

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of Foreign Languages  
Section of English



**The Role of English Cultural Concepts' on Learners'**  
**Proficiency in Language Comprehension**  
**Case Study f Third Year LMD English Students at Mohamed Kheider**  
**University of Biskra**

A dissertation presented to the Department of Foreign Languages  
as partial fulfillment for the Masters' Degree in Sciences of Languages

**Submitted by:**

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University of Biskra

**Academic year**

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## ***Dedication***

*Each challenge work requires strong efforts and guidance especially of those who were very close to our hearts.*

*I dedicate this work to my sweet and dearest persons whose affection, love and prays make me able to obtain such achievement*

## ***My Father & My Mother***

*To my sisters, brothers and all members of my family especially our nephew **safouane** whose smiling and cheery encourage me to be able to achieve this research*

*To my husband who took care of me and helped me in writing this dissertation*

*To my dearest teacher who helped me till the end*

*To all my friends without exceptions*

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### *Abstract*

The present research intends at examining the importance of learning and teaching the English language culture in EFL classes. In addition, the study also aims at defining culture, demonstrate the relationship exist between culture and language and what role it plays in teaching and learning English as a foreign or second language. Thus, knowing the English culture helps EFL learners to learn the English language efficiently. Since the study is based on one hypothesis, that if learners know the English Cultural concepts', their learning level will improve, to check this hypothesis, we submitted questionnaire to teachers to collect data about the teachers point of view about the necessity of including the English culture in their classes, as well as their strategies to motivate learners to learn it. Also, we made an interview with 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra to gather data about the students' attitudes towards the English language culture and their interest in the foreign culture learning and teaching. We also shed light on how teachers or the ways the teachers use to teach culture in English language classrooms. The results of this research indicate that the learners' are interested and are challenging to learn about others 'culture, as well as its role in enabling them to communicate successfully in different contexts, it also shows that teaching only the linguistic part of the language without cultural knowledge is not complete.

### *List of abbreviations*

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**LMD:** License Magister Doctorate

**FLL:** Foreign Language Learners

**FL:** Foreign Language

**FLC:** Foreign Language Culture

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# *General Introduction*



## **Introduction**

Learning a new language is like an adventure, because each time the learner faces and discovers new words which he need to understand and memorize. That's why it is natural to impulse to turn to the similarities with things that are familiar to try to extract certain number of comparison with what we know to what we do not

At the present time, the English language is considered as the international language of the world, everyone wants to learn it. As a matter of fact, many people are learning it as a second language. Moreover, it is especially significant for learners to learn it through learning the English culture. It is believed that, learning about culture is one of the important aspects while learning a new language. Without having a strong hold over cultural concepts in which that language occurs, students can't master that specific foreign language. For that, in English classes teachers are determined to teach the culture of the target language. Cultural concepts' support the learners to develop their understanding of certain social factors like: age, social classes and religions that affect the ways in which people speak and behave learners will combine to the English language culture. So, cultural concepts' will provide learners to be qualified in learning English language and enable to easily know the usages of words.

This is what the present research seeks to prove, taking into consideration the role of English cultural concepts' on learners proficiency in learning and how these concepts increase learners comprehension and explore the multifaceted language as well as culture when they engage in the reading process to find out the basis of social meanings.

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

Generally, EFL students of Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, face several difficulties on learning English as a foreign language due to different facts and the most popular one is: the little knowledge of the English cultural concepts which is the major gap between the target language and the mother tongue. Thus, knowing the target's language culture is crucial to ease the learning process and help the learners to understand that language properly. For that, we do believe that explaining the English culture is the key term for the learners to motivate them learning English without any hesitation. Also, we try to give some solutions for both teachers and students to help them working in collaboration.

## **2. Research Questions**

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1) Why should learners know the culture of the English language?
- 2) What is the effective method that enhances students' comprehension of English cultural concepts'?
- 3) What kind of activities lends themselves to learning about and appreciating other cultures?

## **3. Hypotheses**

The present research is related to the role of English cultural concepts' and their importance in developing learner's proficiency in learning. Thus, this study is based on one hypothesis which will be tested and verified:

- If learners know English cultural concepts' their learning level will improve.

#### 4. Significance of the Study

The present research is an investigation about the importance of cultural concepts comprehension on mastering a foreign language. Thus, it can provide data on the relation between the English Cultural concepts' comprehension and the improvement of FLL achievement in learning.

#### 5. Aims of the study

The present study attempts to explore a clear view and explanation of the role of English cultural concepts' on learner's proficiency in learning. It aims at:

- ✓ Provide guidance to language educators on effective culture teaching methods.
- ✓ Suggest ways to assess culture learning.
- ✓ Through knowing English cultural concepts' learners learn how language can be used in different situations and for different goals.
- ✓ Culture can be the medium for language comprehension.
- ✓ Developing motivation.

#### 6. Methodology

In order to have better understanding about the present work, the qualitative descriptive method seems to be the appropriate one which allows us to analyze the data that we will gather in the field work of the study.

**Population:** To fulfill the purpose of this study, we chose a population of 20% third year EFL students of Mohamed Khieder University of Biskra because they are more advanced in English language than the first and second year students.

**Data gathering tools:** In order to examine the case, and reach the above objectives of our study; student's interview and teacher's questionnaire will be to be administered.

## **7. Structure of the thesis**

The present work is divided into two parts, one is the theoretical which consists of two chapters, and the other one is the practical which includes one chapter. In the first chapter, we will talk about the definition of culture, cultural and intercultural communicative competencies, cultural awareness, components of culture, approaches and methods for teaching culture, cultural content in the EFL teaching program, teaching culture in the classrooms, and the main concerns is guidelines for teaching culture. In the second chapter, we are going to tackle the role of culture in EFL classrooms, language as a carrier of culture, the relationship exists between language and culture, approaches to culture in foreign language teaching and learning, cultural factors that impact EFL learning, problems of teaching English language culture in EFL classrooms, the impact of culture on foreign language learning, culture and motivation, communication and learners creativity. The last chapter, is the practical part in which we try to describe and analyze the results of research tools, which are the students' interview and the teachers' questionnaire.

# *Chapter One*

## **Chapter One: The Implementation of Culture in EFL Teaching Programs**

### **Introduction**

A long time ago, linguists and anthropologists established the connection between foreign language learning and culture learning. Because, throughout the study of other languages, the learners gain knowledge and perceive the cultures of these languages. Furthermore, students are unable to master the language till they know and mastered the culture that belongs to that language. Thus, learners cannot rely only on the linguistic competence because it is not enough to allow them to be qualified in that target language. So, in order to communicate successfully, language must be associated with the cultural behavior, not only linguistic rules. For that, culture should be taught as a part of the linguistic forms. Cultural concepts are of a great importance to make those cultural features expressed by all learners to help them understand the foreign language. At the end, this is what the present work tries to explain and elucidate taking into attention the role as well as the importance of cultural concepts' in helping students increase their level of proficiency in learning as well as developing language learning skills.

## 1.1. What is culture?

Multiple and different disciplines embraced culture as an interesting term due to its variety and its importance, each discipline offered various definitions according to a particular concern. Ember (1999) views culture as a set of behaviors, values, assumptions that affect the thoughts of members of the social group. Tyler (1870) states that culture is construct task that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1952) indicate that culture is composed of patterns of explicit and implicit behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, including human traditions, ideas and values.

Furthermore Spencer-Oatey (2008) points out:

“Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member’s behavior and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behavior.”

Simply saying, culture is the fundamental behavior, attitudes, beliefs and values exchanged by all members of the society which influence the individuals’ mind.

According to T.Schwartz (1992) Culture is constituted of experiences organized and created by the individuals, including images or encodements and meanings transmitted from generations or individuals themselves.

Nevertheless, as it is said culture is considered as the core of shared behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and traditions among all members of the society. It functions as a path for interacting with other members all over the world.

## **1.2.Cultural competence**

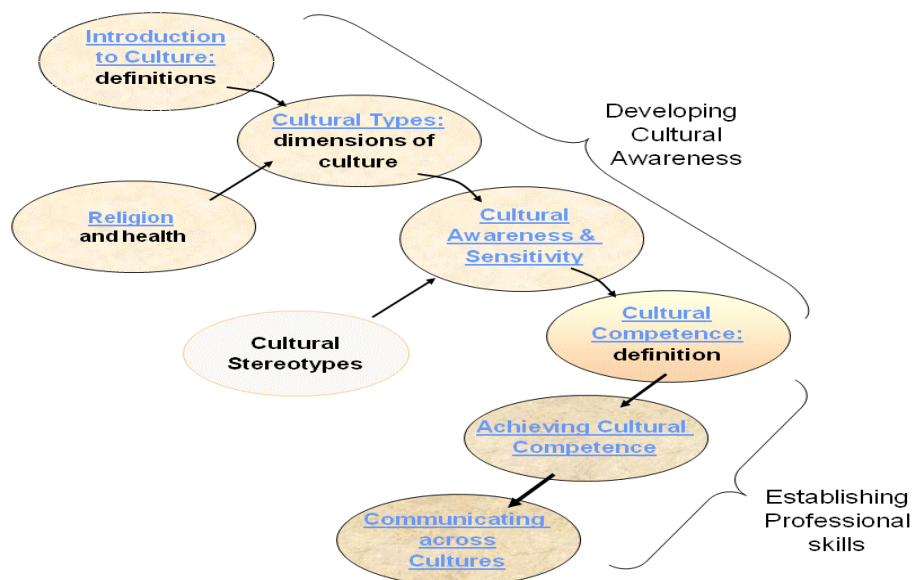
Can the cultural competence be taught? This question has been the interest of many educators. Cultural competence is a major key that enables teachers to effectively help students to learn other culture different than their own. It is seen as a moral responsibility to create a successful environment for students to be motivated in learning the target language. Cultural competence has a number of definitions that derived from diverse perspectives and interests. Roberts et al (1990) claims that cultural competence is the ability to respect the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors that enables individuals to work effectively in cross-cultures in different situations. According to Cross et al,(1989) “ Cultural competence is a developmental process that occurs along a continuum. There are six possibilities, starting from one end and building toward the other: 1) cultural destructiveness, 2) cultural incapacity, 3) cultural blindness, 4) cultural pre-competence, 5) cultural competency, and 6) cultural proficiency.” All in all, cultural competence related to students’ learning outcomes, it enable students to develop a sense of belonging to groups and working in collaboration, it gives them sense of understanding responsibilities necessary for active participation in learning, also it makes students become aware of fairness and become successful in learning the target language.

## **1.3.Cultural awareness**

Cultural awareness is considered as the basis of communication and an important tool for teaching and learning a target language. This involves the ability of being conscious of the cultural values, perceptions, beliefs... etc. The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) defines Cultural awareness as being observant, and conscious of similarities and differences among and between cultural groups. Winkelman (2005) also stated that cultural awareness includes recognition of one’s own cultural influences upon values, beliefs, and judgments, as well as the influences derived from the professional’s work culture. From these



above definitions, we understand that cultural awareness includes being conscious of culture and its implications for practice, teaching, and research, and understand how people acquire their cultures and the importance of culture in building personal identities, ways of life, and mental and physical part of individuals. However, Tolinson and Masuhara, (2004) claimed that an cultural awareness helps learners widen the mind, increase tolerance and achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity. For that and for better understanding of the necessity of providing students with a sense of cultural awareness we mention the following diagram that enables teachers developing cultural awareness in their classes:



**Figure 01:** Developing Cultural Awareness

## 1.4. Intercultural Communicative Competence

While considering the use of a variety of linguistic forms is essential for successful communication, sociocultural factors also play an important role. Celce-Murcia (2007) indicates that Intercultural communicative competence is one component of sociocultural awareness which has been characterized as integral for communicative competence, but its practical application remains a challenge due to the fact that language educators tend to have more knowledge about the target language than its related cultural aspects. Another important

dimension that positively affects language and cultural learning is the representation of one's identity (Norton, 2013). therefore, it is also the combination of different terms such as the learners' personal identity, social abilities and attitudes, it involves a language user's ability to interact with one's own cultural background in the process of interaction with foreign cultures and requires knowledge about one's country and culture and those of the others', skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness. For that, the implementation of intercultural communicative competence in English Language Teaching allows learners to express their identities while engaging in meaningful discussions about cultural views. To better understand the role of intercultural communicative competence we illustrate the following model suggested by Byram's (1997) that is aimed to validate students' identity in English language classes.

