and works of arts of the different cultures.

Q14: How often do you discuss cultural topics in your lecture?

-Often

-Rarely

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Often	3	25%
Rarely	9	75%
Total	12	100%

Table 13: Discussing cultural issues in classes

The above table shows that **75%** of teachers rarely discuss cultural topics in their lessons, whereas the minority of them **25%** often discusses cultural issues. In fact, more than the half rarely included teaching culture in their classes. This can be explained by the fact that

teachers are not aware of the English culture, that is, they lack the cultural knowledge and the confidence to deal with culture and sometimes because of the time limits.

Q15: What are the difficulties when dealing with foreign cultural content?

In this item the teachers are asked to mention some of the obstacles that they may encounter in their teaching culture. Most of the teachers said that culture is complex and it requires time so that many teachers access strange vocabulary, expression, customs, thoughts, there are some abbreviations of associations, organizations, places, celebrations which derived from the target culture. Moreover, sometimes the absence and the lack of resources materials (books) is an obstacle for exploring the culture in the classroom, others lack of knowledge at the part of the students themselves. Furthermore, students are not very open-minded; they do not have close contact with native speakers, and no direct discussions with native speakers. In fact, how can teachers stimulate their curiosity about this culture.

Q16: Do you design particular activities and materials to teach things about foreign culture?

-Yes

-No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	8	66.67%
No	4	33.33%
Total	12	100%

Table 14: Designing activities and materials to teach about culture at the Secondary level

The most notable point here is that, the majority **66.67%** of teachers design particular activities and materials to teach about the foreign culture. While **33.33%** of them do not use extra tasks to teach aspects of culture they may find that the textbook offer enough activities and materials to teach culture.

Q17: If "Yes", which ones?

Teacher (a) "materials (books, maps, videos...) and activities such a comparing and contrasting."

Teacher (b) "audio-visual aids."

Teacher (c) "project works about persons or topics, plays, dialogues, data show, pictures... etc."

Most of teachers focused on audio-visual aids they may help them to explain and deal with cultural issues. Teachers who use audio-visual materials do not face difficulties because they provide a solid basis for teaching. Whereas, those who do not use them they may face

difficulties in explaining cultural aspects because it is very difficult to put the learners in the picture unless they watch and see what the teacher is speaking about.

Q18: Do you use authentic materials in your lecture?

-Yes -No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	6	50%
No	6	50%
Total	12	100%

Table15: Using authentic materials in classes

A half of teachers **50%** use authentic materials in their classes to teach culture. In contrast, the other half **50%** did not apply it in their lessons may be they do not consider it necessary.

Q19: If "yes" which ones?

Teacher (a)“videos, listening scripts (native speakers).”

Teacher (b)“songs, speech, dialogues, statistics, pictures, videos.”

For almost half of the respondents choose videos and listening to native speakers of the target culture. Generally, the responses have shown most of the materials mentioned by the teachers, are mainly used to help students to build background knowledge and acquire communicative aspects of language.

Q20: Do you think that a teacher should use:

a-Cultural capsules and clusters

b-Culture assimilators

c-Role plays

d-Other, please specify

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Cultural capsules and clusters	2	16.67%
Culture assimilators	3	25%
Role plays	5	41.67%
Other, please specify	2	16.67%
Total	12	100%

Table 16: Using techniques to teach culture at the secondary school

41.67% affirmed that teachers should use role plays as the technique that mostly used for integrating the target culture, and **25%** of them prefer culture assimilators and the other culture teaching techniques were selected with very little percentages: for example the option

(a);cultural capsules and clusters **16.67%** and the remaining teachers selected other teaching culture techniques such as the combination or stating the differences between cultures.

Q21: Are you aware of the cultural content included in the textbook to teach the foreign language?

-Yes

-No

Option	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	11	91.67%
No	1	8.33%
Total	12	100%

Table 17: The teachers' familiarity with the cultural content of the Secondary School textbook

The results in the above table indicate that the majority of teachers **91.67%** responded with yes since they have better insights about target culture introduced in the textbook. While, only one teacher answered negatively may be because of the lack of experience.

Q22: Whatever your answer, please justify

Justification provided by teachers can be summarized as follows:

Teacher (a) “the textbook contains much cultural content.”

Teacher (b) “in each unit we are exposed to a foreign culture topic related to the theme of the unit.”

Teacher (c) “because it is very important to know more about cultural content to teach the foreign language.”

In fact, most of teachers justify their familiarity with the textbook by giving examples about the units which cover the textbook.

Q23: Does the textbook *Getting Through* offer enough reading materials introducing the foreign culture?

Teachers’ opinion on this item is that some of them said that the textbook is not sufficient, and others agreed that it may provide teachers as well as students with the necessary materials according to their level. However the rest of them agreed that it does not provide teachers materials included in the target culture.

Q24: Does the foreign cultural content in the reading materials facilitates learner’s reading (comprehension, or hinders it)?

The same with (Q23) teachers’ responses answered differently. It can be summarized as follows:

Teacher (a) “it hinders it.”

Teacher (b) “it facilitates it.”

Teacher(c) “it facilitates it as well as it hinders it.”

According to the results above half of the teachers **50%** agreed that the target culture hinders learners’ reading comprehension for that reason; because it is a new culture, a new language, new words so this will be an obstacle for them, and they are unaware about them, they do not have a previous knowledge, they are not knowledgeable, also the students are not interested in the foreign culture. Moreover, **33.33%** chose the option (c) and justified their choice by saying that some learners enjoy themselves while learning something related to foreign culture and this enriches their background or others, they find it difficult to do so and this hinders their reading comprehension, and depending on the topic of the reading materials and the level of students. In contrast, **16.67%** of teachers said that it keeps the learner close to the culture, helps in dealing with activities related to cultural context. In fact we can use a local context and have better results concerning the reading skills.

Q25: Would you, please, provide us with further suggestions or comments?

This item deals with the teachers suggestion as far as the topic of the research is concerned the responses demonstrated that the great majority of the respondents expressed their agreement to expose learners to the culture of English speaking countries the most common claim put forward by the teachers for supporting teaching the culture of English speaking countries was their belief in the link between language and culture. The following suggestions collected from the questionnaire:

- culture and language are interrelated and that language is used as the main medium through which culture is expressed.
- providing teachers with authentic materials which may facilitate learners reading comprehension and read more about the target culture.
- take into consideration the attitudes that students have towards learning the foreign culture
- consider the students’ needs, what are they going to do with the target culture.
- providing learners with listening scripts i.e. native speakers.
- the textbook in general should has a variety of cultures in order to master the English language, especially the foreign languages stream they need more important topic to improve their level.

As a conclusion to the second section, two points were revealed; first the questionnaire fulfilled its aim in providing further insight into teachers’ views about the situation of culture teaching at the Secondary School. Their responses complemented the ones obtained via the questionnaire. Second teachers revealed that culture and language are closely related and teaching culture is incomplete due to some causes which are: no contact with native speakers, fear of not knowing enough about the target culture and unavailability of sources and authentic materials.

General Conclusion

Since culture and language are interrelated, then the process of teaching a foreign language should entail teaching the cultural features related to such language, and not just its grammar and vocabulary. The current study has centered on finding out to see if the reading materials include foreign cultural clues facilitate learners reading comprehension with reference to the second school English text book getting through, and the teachers.

This dissertation consists of three chapters; the first one has dealt with some considerations on culture, the relationship between culture and language. In addition, the aspects related to the teaching of culture such as its developing role in foreign language methods and techniques, the importance of teaching culture as well as its effects on learners. The second chapter has devoted to reading and language textbook classification discussing: reading and reading comprehension definitions, reading materials, and reading in culture. While the third one constituted the field work in which we have used two tools of investigation: teachers' questionnaire and students test. More importantly, we have suggested some recommendations which seemed to us very important to both students and teachers.

After analyzing the test quantitatively and qualitatively, we have classified learners' mistakes into three types of mistakes: lack of background knowledge, language mistakes, and the misuse of background knowledge. Furthermore, students are usually comprehend short texts rather than long ones since this latter needs a total concentration, and a lot of vocabulary which most of them have not possess. Besides; they are far from being exposed to foreigners so as to get better insights concerning their culture. On the other hand, almost all teachers stated that the lack of materials is a crucial problem facing them, more importantly the text book did not contain enough sources introducing the foreign culture. Also, we have found that our school having a lack of teachers training who are familiar with cultural content. Thus, the obtained results proved hypothesis stated foreign culture type hinders learners reading comprehension.