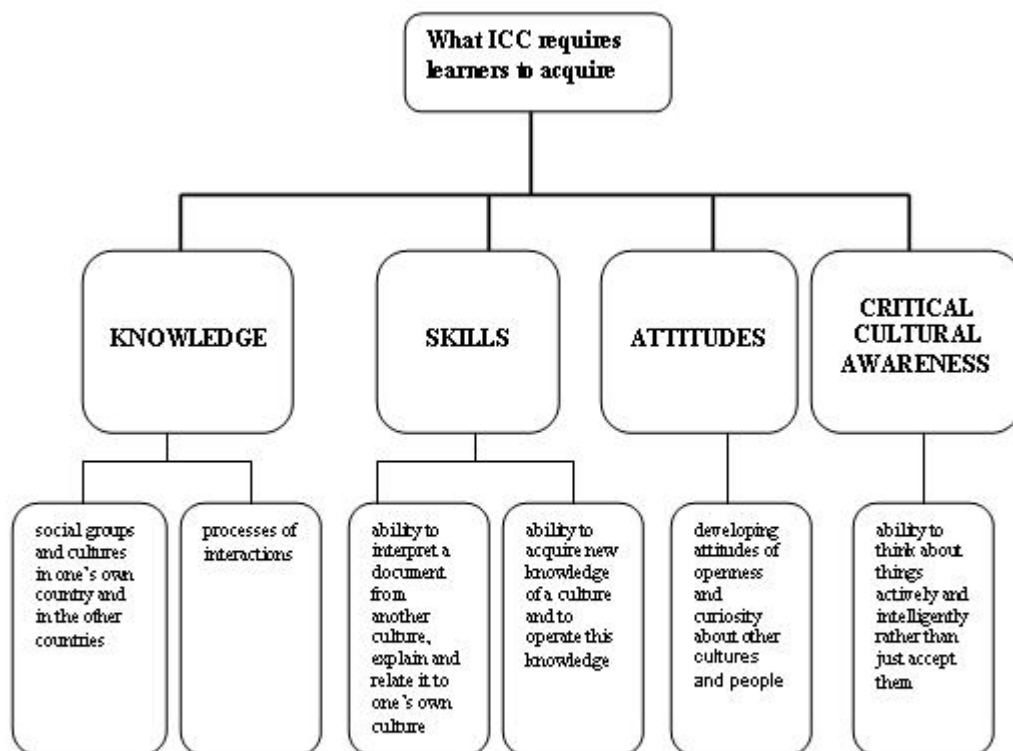


Figure 1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Figure 02: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

## **1.5. Components of Culture**

Culture consists of various components that enable all members of the society to be competent in participating and interacting with one another. Each component has its own interest in the existing of particular culture. Therefore, we try to categorize the four constituents that culture underlies namely: communication component, cognitive component, behavioral component, and material component.

### **1.5.1. Communication components**

Communication components hold language and symbols which have a great impact in giving chance for all members of the social group to interact and communicate with one another, sharing ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

#### **1.5.1.1. Language**

Language is a system of communication. It is an essential tool for sending and interpreting messages cultural meanings that includes of thoughts, beliefs, feelings...language is considered as an important mean to help members of the members of the social group to learn about others' culture. It helps us using symbols to build which makes effective communication.

#### **1.5.1.2. Symbols**

A symbol is a sign that indicates an idea. It is occurs in various forms which convey meaning. It is also vary from culture to culture.

## **1.5.2. Cognitive components**

Cognitive component includes ideas, knowledge, beliefs, values, and accounts which are the basic units for the building of knowledge to understand other people culture.

### **1.5.2.1. Ideas**

An idea is a thought stored in the mind. It functions as an necessary instrument for arranging information and organize stimulus.

### **1.5.2.2. Values**

Values are beliefs and ideas shared by the members of the society that encompasses of goodness, beauty. Values have big impact on person's behavior and it serves as guidelines in all context and situations.

### **1.5.2.3. Accounts**

Accounts are those ordered ways in which all members of the social group use language to explain, comprehend and behave with each other in different circumstance.

### **1.5.2.4. Beliefs**

Beliefs are assumptions, values, attitudes shared by all people. Beliefs are what people assume to be true. They can be changed.

### **1.5.2.5. Knowledge**

Knowledge is the interpreted and understood information from the giving data as well as experience.

### **1.5.3. Behavioral components**

Behavioral components are the fundamental components of culture which considered as the way how we act and behave. They consist of norms that divided in mores, folkways, laws, and rituals.

#### **1.5.3.1. Norms**

Norms are collection of rules that all members of the society have from each other which guide the interaction and direct the behavior.

#### **1.5.3.2. Folkways**

Folkways are defined as the dictate behavior obliged to be followed by all members of the society, it reflects values. Folkways draw line between right and rude.

#### **1.5.3.3. Mores**

Mores defined as the moral norms which are accepted by a particular group. It distinguishes the difference between right and wrong.

#### **1.5.3.4. Laws**

Laws based on traditional mores, they serve as the important norms that translated into legal formalization.

#### **1.5.3.5. Rituals**

Are those universal features of human social existence, they are also defined as formal interactions which follow a series of actions.

## **1.5.4. Material components**

### **1.5.4.1. Materials**

Materials serve as an expression of an individual culture. These objects also called ‘material culture’. They created by humans for practical use and specific reasons.

## **1.6. Cultural content in EFL teaching programs**

The utility of using cultural content in classrooms is a necessary tool for increasing learners’ motivation and helping them learning the target language effectively. However, culture is an important key to effective teaching and learning a foreign language. Tseng (2002) indicates that culture influences changes in individual perception and it is essential for expanding individuals’ view of the world. Shanahan (1997) states that cultural content is not set of facts to be learned but it is a helpful tool that makes learners feel the need to speak that target language. Also, Stuart & Nocon (1996) argues that learning about the culture of the target language demands the implements which help the learners in finding meanings and understanding the communicative and cultural texts in which language is used.

However, the reason for the use of cultural content in classroom is to foster learner motivation McKay, (2000) believes that there should be a variety of cultural content besides learning about others culture in all EFL classes. This also can help to create learner interest towards contents as well as towards the language.

## **1.7. Approach and methods for teaching culture**

### **1.7.1. Traditional Methods**

#### **1.7.1.1. The Direct Method**

This method received its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language. Its influence was in the advancement of inventions, foundations and technologies. It emphasizes on real life situations which change people attitude toward teaching and learning a foreign language. Rivers, (1968) Omaggio, (1986) illustrated that the key characteristics of the direct method is the use of culturally pictures that make students aware of everyday situations they might encounter in the foreign culture. Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that the above method elucidates the geography and the history of the target language. Long-Fu (2001) states that direct method at the first stage associated with small 'c' culture and large 'C' culture at the advanced stage. Also, Jespersen (1904) mentioned that according to the direct method the purpose of teaching a language is the access of target language culture.

#### **1.7.1.2. The Audio-Lingual Method**

Chastain (1976) claimed that the audio-lingual method consider dialogues in texts as linguistically and culturally authentic and at the same time are suitable in different situations. However, audio-lingual method explains the significance of teaching culture as well as the use of field work pattern practice. Simply, it gives more priority to the concept of small 'c' culture.

### **1.7.1.3. Innovative / Designers methods**

The innovative approach is an approach based on the knowledge which the students learn from everyday life of people who speak the target language. Furthermore, it consists of three interrelated methodologies which are:

- a- The Silent Way: is encouraging students to be involved actively in producing language.
- b – Suggestopaedia: a scientific method focuses on the systematic study of the unconscious influences and what is the process that the brain learns most effectively.
- c- Community Language Learning: learners are significant members of a community.

## **1. 7.2. The Modern Approaches**

### **1.7.2.1. The communicative approach**

According to Long-Fu(2001), the communicative approach is an approach that analyzes the foreign language teaching within a social and cultural context in collaboration with the socio-linguistic view that language influence by the society, culture and economics. In other words, communicative approach in language teaching is focuses on interaction and communication which emit from everyday language use under a variety of socio-cultural situations.

### **1.7.2.2. The Cooperative Language Learning**

Cooperative Learning is an approach pursuing the cooperative activities that includes pairs and groups of learners in the classroom, in order to give them the knowledge about what does the worlds operates, explains personal varieties between group members individual's



identities, and more importantly make them aware about their significant role as members of learning community. Moreover, it is an important method which motivates learners step forward into their cooperative learning process in classroom.

### **1.7.2.3. Content-Based Language Instruction**

Content-Based Language Instruction is an approach relies on implying culture inside English classes to facilitate for teachers to offer culture to the students' through a specific vocabulary or terms. Furthermore, it pushes teachers to create a comfortable environment in which learners organized the information around a linguistic or other type of syllabus that supports their cultural identities.

### **1.7.2.4. Task-Based Language Teaching**

Task-Based Language Teaching approach based on the use of tasks as a central unit of planning and instruction in language teaching, one of these tasks is what is called "Activities Using Cultural Objects" which involves the use of products of a culture. Using such activities, aid students to work together in pairs or small groups share and discuss what they have discovered, and interpret the information within the context of the target culture and in comparison to their own culture.

### **1.7.2.5. The Cognitive Approach**

Long-Fu(2001) declared that language learners depends on consciousness to acquire competence in a meaningful manner as well as the necessary tools to gain the acquisition of performance skills. In addition, Omaggio (1983) give more importance on meaningfulness of previous knowledge in the learning process.

## **1.8. Teaching culture in EFL classroom**

Culture has been an essential part of the second language classes. Without incorporating culture students lack an important constituent of the language learning process. For that, the main purpose about teaching culture is not transmitting knowledge but gaining knowledge about the target groups is the most significant one. Furthermore, as Kramsch mentioned that to learn a foreign language is not to learn how to communicate but also to discover how much the target language culture allows learners to manipulate grammatical structures, sounds, and meanings. According to Lessard-Clouston (1997) “students will indeed need to develop knowledge of and about L2 or FL culture, but this receptive aspect of cultural competence is not sufficient. Learners will also master some skills in culturally appropriate communication and behavior for the target culture.” Therefore, teachers should put great interest in teaching culture to help students feel able to cooperate with others. Thus, to incorporate cultural into teachers’ classroom, they should give activities to help students understand target language cultural beliefs and think about cultural awareness as well as enhancing materials about culture in order to help them improve their language skills.

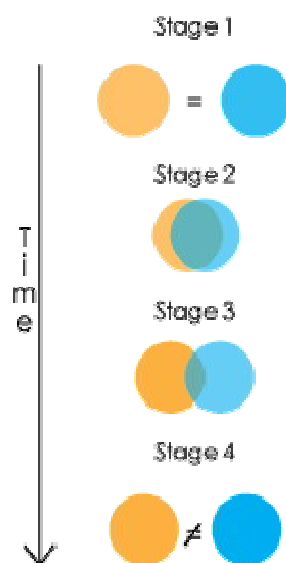
### **1.8.1. Culture in curriculum**

At the present time culture is indispensable part in making students understand a language. It is a key component in giving students a successful education and provides a context for understanding one's own culture. For that, many debates has been opposed about the necessity of including culture in EFL curriculum and its role as an inmost part of the program like other modules such as linguistics, literature...etc Through teaching English cultural features students cultural awareness will improve as well as it will advance them in their life. This means that English culture will be the essential of communication and needed to be taught in the education curriculum. Thus, teachers should include English culture in their lessons and

teaching cultural information and concepts. In other words, they should put an interest in tackling it in their subjects. For that, we can say that teachers should follow a process of stages to make their students able to perceive and understand the target language effectively. In the first stage, teachers must be aware of the differences happen between the new language culture and their own ones because in this stage students are lacking knowledge about the target language culture, they see the two are similar an equal and the difference was only in language. After students became know the comparison between the two cultures, at second stage, students can discover the difference occur between the first culture and the second culture. At the third stage, teachers teach their students that there are similarities between their own culture and others culture, but there are too much differences.

At the final stage and with time teachers realize that their students accept that their culture is not the same as target language culture.

- The following schema summaries the above stages and shows how culture can be understood among learners:



**Figure 03:** Stages for understanding Target Culture

### **1.8.2. Cultural materials**

Culture is becoming an important part in the teaching and learning processes. Gaining cultural knowledge can impact the way the educators understand their students and also affect the way that students increase their learning skills. Culture tends to be a specific section in textbooks and subject of many teachers. It is argued that every photo, drawing, dialogue is not just a subject of linguistic form rather it is for cultural discussion, as well as culture is expressed through a variety a tools and resources such as: guest speakers, videos, internet clips, radio...etc. So, by using such materials students became more exposed to the target language.

However, there are several ways and materials that help teachers incorporate culture in their classes. Teachers should enable students to be engaged with these materials such as films, music, videos, images that present elements about that culture in order to help them go deeper to understand the target language culture easily as well as to help them improve their language skills.

#### **1.8.2.1. Authentic materials**

In order to facilitate for learners understanding the target language culture which help them reaching the objective of learning a target language effectively, authentic materials such as watching films, news broadcasts or TV shows are needed to be included in EFL classes. Because using authentic materials help students listen and understand the written texts and gaining information about non-verbal behaviors such as the use of personal space, eye contact or gestures.

### **1.8.2.2. Role plays**

Role plays are a helpful tool for students to practice speaking and using language in unpredictable situations. By illustrating plays assigned by other language and another culture students can discuss what happened in the play and are obliged to comment and mention what they have learned during performing the roles and taking the floor. So, they can improve their listening and speaking skills.

### **1.8.2.3. Cultural items**

Discussion cultural items in classroom improve students' presentation and writing skills in the target language. For that, teachers should assigned items from the foreign culture and discuss them during presenting the lesson to make them aware of these items.

### **1.8.2.4. Pictures and photographs**

Providing students by images and photos related to a variety of topics about foreign language help students to express themselves effectively as well as able them practice a new concepts and understand meanings. So, in order to apply this and fostering students' learning, students need to be asked to interpret the illustrations and photographs they see and realize what elements of culture has been portrayed.

### **1.8.2.5. Proverbs**

Proverbs make students feel very informative about the target language culture and their own culture, also able them to compare the differences between them. They can lead them to make discussion about stereotypes or values represented in the proverbs of both cultures.

## **1.9. Guidelines for teaching culture**

Following the discussion in the previous sections of this chapter with emphasizing on teaching especially English culture, we try to present the following guidelines to incorporate that English cultural concepts in EFL classrooms. For that, teachers should:

- ✚ Make the students go deeply listening to what others say and to the feelings, attitudes behind what they say.
- ✚ Make them recognizing that the more we gain ideas and opinions about other people help us filling the gap of what we don't know and what we ignore.
- ✚ Make them trusting the integrity of others, believing they have the right to their opinions and let them sharing ideas.
- ✚ Make them explore new ideas and work through conflicts, debates, conversations that may arise when talking about different issues.
- ✚ Ask them questions about things they don't know and support them to understand topics related to culture identity, cultural authenticity.....
- ✚ Provide student with activities about different topics of the target culture, than asking them to give answers by sharing their existing knowledge.
- ✚ Allow them to read or listen to stories by native speakers, and afterwards ask them to reformulate it or retelling it to their partners.
- ✚ Telling them story and stop in certain points than make them predict how this story will continue.

So, all these above insights will help learners combine their interests with the classroom as well as will force them to review their existing knowledge and raise their curiosity about whether their predictions are correct or not. Also, facilitate to them to develop their learning proficiency.

## **Conclusion**

Each language is rooted and embedded in a particular culture, when we learn a language we learn about its underlying culture. In the light of the problem opposed in the present chapter, we presented that language learning and teaching processes must be built upon the teaching of culture of the target language community. Although, it seems that culture is implicit part in EFL teaching methods and approaches, English educators should not need only to be more culturally and linguistically aware but also they should be able to design curriculums with an international and multicultural interest. However, allow teachers with the proposed materials and techniques help them bring the target culture into the classroom as well as they serve as important tools that promote the understanding of culture and language in all aspects of cultural understanding and develop as well as improve strategies that are effective for learning the target language cultural concepts. While teacher using cultural content in their classes, they are obliged to keep in mind that English is an international language and culture is an aid to motivate their students.

# *Chapter two*



## **Chapter two: The Importance of Culture in Foreign Language Learning Process**

### **Introduction**

When a person decides to learn a language he/she does not only need to know the linguistic part of the language, but everything to do with the language. So, in order to be able to speak a foreign language well, everyone has to think in that language. This means that, learning a foreign language is a matter of mastering the language cultural context. However, Language learning is Culture learning, Wang (2008) argues that foreign language teaching is foreign culture teaching and foreign language teachers are foreign culture teachers. Thus, culture is a very important tool in foreign language learning because the key to acquire a foreign language is to receive language culture. For that, FL teachers should hold culture in their classes because culture is the primarily source for mediating learning and make them understand the cultural values in the foreign culture in order to be able to speak English effectively and to understand why certain phrases are used. Therefore, for students to study English culture is a necessary activity for developing one's learning proficiency, improving own language skills as well as helping them to relate the language begin learned to real life situations.

## 1.1. The role of Culture in EFL Classroom

Why incorporating culture in EFL classroom is important? There are numerous reasons to illustrate the role that culture plays and for answering the above question: the first one is that language classrooms must include cultural elements because language and culture are inseparable processes as Politzer (1983) points out:

“As language teachers we must be interested in the study of culture not because we necessarily want to teach the culture of the other community, but because we have to teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning, for unless he is warned, unless he received cultural instruction, he will associate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols.”

“Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs.” (National Standards)

However, the two quotations indicate that language represents culture and culture should be taught in all EFL classes.

The second reason is that foreign language learning is foreign language culture. According to Tomalin&Stempleski (1993: 7-8), the teaching of culture has the following goals:

1. Help students to develop an understanding that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviors.
2. Help students to develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class influence the ways in which people speak and behave.

3. Help students to become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture.
4. Help students to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.
5. Help students to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence.
6. Help students to develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture.
7. Stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people.

Buttjes (1990) explains how language teaching is culture teaching through: that language codes cannot be taught in isolation, language teachers need to go beyond monitoring linguistic production in the classroom and became aware of the intercultural mediation between the foreign language learners.

The third reason is as it is argued that the most important goal of any foreign language program is the mastery of communicative competence. So, for making learners achieve that goal, teachers should able them to gain and grasp the target language cultural background knowledge that help them communicate effectively.

The last reason is that culture has great impact on learners' motivation. Hammerly (1982) viewed that "teaching about the target culture when teaching the language piques the interest of students and act as a motivator". Simply saying, culture serves as a motivator to encourage learners to be creative in making for example different role plays, make them sing write poems, stories...etc

## **1.2. Language as a Carrier of Culture**

Every language has two main characters; one is as mean of communication and the other is as a carrier of culture, language reflects the values shared by the people in certain society. Wathiong (1986) stated that “Language is a carrier of people Culture, Culture is a carrier of people’s values, and Values are carrier of people’s outlook or conscience and a sense of identity.” Simply, culture is not just a mean of communication but it expresses people values and identity. Without language human being will lost without values and identity. As Pitkin, (1972) indicates:

“And language is the carrier of the human culture, by which mankind continually produces and contemplates itself, a reflection of our species-being. Language, one might say, is the medium of mind, the element in which our minds dwell as our bodies dwell on earth in the air. In mastering language, we take on a culture; our native language becomes a part of ourselves, of the very structure of the self. Thus language has dual aspects: it is our means for self-expression, for articulating our unique individuality; yet at the same time it is what we have in common with other members of our community, what makes us like them and binds us to them.”

All in all, language expresses one’s values, ideas, attitudes, beliefs...etc. In other words language is a mirror of culture as well as a powerful tool of culture.

## **1.3. The relationship between language and culture**

Language and culture are two interrelated terms; they have evolved together, influencing one another, as Emmitt & Pollock (1997) viewed that “language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from generation to the next”. In this context A.L.Krober (1923) also said “culture, then, began when speech was present, and from then on, the enrichment of either means the further development of the other”. As a matter of fact, language is a part of culture, Brown (1994) indicates that: “A language is a part of culture and culture is a part of language, the two are intricately inter woven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”. Simply, culture and language are inseparable. In addition, Vera Simone (1987) puts

“language is culture” he argues that language and culture cannot be broken off. Thus, EFL students should pay attention to that relationship in order to act appropriately in different contexts. Furthermore, many linguists extract the relationship between language and culture. Nida (1998) holds the view that “language and culture are two symbolic systems”. as For Doyé (1996) points out:

“The very nature of language forbids the separation of language from culture. If Language is considered as a system of signs, and signs are characterized by the fact that they are units of form and meaning, it is impossible to learn a language by simply acquiring the forms without their content. And as the content of a language is always culture-bound, any reasonable foreign-language teaching cannot but include the study of a culture from which the language stems.”

Simply, it is forbidden to separate language and culture from each other.

For that, teachers must make their learners compare and contrast between the culture of the mother language and the target language culture as Valdes argues that “not only similarities and contrasts in the native and target languages have been useful as teaching tools, but when the teacher understands cultural similarities and contrasts, and applies that knowledge to teaching practices, they too become advantageous learning tool”

Jiang (2000) put the following three metaphors that illustrate new understanding of the relation between language and culture.

### 1-From a philosophical view:

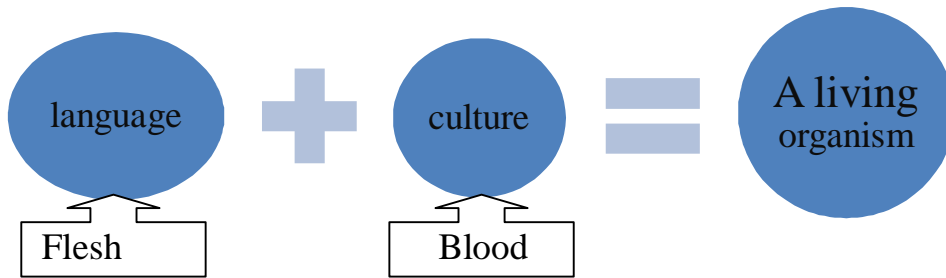


Figure 04: Philosophical View

### 2-From communicative view:

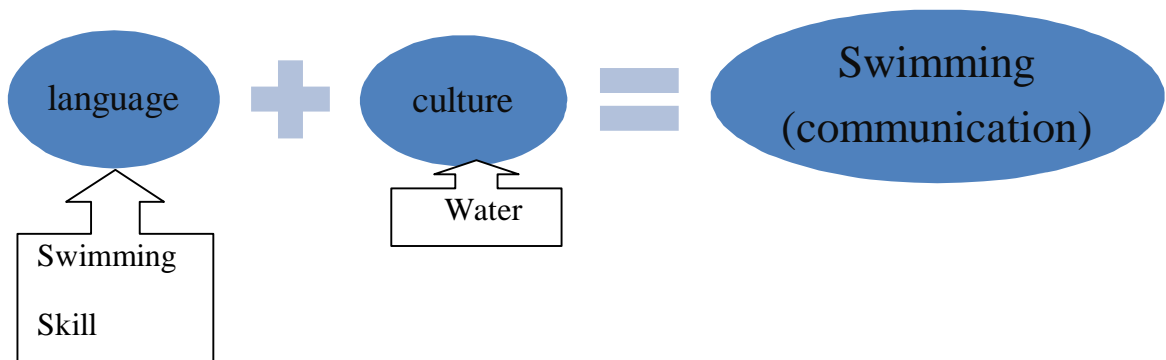


Figure 05: Communicative View

### 3-From pragmatic view:

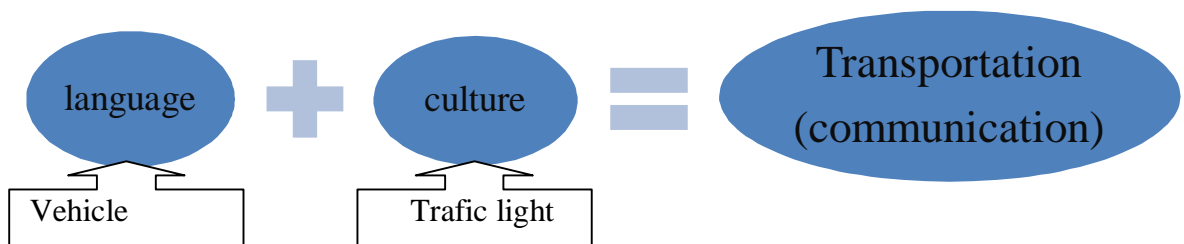


Figure 06: Pragmatic view

From the above views, we conclude that from the Philosophical view language and culture makes a living organism; language is fresh, and culture is blood. Without culture, language would be dead and without language culture would have no shape. The communicative view signifies that communication is considered as swimming, language is the swimming skill, and culture is water. Without language and culture there would be no communication at all. And from the last view which is the Communicative view communication is the transportation, language is the vehicle and culture is traffic light. Language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates communication. Culture and communication are inseparable because culture helps to determine how people encode messages. Culture is the basis of communication.

So, it is obvious observed that knowing the existing relationship between language and culture, if teachers teach their students a foreign language without teaching them about its culture; students' learning will be meaningless.

#### **1.4. Approaches to Culture in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning**

Since culture is defined as one's ability to enter cultured and communicate effectively, we acknowledge that language is part of culture. However, culture has impact on language learning and teaching processes. For that, different approaches to teaching culture has appeared and classified in different ways. Saluveer (2004) has divided them into two categories: the first is the mono(cultural approach which focuses only on the culture of the country whose language is studied and the second is the comparative approach which lower on comparing learners' own and the other culture.

Another division is proposed by Stern (1992) who presented eight approaches that encompass:

- Creating an authentic classroom environment

- Providing cultural information
- Cultural problem solving
- Behavioral and affective aspects
- Cognitive approaches
- The role of literature and humanities
- Real-life exposure to the target culture
- Making use of cultural community resources

Additionally, Risager (1998) provided four approaches to teaching culture, which are:

**1.4.1. The Intercultural approach:** this approach indicates that teaching and learning a foreign involves more than only the linguistic skills but also requires knowing about the culture of the target language. The main goal of this approach is to help EFL students to develop the ability to compare and language contrast between their own culture and the culture of the target language because it aids them to become successfully intercultural communicators.

**1.4.2. The Multicultural approach:** this approach involves from the teachers to present different cultural activities and they should teach students cultural differences as well as asking them how they see the world around them and what they think of others. It also based on the idea that in every country there are set of sub-culture. The approach put emphasis on the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the target country and the learners' own culture.

**1.4.3. Trans-Culture approach:** which is based on mass communication, it considers that foreign language is an international language, so there is no need to foreign language culture.

**1.4.4. Foreign-Culture approach:** it focuses on the target culture and the students' own culture and it ignore the relation existed between the two cultures. This approach seeks to develop communicative competence and cultural understanding.



## 1.5. Cultural Factors that Impact EFL Learning

Many factors enter the foreign language learning and teaching process among those factors we mention the cultural factors. So, what is meant by cultural factors? What are those cultural factors? And how those factors influence the foreign language learners' learning? The cultural factors are viewed as those aspects of culture that all members have acquired consciously or unconsciously, and hold with them where ever they are.

- Hofstede (1980) designated a cultural factor which is Masculinity versus Femininity that emphasize on the level to which gender roles are assigned in a culture.

- Another of Hofstede's 5 cultural factors is Individualism versus Collectivism, in considering this he points that people from individualistic cultural traditions view the individual person and his/her rights as more important than any responsibility to a specific group, while people from collectivistic cultural traditions spring from strong extended families.