Recommendations

On the basis of what has been done and found in this study, we put some recommendations. We believe that if it is taken into account, it will be of great benefit:

- ❖ The majority of the reading materials cover the textbook including local cultural clues.
- ❖ There should be a variety of materials such as: poems, short stories, extracts from literary works.
- ❖ The length of texts should be taken into account by designers in order not to turn the reading process into a burden that frustrates learner.
- ❖ Authentic materials are recommended to offer learners both the linguistic and cultural insights.
- ❖ The program must focus on an exposure to the English culture explaining everything related to the target culture.
- ❖ Textbooks should involve information related to the foreign language culture because no language can be taught without its corresponding culture.
- ❖ Textbook designers should be careful about choosing appropriate, different and authentic materials that reflect interesting aspects for learners' needs and level specifically through needs analysis.
- ❖ Textbook designers should employ enough foreign cultural content with the appropriate frequency to enable learners to be in touch with the foreign culture that raises their comprehension and eventually enriches their communicative competence.
- ❖ Language teachers need to be well informed and competent.
- ❖ Teacher should be careful about learners need, interest, level, age and social situations.
- ❖ Teacher efficiency is seen through careful lesson design and adapting and planning appropriate didactic teaching materials.
- ❖ Teachers should use authentic materials; an authentic environment should be made possible in the classroom. This could be achieved through the availability of didactic aids such as films, television shows, proverbs, videos, and songs of authentic English.
- ❖ Teachers should adopt and innovate methods of teaching the foreign, culture in order to avoid any unwanted result. These can be "culture assimilators" through which cultural

information is provided, to prevent any prejudice or misunderstanding resulting from cultural differences. "culture capsule" through the description of one of the other culture followed by discussion of the contrasts between the learners and other cultures.

❖ The teacher also should care about learners' ideas concerning the foreign culture. In this way, the teacher should exploit learners background knowledge about the foreign culture, if it is positive, to raise their cultural tolerance and awareness, and to correct it, if it is negative, to avoid prejudices, misunderstandings, cultural shock.

❖ Teachers must benefit from seminars in Algeria and abroad. To raise their awareness of the importance of teaching culture and seminars abroad would help teachers to get in touch directly with the foreign culture.

APPENDIX 1

Students' tests

Test One: Charities

Charities are independent organizations that help the poor, the homeless, children, old people and animals. They are involved with human rights, education, medical research and conservation of the environment.

In 1997 there were about 180 000 charities in Britain, with a total income of 18 billion dollars. Many charities that are now well known throughout the world, such as **Oxfam** and **Amnesty International**, began in Britain. Americans are also enthusiastic supporters of charities. In 1995 they gave over 116 billion dollars.

Oxfam has aid programs to help poor people overseas, especially the victims of natural disasters. Other well-known charities working in Britain include **Barnado's**, which helps children, and **Age Concern** and **Help the Aged** which support old people. **Shelter** provides food and a place to stay for the jobless and the homeless.

The traditional method of raising money is to organize a **Flag Day**. Volunteers stand in busy streets asking members of the public to put money in a **collecting tin**. In exchange they are given a **sticker** to be put on coat lapels.

Nearly every town in Britain has at least one charity shop. These are run by volunteer staff and sell second-hand clothes, books and household goods at low prices in aid of charity.

In recent year, **telethon** has proved an effective method of fund-raising. During an evening of popular television programs, television stars ask the public to telephone and pledge (= promise) money to the charities involved. Other fund-raising activities include fetes (=outdoor sales for craft work, plants, etc...) and **jumble sales** (= sales of second-hand clothes). Sponsored walks, cycle rides, even parachute jumps are also popular.

At Christmas or Thanksgiving, schools organize collections, called **food drives** in the US, for the elderly and the poor. In America, the custom Hallow'en has changed, and now children ask for money to give to UNICEF, a charity for children run by the United Nations.

(Adapted from **Oxford Guide to British and American Culture**)

Activity one:

Read the text and answer the following questions.

1. Do you know some charities in Algeria? Give examples if found.

.....
.....

2. Are the Oxfam and Amnesty international only British charities? Justify your answer.

.....
.....

3. Are charity shop workers appointed and paid by the government? Justify.

.....