- In addition, another factor is stated by Hall (1959) that is High- Context culture versus Low-Context culture. High and Low contexts refer to communication styles. Low-context entail that individuals utilize direct verbal communication that their messages are communicated explicitly to others. High-context involves that the trouble to understand the message is on the listener.

- Other cultural factors that may enter the learning environment, culture-based preferences for learning, Ramirez (1991) believes that diverse cultural traditions tend to support certain preferences for learning in their cultural background. Diverse cultural traditions often prefer: *'cooperative learning environments, group study, to minimize distance when communicating, to express emotions freely, to see time as flexible and subjective, to view task orientation as relative to personal demands, to make use of relational and affective learning styles, and to seek personal relevance when processing information.'*

- Other important cultural factors is that group's conception of formality, this indicates that how a given group perceives family-school relationships or student-teacher relationships.

At last, as it is observed, culture and learning are connected. For that, it is significant for teachers to have a clear understanding of the role cultural factors play in the learning process so that they develop that knowledge to build a successfully learning environment that supports the success and achievement of all students.

### **1.6. Problems of Teaching English Language Culture in EFL classrooms**

It's really a problem to teach a foreign language without paying attention to cultural information, because knowing about the foreign language culture has a great affect on the students' learning. However, there are several problems that may obstruct the teaching and learning about target language culture.

- One of these problems is that incorporating target language culture is time consuming. As it is observed, foreign teachers find it a problem to tackle all activities, topics, information that encompasses and talk about foreign culture because they are limited by the syllabus and they didn't find time to teach about all the foreign cultural aspects.

- Another considerable problem is that teachers the lack of teachers' knowledge about English culture. Maybe most teachers do not have enough cultural information background.

- Also, most teachers ignore teaching culture because it deals with students' attitudes, for that teachers should discuss topics about culture that is suitable students' needs. And think about what is the most important parts of culture that help improve students' learning proficiency.

- Additionally, other problem is that students are not aware of cultural differences, for example the teachers teach their students only common sentences people use in greetings but he had never mentioned the cultural differences.

Furthermore, foreign language instructors need to integrate cultural information as part of their language teaching and find out solutions and discover suitable topics related to culture to overcome the problems of teaching and learning foreign culture.

### **1.7. The impact of culture on the foreign language teaching and learning**

As we have mentioned before, mastery of a language does not only mean the mastery of linguistics, grammar, syntactic, semantics perfectly but it requires the understanding of cultural aspects of the language being learned. Allwright & Bailey stated that “learning a new language involves the learning of a new culture” this means that culture plays an important role in learning a foreign language. And for better understand the role that culture plays we should know to what extent cultural background effects language learning as well as teaching like its impact on listening, reading, speaking...etc

#### **1.7.1. Culture impact on vocabulary**

Generally, language is the lighthouse of culture, it defines the personality of the speaker, and specifically vocabulary is the basic component of language. Definitely, cultural variations presented on the vocabulary and the explanation of these vocabularies will reflect the nation's cultural differences. As an example, colors are taking different symbols across the world, in Algeria for instance white represents color of peace and serenity and brides wear it in weddings, in the opposite in China white represents pale, weak and without vitality.

For that, learning a language requires more than knowing grammatical rules and lexical items, but understanding the cultural phenomena and everything that contained of culture. Briefly, learning vocabulary with pay attention to cultural factors is vital and crucial.

### **1.7.2. Cultural influence on listening**

Listening process is one of the effective processes on learning a foreign language. In fact, EFL learners are complaining that they do not get satisfy about understanding a foreign language although they spend too much time on learning and training their ability of listening comprehension. To reach that aim, they try hard by using different techniques such as; buy tape recorders to improve their listening ability in an attempt to facilitate their learning process and they listen repeatively on it many times per day. Never the less, when they encounter new listening structures, they still cannot understand them. The problem behind this is due to the following reasons; lack of vocabulary, weak grammar, and in explicit pronunciation. But the major reason is that their insufficient cultural background knowledge about the target language. Listening and culture are closely connected. Judging one's ability require taking into consideration his comprehensive ability, including the English level, intellectual extent, and analytical ability...etc .When we listen to a familiar events such news, reports, a lectures, or sports it is quiet easier for us to understand despite if there are new words in it, we may decode the meaning in the light of the context. On the opposite, it will be harder for us to understand new words within a context that is unfamiliar to us. Sometimes, the structures maybe simple and we can define them by repeating them on the type recorder. But the lack of necessity cultural background could impede our understanding. From what we mention above, we can see how cultures close to our listening ability and it plays an important role in our understanding new words on our learning process.

### **1.7.3. Cultural impact on reading**

According to Larsen-Freeman & Long (2000) reading process is not just a student's previous knowledge, but it is a process which arises from the stimulations of the outside information to decrypt, recognize and infer the material throughout the cognitive process. For that, it is

crucial for us to understand the non-verbal information, such as: the humanism background, culture, geography, history and traditional local customs. Student's reading can be affected by two factors: linguistic knowledge and cultural background. Among these factors, cultural background plays a more significant role in the reading process. Furthermore, reading barriers do not appear from language knowledge itself, but also they are caused by cultural differences between the target language and our mother tongue. Background information, words, sentences and text structures contain cultural differences of which are going to become potential reading barriers. Sometimes, students can understand the meaning of the word separately within a text but they are still unable to understand the meaning of the whole sentences or paragraphs.

#### **1.7.4. Cultural impact on speaking**

Speaking ability requires more than focusing on pronunciation or intonation. Learners have to read intensively about the different cultural backgrounds of the target language in order to communicate successfully with the others. For that, EFL oral expression teachers should encourage the practical use of the language, and try to rely on the daily life experience as effective teaching materials. This could help learners use suitable expressions in its right context. Furthermore, well-trained linguistic learners may still fall into mistakes or have a misunderstanding of cultural background context. Thus, lack of using an appropriate expression in the appropriate time is one of the mistakes that young learners may do when they meet a native speaker due to their absence of background expression. Learners should concentrate on the context.

### **1.8. The impact of culture on motivation**

Motivation is an important subject that stimulates the students' desire to study and improve their level of learning. Greenberg and Baron (2003) defined motivation as: "the set of processes that arouse, direct and maintain human behavior toward attaining some goals", this illustrates the function of motivation in directing every human being to achieve his purposes. However, in foreign language learning motivation is considered as a key issue that requires from teachers as well as students to deal with all cultural aspects of the target language group. Also, teachers should make their learners recognize others' thoughts, expectations in other words their cultural background information because this latter motivate them to learn the language easily and help them to interact successfully. All in all, teachers should not only seek to help students learn the language itself but also understand its cultural information that motivate students to be able to acquire shared meanings.

### **1.9. Cultural impact on communication**

Learning a second or foreign language involves understanding of the cultural context. Kramsch (1993) argued that "culture is not an independent aspect of language learning or teaching, it is a feature of language, it is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners' proficiency when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them". However, the most important goal of learning a foreign language is to communicate successfully in the appropriate context Samovar et al accentuate:

"Culture and Communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who tell to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, and the meaning they have for messages, and the conventions and circumstances under which various messages may or

may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted...culture...is the foundation of communication''

As it is seen, culture affects people's behavior, reaction, it also has a great impact on people's communication, and it is considered as a factor that determines the way one thinks, acts as well as interacts. Therefore, every aspect of communication is influenced by cultural differences, and the latter impacts the sending and receiving of the accurate messages directly, and by being precise with spoken words. Communication shapes culture, and culture shapes communication. As an example, when a three-person meets, the members bring with them individual, one individual engages in communication with the other members, they begin to create a set of shared experiences and ways of talking. If the group continues to interact, we discover their different history, customs, in other word, the discovery of different cultural differences it would be clearly observed. So, in language learning classrooms, learners need to engage with the ways in which context affects what is communicated and how. Both the learner's culture and the culture in which meaning is created or communicated have an influence on the ways in which possible meanings are understood. So, in language learning classrooms, learners need to engage with the ways in which context affects what is communicated and the teachers should teach their students to be able to produce correct grammatical sentences and how to use them in appropriate contexts.

### **1.10. Cultural impact on creativity**

Nowadays, culture plays an important role in developing creativity. It can either encourage creativity or hinder it. Culture stimulates one's imagination, thinking and acting to achieve high results. Cropley (2001) creativity for him is fostering "flexibility, openness for the new, and the ability to adapt or to see new ways of doing things and the courage to face the unexpected". Culture plays a significant role in fostering creative minds in educational settings. It involves individual abilities such as the ability to think, the ability to be imaginative, and the ability to find solutions to various problems which helps in advancing

student's skills. Additionally, creativity engages learners' "critical thinking" and encourages them to produce different judgments and use their imagination. However,creativityshouldbe encouraged in learning, and everyone shouldrecognize how culture can enhance the creativity oflearners.



## **Conclusion**

In view of the fact that, the primary assignment of the teacher is to teach language, he/she should at the same time bring in the cultural knowledge about the target language to the process of language learning. So, when teaching a foreign language, culture should not be kept away from discussing, because culture and language should jointogether in order to reach a good understanding of the targetlanguage effectively.

As far asthe relationship between language and culture, scholarsargue that language and culture are close. If culture was integrated in language teaching, the whole teaching process would be complete. In classroom instruction, language teachers should deal with teaching the foreign language cultural content to accomplish both linguistic as well as cultural competencies, and they must pay attention to certain problems that may hinder the process of teaching target language culture.

# *Chapter three*

## *Students' Interview and Teachers' Questionnaire*

### Introduction

#### 1. The Students' Interview

##### 1.1. The Sample

##### 1.2. Description of the Interview

##### 1.3. Analysis of the Result

#### 2. The Teachers' Questionnaire

##### 2.1. The Sample

##### 2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

##### 2.3. Analysis of the Results

#### 3. Discussion

### Conclusion

## *The Students' Interview and Teachers' Questionnaire*

### **Introduction**

As we have already hypothesized before, the more the students are expected to the target language culture the more their proficiency of learning English will improve and became well developed. This will reflects in their comprehension of the English language effectively. Therefore, the present work draws out the students' and teachers' outlook of the necessity of comprehending the English Cultural Concepts in helping EFL learners to learn English as a second language. Since, our variables are the students and teachers, their opinion is very helpful to test the hypothesis, we have submitted a questionnaire to the teachers of "Culture of Language" module, and we have made an interview with third year LMD students at Mohamed Khider university of Biskra.

- The Teachers' Questionnaire is aimed to examine the teachers' answers about how knowing those concepts aid the students to be culturally competent and became fluent in speaking English, as well as to explore the ways teachers use that motivate their students to learn the culture of the English language.

-The Students' Interview is conducted to identify the importance of knowing English Cultural Concepts' and how those concepts help the students' developing their language learning skills.

## *The Students' Interview*

### **1.1. The Sample**

To fulfill the purpose of this study, the population chosen for this study is third year students' at Mohamed Khider university of Biskra because they are more advanced to English language. We have made an interview with 25 students chosen among 10 groups of third year students LMD at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

### **1.2. Description of the Students' Interview**

The students' interview was made of 10 questions; all the questions were closed questions. The interview was divided into two main sections:

#### **Section one: Background Information**

This section was concerned about students' background information, which comprises their age and a question about whether they like to speak and listen to English or no.

#### **Section two: concerning Culture and Culture Learning**

In this section, students were asked to answer questions about foreign language culture. Therefore, they were requested to give their opinions' about whether they think that culture is important in foreign language learning process or not. These questions and answers help us to recognize if the learners know about the English culture, and to identify in what way culture helps them develop their learning skills as well as learning English language successfully.

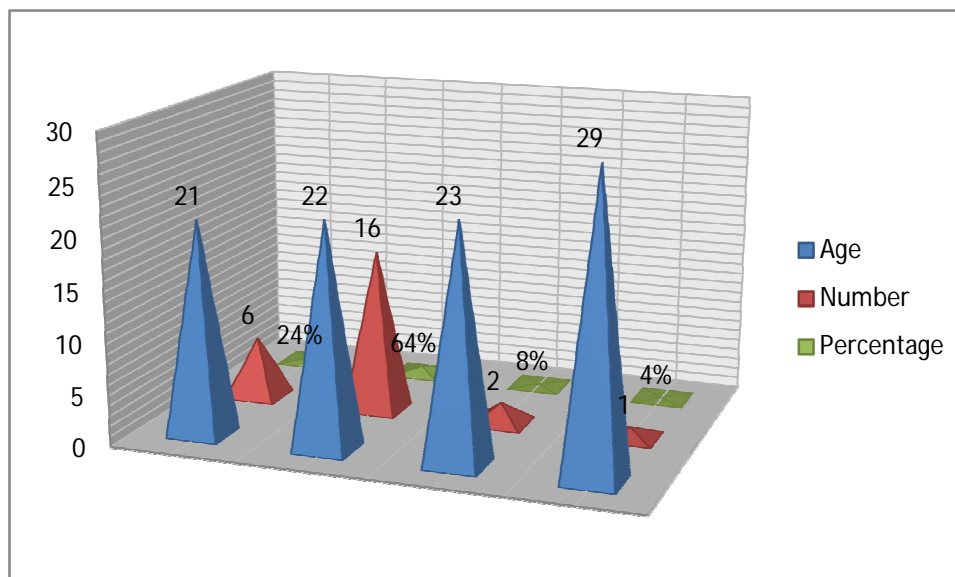
## *The Analysis of the Students' Interview*

### Part one: Background Information

#### Question1: Age distribution

Age	21	22	23	29
Number	06	16	02	01
Percentage	24%	64%	08%	04%

**Table 1:** Students' Age Distribution



**Figure 07:** Students' Age Distribution

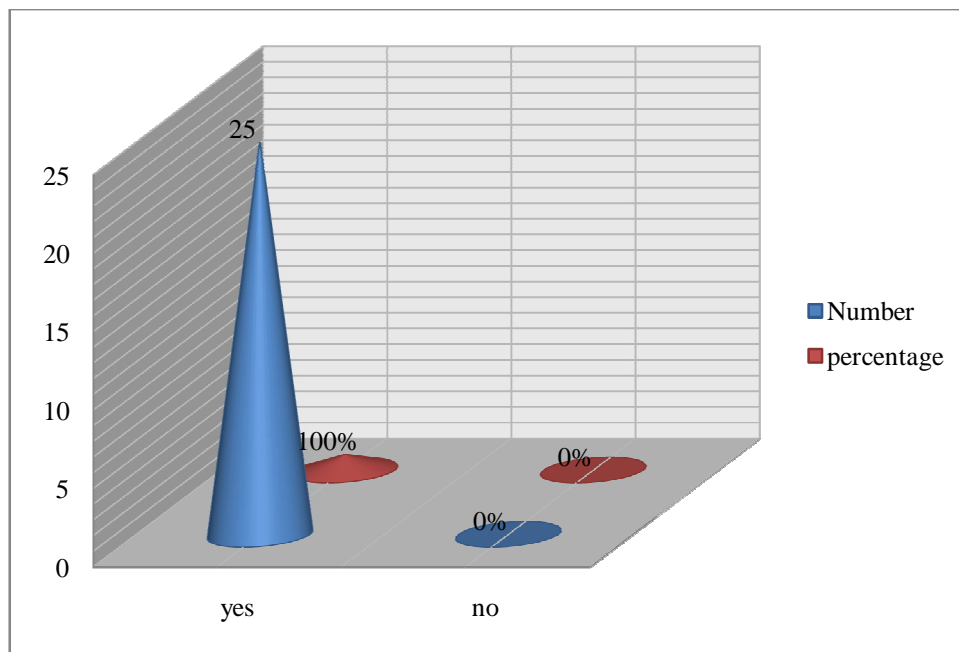
From the above table 1, it is observed that the students' age is between 21 years and 29 years.

The majority of students are 22 years. 06 students are 21, 02 students are 23 and 01 is 29 years.

**Question 02:** students' agreement if they like to speak and listen to English or no?

Answers	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	100%
No	00	00%
Total	25	100%

**Table 02:** Students' agreement if they like to speak and listen to English



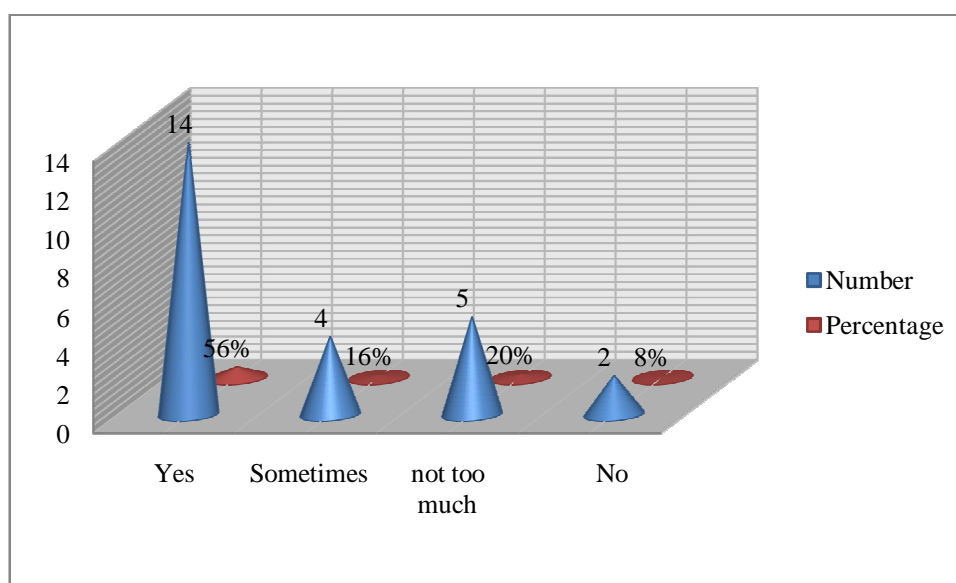
**Figure 07:** Students' agreement if they like to speak and listen to English

The whole population of 25 students (100%) has claimed that they have the desire to speak as well as listen to English language; also we observed that study of English was the students' personal choice.

**Question 03:** Do you like to know about the FL culture?

Answers	Numbers	Percentage
yes	14	56%
Some times	04	16%
Not too much	05	20%
No	02	08%
Total	25	100%

**Table 03:** students' answers distribution to question 03



**Figure 08:** students' answers distribution to question 03

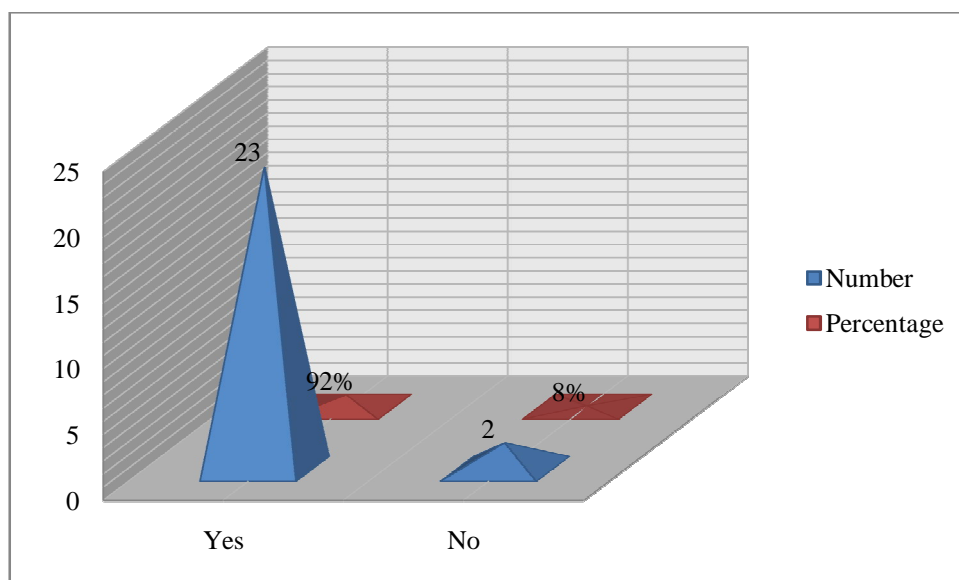
Most students (56%) are motivated to learn about the foreign language culture because this helps them in comprehension and to increase their proficiency in learning. (16%) answered sometimes maybe in other fields. (20%) argued that they don't like it too much while (08%) said no because they don't even understand the culture module.



**Question 04:** Do you feel that the FL culture is necessary for comprehension?

Answer	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	92%
No	2	08%
Total	25	100%

**Table 04:** students' answers distribution to question 04



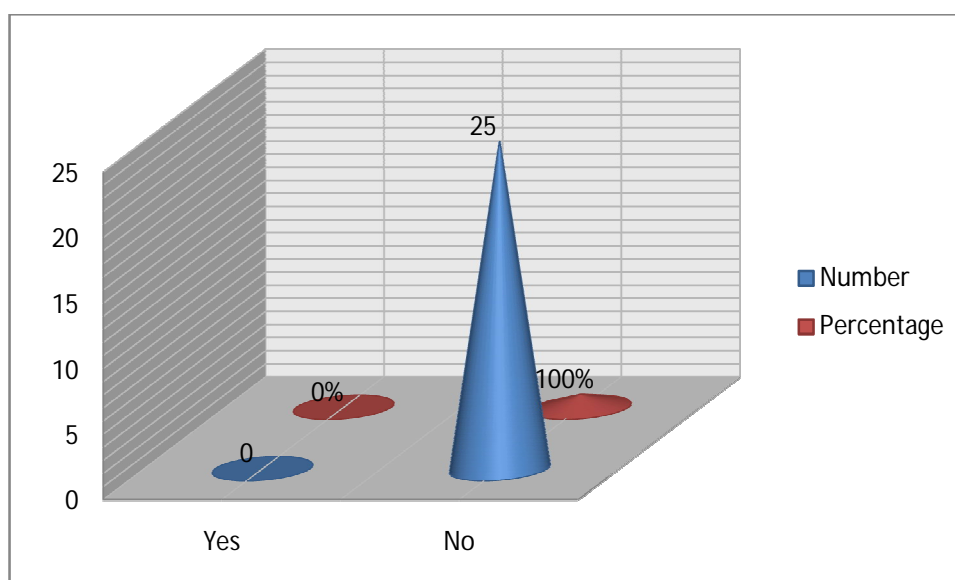
**Figure 09:** students' answers distribution to question 04

The results from the table 5, we see that the majority of the students with (92%) claimed that FL culture is important because through it we gain large amount of vocabulary and considered it as w window not only to understand other languages but to understand human mind better, while others' (08%) responses is no.

**Question 05:** Is the teaching program the only source to know the FLC?

Answers	Number	Percentage
Yes	00	00%
No	25	100%
Total	25	100%

**Table 05:** students' answers distribution to question 05



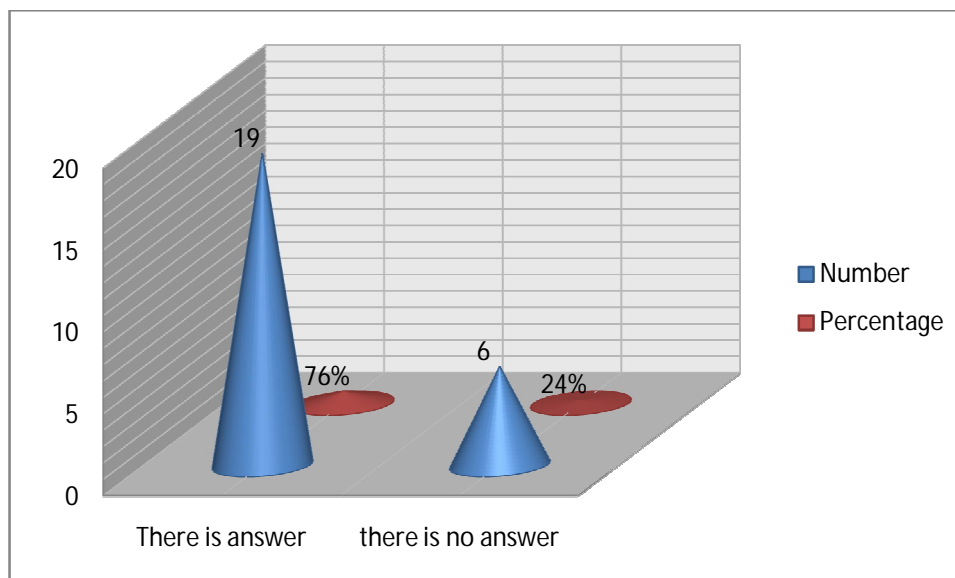
**Figure 10:** students' answers distribution to question 05

As we can see in the table above (6), all the students (25) answered yes there are plenty of sources like the net (YouTube facebook by communicating with native speakers) books, magazines and many other sources. Also we noticed that the learners have knowledge that culture is taught and they like to know about it.

**Question 06:** What aspects of FL culture they are interested in?

Answers	Number	Percentage
There is answer	19	76%
There is no answer	06	24%
Total	25	100%

**Table 06:** students' answers distribution to question 06



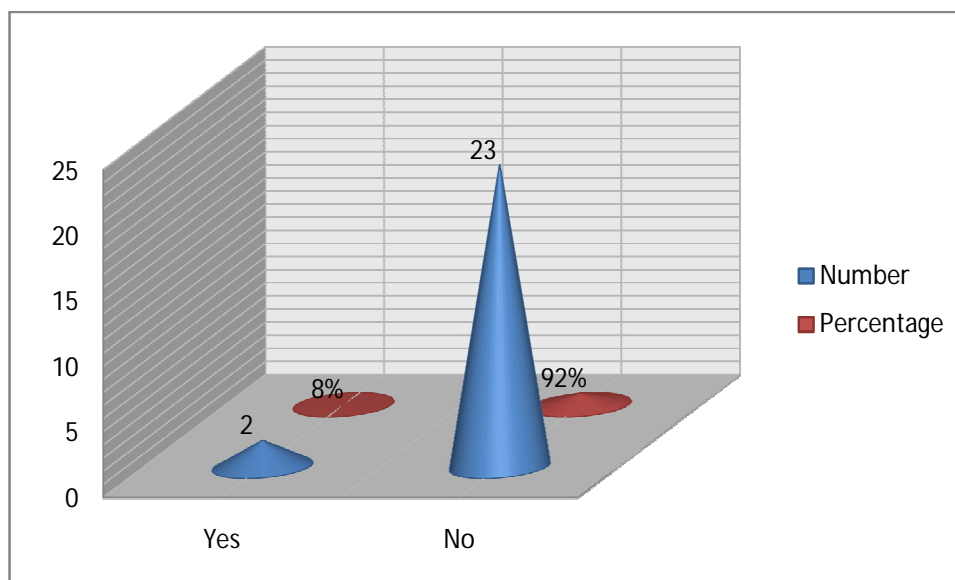
**Figure 11:** students' answers distribution to question 06

According to the table above, we observed that most of the students (76%) agree that there are other aspects of FL culture that they are interested in and (24%) disagree and they even didn't answer.