4. Why do you think only Britain and America are mentioned as examples of having charities?

.....
.....

Activity two:

Read the text and cross(X) the right answer A, B or C.

1. Charities are found.....

- A. Only in Britain and America B. Originally in Britain
C. All over the world

2. Algeria organizes a flag day to collect money.

- A. True B. False C. Does not say

3. In Britain, charity shops are.....

- A. Rarely found B. Never found C. Found in every town

4. At Christmas, people in Algeria buy charity cards.

- A. True B. False C. Does not say

5. In Algeria, we celebrate annually Thanksgiving through which we collect food to help people in need.

- A. True B. False C. Does not say

6. Halloween is a custom where.....

- A. People wear strange and scary costumes
B. Children throw eggs on people who do not give them money
C. Money is collected by some children to help other children in need

Test two: Martin Luther King, the Man of Peace

Black Americans can do a lot of things that their parents could not do years ago because of racism. They can vote; they can eat in any restaurant they like; and their children can go to the same schools as white children. As we prepare ourselves to celebrate Martin Luther King Day next Monday, we'll reproduce a part of king's address *I Have a Dream* in memory of this great leader who was able to combat racism and hatred with non-violence and love.

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it from every village, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all God's children, black men, and white men will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!"

Activity one:

Answer the following questions.

- 1. Who is Martin Luther King?
.....
.....
- 2. What is the origin of Martin Luther king?
.....
- 3. Whom king is addressing in his speech 'I have a dream'?
.....
- 4. What is the aim of Martin Luther King's speech?
.....
.....

Activity Two:

Read the statements and cross (x) the right answers: A, B, or C.

1.....were suffering of racism.

- A. Blacks B. Black Americans C. Americans

2. In the past, black Americans could vote, eat in any restaurant they liked and their children could go to the same schools as white children.

- A. True B. False C. Does not say

3. Martin Luther King's speech 'I Have a Dream' stresses.....

- A. Racism between people in America B. Violence between Americans
C. Love between people in America

4.....were judged by their color.

- A. White Americans B. Americans C. Black Americans

5. Martin Luther King lived in the red hills of Georgia.

- A. True B. False C. Does not say

6.....will be able to sit together at a table of brotherhood.

- A. The sons of American former slaves B. American former slave owners
C. Both of them

APPENDIX 2

Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of a research work. It aims at finding out what teachers of English think of teaching foreign culture as well as the way culture is actually dealt with foreign language classes. Your experience at the secondary school level is valuable information to achieve this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Personal information :

1) Gender

Male

Female

2) Age

3) Degree(s)

4) How long have you been teaching English?

.....

5) Have you ever visited English-speaking country?

-Yes

-No

6) Does teaching a foreign culture mean learning its culture?

-Yes

-No

7) Whatever your answer, please justify?

.....

.....

8) How would you define the word "culture"?

.....

9) Do you believe that learning the foreign culture is an interesting component of teaching English as a foreign language?

-Yes

-No

10) If "Yes", please justify your answer.

.....
.....

11) What does teaching foreign culture mean for you?

.....
.....

12) What kind of methods do you use in teaching foreign culture?

a- Audio-lingual method

b- Grammar translation method

c-Communicative method

d-The Schema theory

13) What is the importance of teaching a foreign culture?

.....
.....

14) How often do you discuss cultural topics in your lecture?

-Often

-Rarely

15) What are the difficulties when dealing with foreign cultural content?

.....
.....

16) Do you design particular activities and materials to teach things about foreign culture?

-Yes

-No

17) If "Yes", which ones?

.....

18) Do you use authentic materials in your lecture?

-Yes

-No

19) If "Yes", which ones?

.....
.....

20) Do you think that a teacher should use:

a-Cultural capsules and clusters

b-Culture assimilators

c-Role plays

d-Other, please specify

.....

21) Are you aware of the cultural content included in the textbook to teach the foreign language?

-Yes

-No

22) Whatever your answer, please justify

.....
.....

23) Does the textbook "*Getting Through*" offer enough reading materials introducing the foreign culture?

.....

24) Does the foreign cultural content in the reading materials facilitate the learner's reading comprehension, or hinder it?

.....
Whatever your answer, please justify.

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

25) Would you, please, provide us with further suggestions or comments?

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

Thank You for Your Contribution

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