**Question 07:** Do you think that learning a Foreign Language without Cultural Information is complete?

Answer	Number	Percentage
Yes	2	08%
No	23	92 %
Total	25	100%

**Table 07:** students' answers distribution to question 07



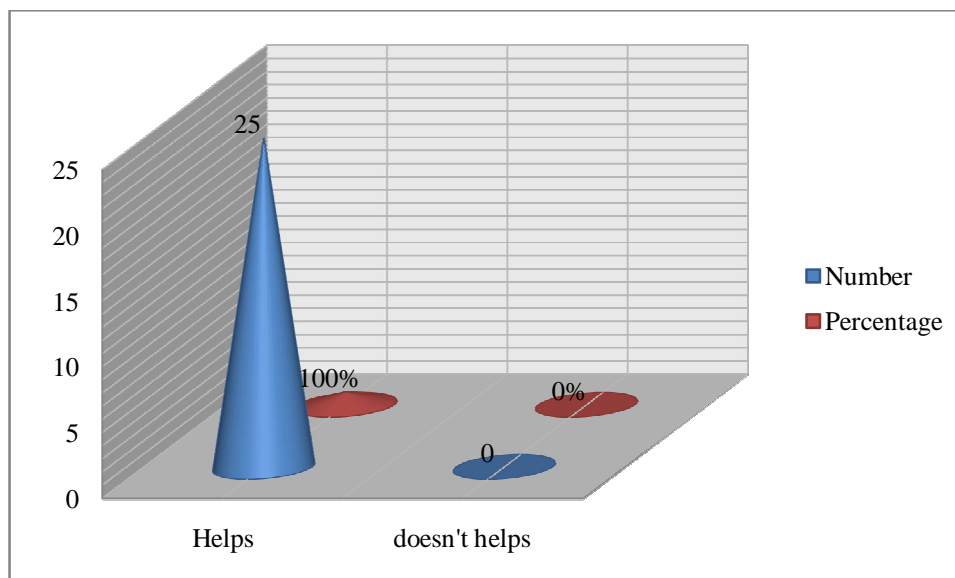
**Figure 12:** students' answers distribution to question 07

The results from the table (08), learners were asked to give their agreements if learning a Foreign Language without Cultural Information is complete, we notice that the majority of the students (92%) answers was yes. While only 2 (08%) students answer was no.

**Question 08:** In what way Culture helps you in developing your language learning skills?

Answer	Number	Percentage
Helps	25	100%
Doesn't helps	00	00%
Total	25	100%

**Table 08:** students' answers distribution to question 08



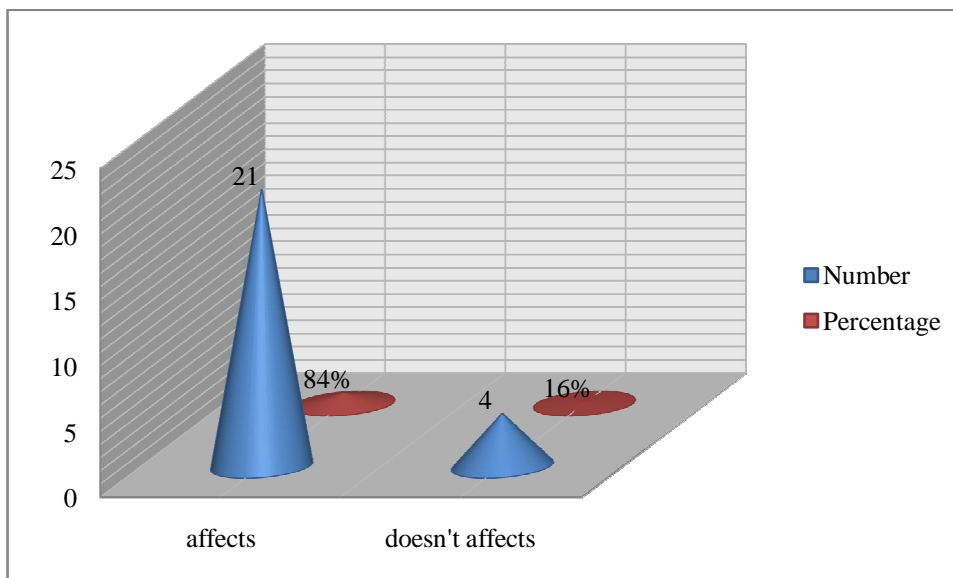
**Figure 13:** students' answers distribution to question 08

From the results shown in the table (09), all the population 25 (100%) agree that culture has a great impact on their learning carrier and it helps them to develop their language learning skills.

**Question 09:** How do you think that culture affects your learning?

Answer	Number	Percentage
Affects	21	84%
Doesn't affects	04	16%
Total	25	100%

**Table 09:** students' answers distribution to question 09



**Figure 14:** students' answers distribution to question 09

The results from the table (10), we see that the learners' answers' were closed between affects and doesn't affects. The first percentage (84%) agrees that culture helps them in developing their language learning skills. The few remaining percentage (16%) disagrees.

## *Teachers' Questionnaire*

### **2.1. The Sample**

The questionnaire was distributed to (06) teachers of ‘‘Culture of Language’’ at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. All the participants in this study have taught the module or are still teaching it. However, as far as our research is concerned, the selection of our sample was based on the consideration that the teachers of ‘‘Culture of Language’’ have the necessary experience rather than other teachers of other modules since they teach their students about others culture, others language, way of life, way of thinking especially the English societies and they are very aware about the tools they use to help the learners learn more about English.

### **2.2. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

The teachers' questionnaire encompasses of (12) questions, which were divided into three parts. In one hand, the questions were closed questions that involving from the teachers to choose one answer from the provided ones by ticking the appropriate box. In the other hand, open questions where teachers are given the chance to provide their comments or opinions.

#### **Part one: Background Information**

This part concerned about teachers' personal information. In question (01) the teachers are inquired about their educational degree, (02) is about the duration that they spent in teaching English, also in (03) they were asked about how many years they have been teaching ‘‘Culture of Language’’ module because their answers help us to know whether those teachers are well qualified in teaching the module of ‘‘Culture of Language’’ or not.

#### **Part two: concerning Culture and Culture Teaching**

In this part, the respondents were asked about their opinion about their understanding of culture, and their attitudes towards culture teaching. Also, the teachers were requested to choose one answer from given choices to examine their opinions' about the importance of incorporating culture in their classes and it's essential part that helps students to learn a foreign language as well as to increase their ability to communicate successfully.

### **Part three: concerning the Importance of Culture**

The fundamental goal of this part is to know the teachers' opinion about whether teaching a target language with the lack of culture is potential. In other words, culture is an essential part of language or a separate one. Additionally, the provided questions help us to determine the cultural features, the topics, and the ways and methods that the teachers use to motivate learners to learn about English Culture.



## *The Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire*

### Part one: Background Information

**Question 10:** What is the degree of your qualification?

Teacher01: magister

Teacher02: magister

Teacher03: magister

Teacher04: magister

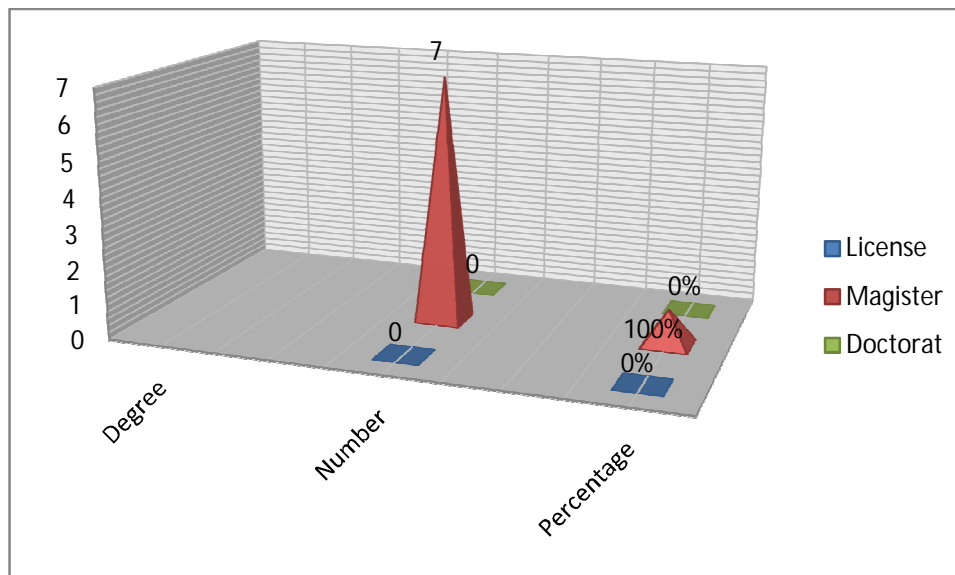
Teacher05: magister

Teacher06: magister

Teacher 07: magister

Degree	License	Magister	Doctorat
Number	00	07	00
Percentage	00%	100%	00%

**Table 10: Teachers' degree of qualification**



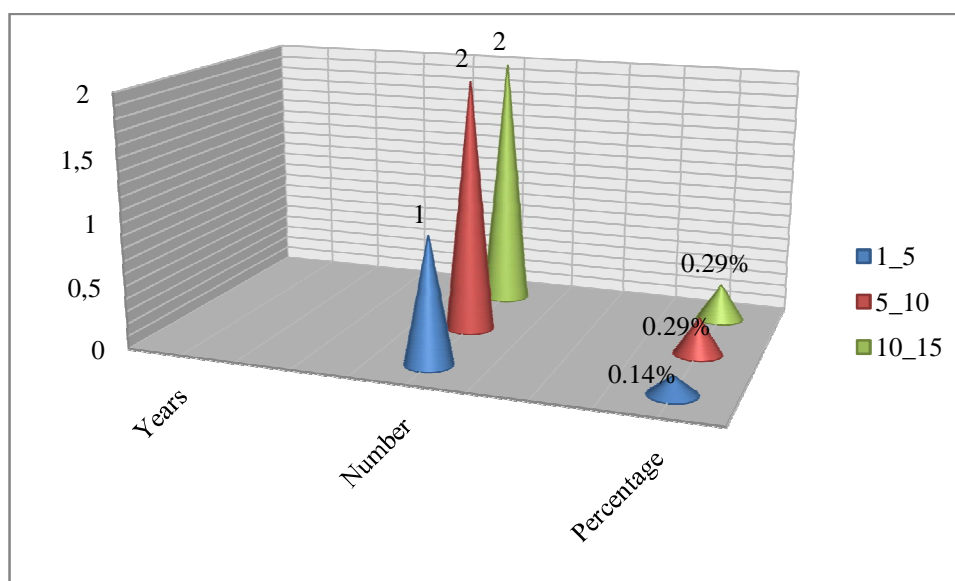
**Figure 15: Teachers' degree of qualification**

According to the table (01) above, we noticed that all the participants 07 (100%) have magister degrees. This indicates how qualified are our teachers in teaching English.

**Question 11:** How long have you been teaching English?

Years	1_5	5_10	10_15	15_20
Number	01	02	02	02
Percentage	14,29%	28,57%	28,57%	28,57%

**Table 11: Teachers' experience in teaching English**



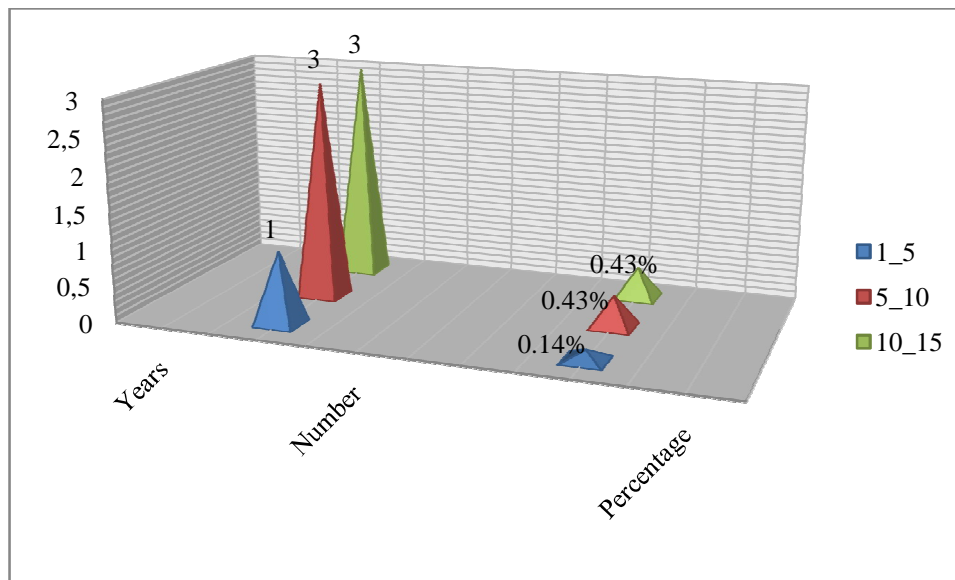
**Figure 16: Teachers' experience in teaching English**

From the answers above, we deduce that (28%) of the teachers experience in teaching English from 15 to 20 years, also (28%) their experience is from 10 to 15, other percentage 28% of the teachers also experience is from how our teachers are experienced in the field of teaching English from 5 to 10 while 16% experience is from 1 to 5 years. This indicates how our teachers are experienced in the field of teaching English.

**Question 12:** How long have you been teaching Culture of Language module?

Years	1_5	5_10	10_15
Number	01	03	03
Percentage	14,28%	42,86%	42,,86%

**Figure 12: teachers' duration in teaching the module**



**Figure 17: Teachers' experience in teaching English**

43% of the participants that is 03 teachers claim that they have been teaching culture of language module of the period between 10 to 15 years. 43 percent of the sample affirmed they have been teaching the module for the period of five to ten years. And only one teacher noted that he/she has been teaching culture of language from 01 to 05 years.

**Question 13:** In teaching culture to EFL students, do you consider that culture is:

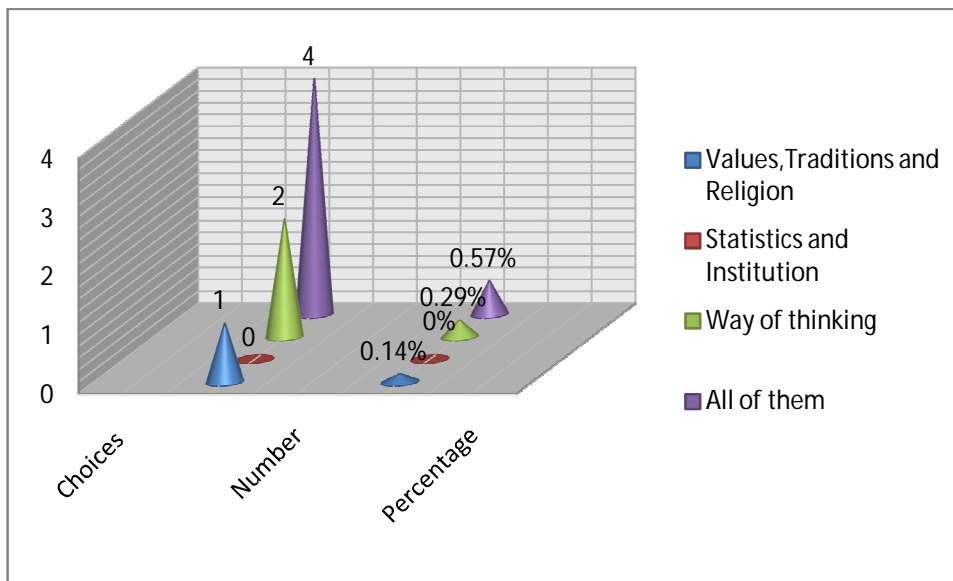
01- Values, Traditions and Religion.

02- Statistics and Institutions.

03- Way of thinking

Choices	Values,Traditions and Religion	Statistics and Institution	Way of thinking	All of them
Number	01	00	02	04
Percentage	14,28%	00%	28,58%	57,14%

**Table 13:** teachers' answers distribution to question 13



**Figure 17:** teachers' answers distribution to question 13

From the answers of the teachers, we see that we have mixture of choices among them, we have (57%) of the teachers choose all the answers, (29%) consider that culture is a way of thinking, and (14%) of the population agree that culture is values, traditions and values.

**Question 14:** In teaching culture, do you agree that culture aids EFL students in:

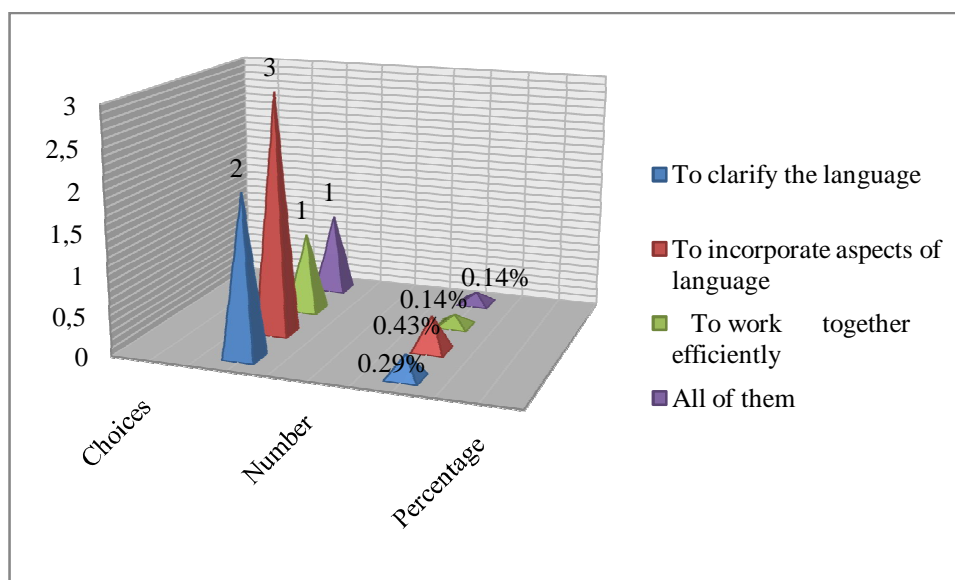
01- To clarify the language

02- To incorporate aspects of the language

03- To work together efficiently

Choices	To clarify the language	To incorporate aspects of language	To work together efficiently	All of them
Number	02	03	01	01
Percentage	28,58%	42,86%	14,28%	14,28%

**Table 14:** teachers' answers distribution to question 14



**Figure 18:** teachers' answers distribution to question 14

From the results mentioned in the table above, we conclude that (42, 86%) identified that culture aids EFL learners to incorporate aspects of language, others (28, 58%) viewed that it helps them to clarify the language. While the same percentage (14, 28%) was given to work together efficiently and to all of the choices.

**Question 15:** In teaching culture, do you agree that culture aids EFL students in:

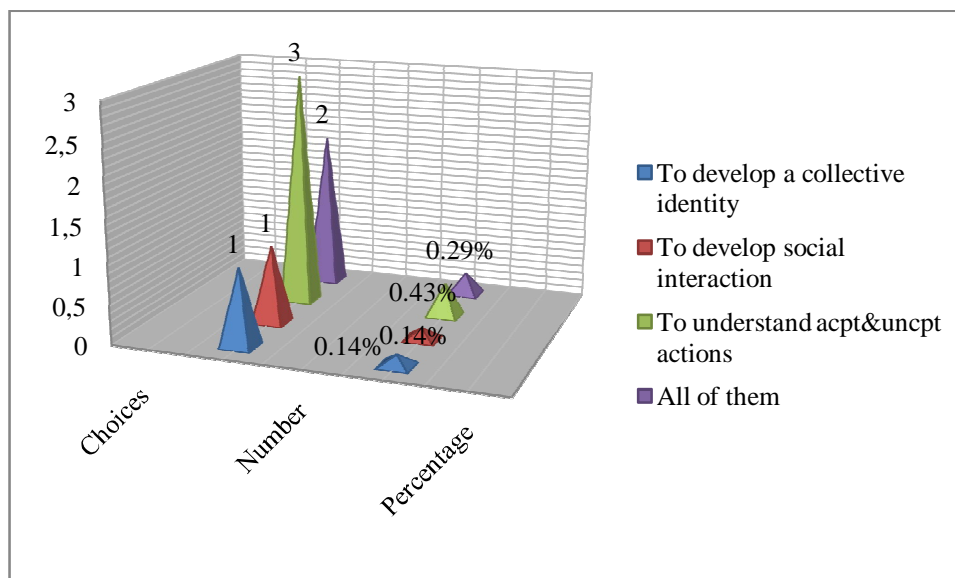
01- To develop a collective identity

02- To develop social interactions

03- To understand which actions are accepted or are unacceptable

Choices	To develop a collective identity	To develop social interaction	To understand acpt&uncpt actions	All of them
Number	01	01	03	02
Percentage	14,28%	14,28%	42,86%	28,58%

**Table 15:** teachers' answers distribution to question 15



**Figure 19:** teachers' answers distribution to question 15

The table above shows that (42,86) of the teachers agree that culture helps EFL students to understand which actions are acceptable and which are not acceptable, other percentage (28,58%) was given to all the choices, (14,28%) answered to develop a collective identity and the same percentage (14,28%) was given to develop social interactions.

**Question 16:** In teaching culture to FLL, do you notice that culture helps them:

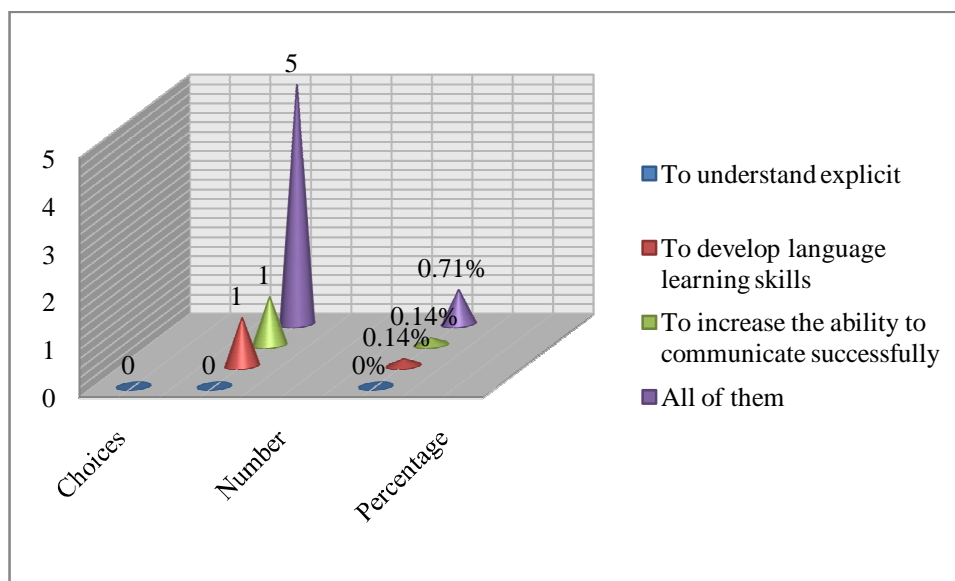
01- To understand explicit meaning

02- To develop language learning skills

03- To increase the ability to communicate successfully

Choices	To understand explicit meaning	To develop language learning skills	To increase the ability to communicate successfully	All of them
Number	00	01	01	05
Percentage	00%	14,28%	14,28%	71,44%

**Table 16:** teachers' answers distribution to question 16



**Figure 20:** teachers' answers distribution to question 16

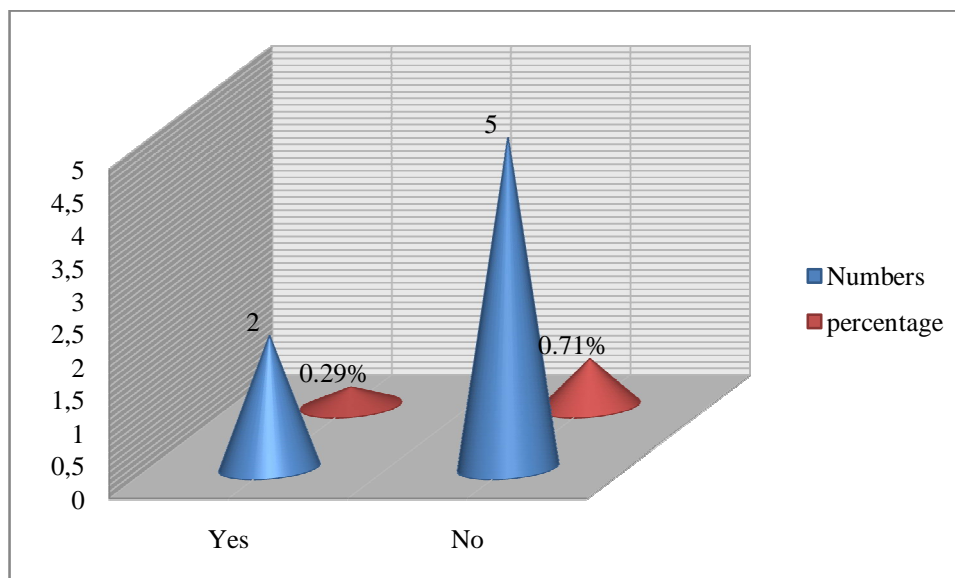
Based on the answers given by the teachers, it is apparent that (71,44%) notice that culture helps EFL learners to understand explicit meaning, to develop language learning skills as well as to increase the ability to communicate successfully. (14, 28%) agree that it aids them to develop language learning skills, also (14, 28%) answered to increase their ability to communicate successfully.

## Part two: concerning the Importance of Culture

**Question 17:** Do you consider that teaching a foreign language without teaching its culture is possible?

Answers	Yes	No
Numbers	02	05
Percentage	28,58%	71,42%

**Table 17:** teachers' answers distribution to question 17



**Figure 21:** teachers' answers distribution to question 17

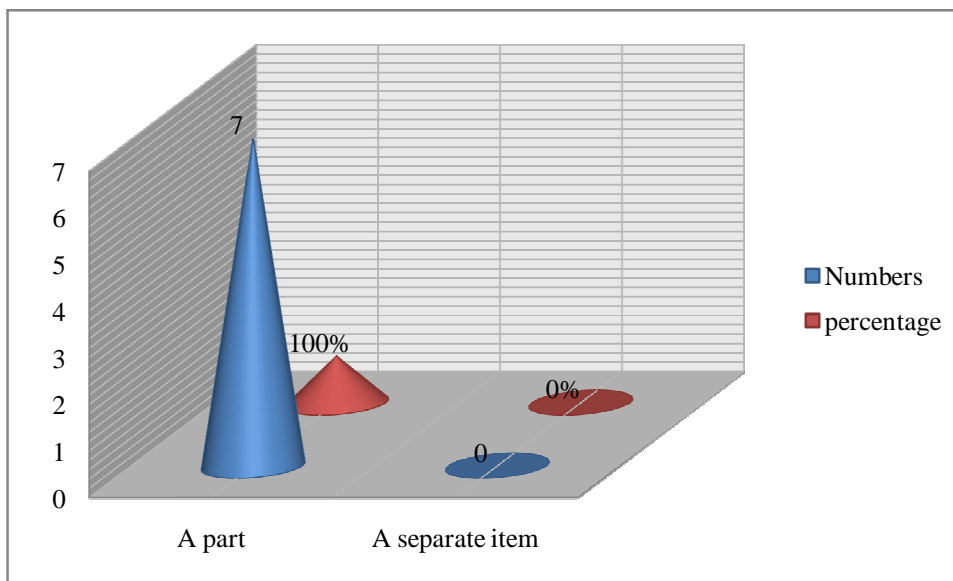
The table (18) shows that the majority of the teachers (71, 42%) disagree that teaching a foreign language without teaching its culture is impossible, while (28, 58%) agree that teaching a foreign language without teaching its culture is possible.



**Question 18:** Do you think that culture is a part of a language separate item?

Answers	A part	A separate item
Numbers	07	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 18:** teachers' answers distribution to question 18



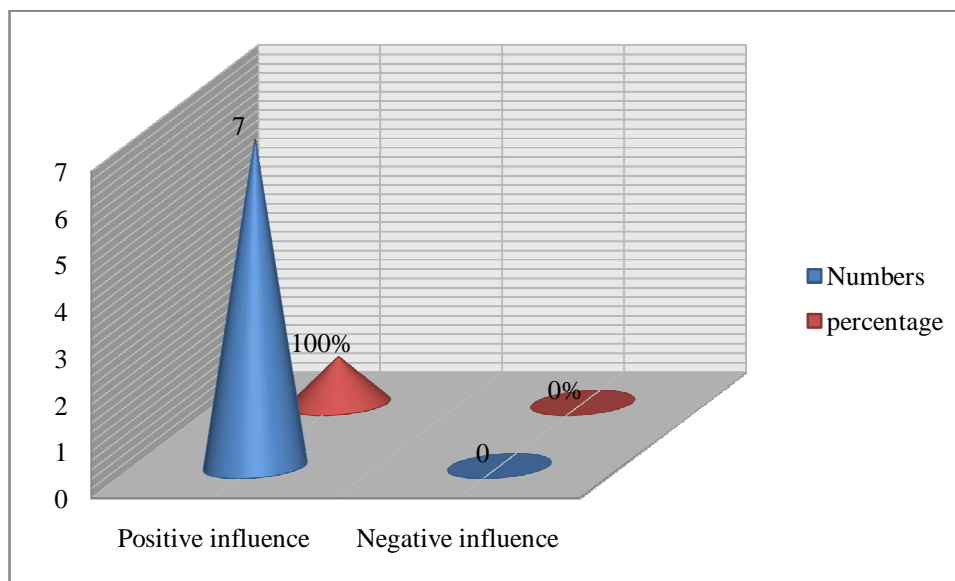
**Figure 22:** teachers' answers distribution to question 18

From the answers the teachers gave us, (100%) they agree that culture is a part of the language and it is not a separate item.

**Question 19:** How does the implementation of culture influence your profession?

Answers	Positive influence	Negative influence
Numbers	07	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 19:** teachers' answers distribution to question19



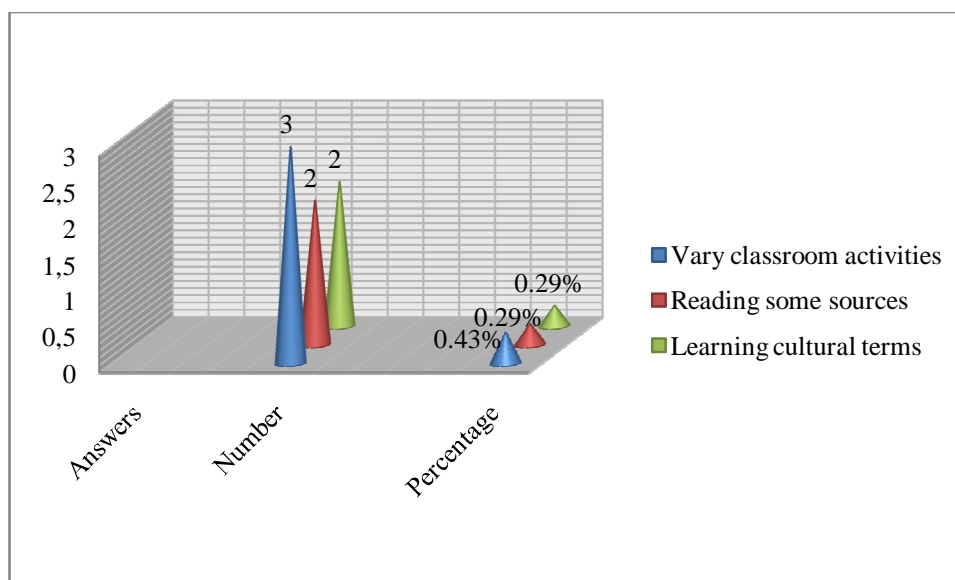
**Figure 23:** teachers' answers distribution to question 19

The 07 teachers (100%) totally agree that the implementation of culture influence positively their profession.

**Question 20:**How do you as a teacher support your learners and motivate them to learn about English culture?

Answers	Vary classroom activities	Reading some sources	Learning cultural terms
Number	03	02	02
Percentage	42,84%	28,58%	28,58%

**Table 20:** teachers' answers distribution to question 20



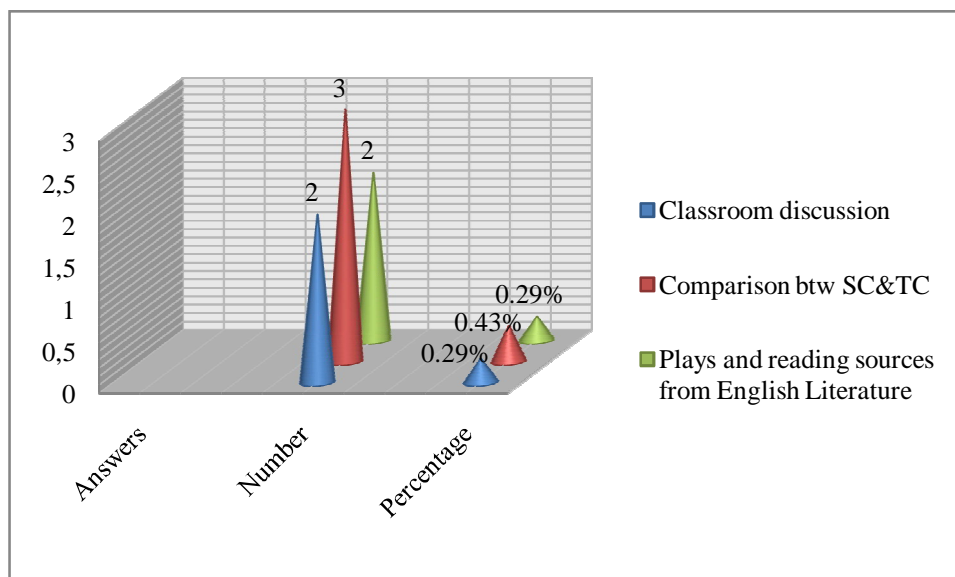
**Figure 24:** teachers' answers distribution to question 20

According to the results shown above, we notice that the teachers use different techniques to motivate learners to learn about the foreign language culture. (43%) of the teachers motivate the students to do some activities, (29%) motivate them to read some sources about the foreign language culture, (29%) also encourage the learners to learn some cultural terms.

**Question 21:** What are some of the ways you use that celebrate success in making students learn the culture of the English language?

Answers	Classroom discussion	Comparison btw SC&TC	Plays and reading sources from English Literature
Number	02	03	02
Percentage	28,58%	42,85%	28,58%

**Table 21:** teachers' answers distribution to question 21



**Figure 25:** teachers' answers distribution to question 21

According to the answers, we deduce that various strategies were suggested to help students to learn the foreign language culture. (42%) of the sample make the students compare between the two cultures, (29%) use classroom discussion, and the other (29%) able students perform plays and read from English Literature.

## ***Interpretation and Discussion of the results***

### ***Interpretation of the Results***

The students' answers 01 and 02 point out the students' background information that helps us to better know the students, also the students' want to speak and learn English.

The answers from 03 to 09 show the students' agreement that knowing about Foreign Language Culture is necessary tool to understand, comprehend and learn a target language. This also demonstrate that the students are interesting in many aspects of the foreign culture, and recognizing the target culture help the students to develop their language learning skills.

The teachers' answers from 01 to 03 indicates the teachers background information that help us to know the teachers' degree as well as their work experience in the field of English. In other words, to know how qualified our teachers are.

The answers from 04 to 07 show the teachers point of view concerning culture and culture teaching. Teachers' choices show their positive attitude towards teaching culture to EFL learners and in what way culture helps them to develop their proficiency in learning.

The answers from 08 to 12 indicates the teachers view about the part that culture has in the process of learning and teaching a foreign culture, and the relationship that exist between language and culture. The answers also show the strategies and the ways the teachers use to encourage students to learn the target language culture.

## ***Discussion of the Results***

Based on the data gathered from the students' Interview, we conclude the following:

The first question, we notice that half of the students (56%) answer that they like to know about the foreign culture because they want to gain more information about other person's culture, their way of life and explore the difference between the source culture and the target culture. (20%) they like to know FC but in other fields. These results indicate the students' desire to learn the foreign culture.

The second question: the majority of the students' answers were that FLC is necessary for comprehension and enhance learners' knowledge about the foreign language and this will help them to develop other skills.

The third question: the whole population (100%) agree that the teaching program is not the only sources to know the foreign culture but there are plenty of sources like doing trips, the internet, YouTube, chatting with native speakers, read books, documents, magazines, stories...This shows that the students do not only wait for teachers to present some facts about the foreign culture but they search for other information that give them data to fill the gap exist between the mother culture and the target culture.

The fourth question: show that the majority of the students (76%) answer the question and said that there are other aspects of FLC that they are interested in. they argued that all the aspects are necessary because they are interrelated. The results indicate that learning a foreign language require understanding as well as knowing all the aspects of the FC that help in understanding the human mind.

The fifth question: (92%) of the population disagree that learning a foreign language without cultural information is complete because each one complete the other. This shows that gaining cultural information help us to understand and learn the foreign culture easily.

The sixth question: all the population (100%) view that culture helps them to develop their language learning skills. They agree that they improve listening and speaking skills through speaking with native speaker. In other hand, it helps them comprehend the language that help them acquire knowledge which allow them to write and this latter help them to speak. This indicates that knowing FLC help learners to improve their learning skills and able them to expresses their selves easily in different contexts.

The seventh question: more than (80%) agreed that culture affects their learning; they mentioned that culture make learning easy and more enjoyable. And give them the desire to learn. We conclude that the students' answers help us to explore that culture is considered as an essential step to learn the target language successfully. It is like the wind that pushes the boat in the sea, it helps them to jump from zero to one.

Based on the teachers' answers and points of view concerning culture and culture teaching, more than half of the test population (71, 42%) disagree that teaching a Foreign Language without teaching its culture is possible because we never disassociate language from its culture, they are clearly related to each other. And teaching a target language without teaching some cultural features/aspects seems like dealing with that foreign language from purely linguistic point of view.

The issue of considering culture is a part or a separate item is an influential one, since all the population (100%) agrees that language is a main and a central part of language and language is the medium to vehicle a lot of cultural aspects. We cannot separate it from language because acquiring any language requires the mastery of all aspects of the language, listening, speaking, reading, writing and operating culturally successfully any situation/conversation with a native speakers or foreigners. In other words, culture is described to be the fifth skill of the language.

All the teachers (100%) strongly agree that the implementation of culture influence their profession. This is because it gives them the chance to know about the target culture, so to respond appropriately to the different social contexts being outside the home country. It provided them with various new cultural dimensions. Simply, culture extends their cultural awareness about the language and also enriches their cultural knowledge that is considered the main feature to successes in communication.

From the answers the teachers gave us, we deduce that the teachers use different methods to support and motivate their learners to learn about English Culture, some teachers motivate their learners to read about English culture, different literary works, historical books, certain sources with different cultural dimensions. These help the students to extend their culture about the English language and became curious and learn more about it. Other teachers vary



classroom activities that help the learners to learn new cultural features and social habits and norms about the English life style.

At last, various ways and strategies were suggested to celebrate success in enabling students learn the culture of the English language. Each teacher mentioned strategies that he/she apply in the classroom. (42,85%) of the students make the students compare between the mother culture and the target culture, this helps them understand what kind of behaviors and attitudes should do in order to manage successfully the conversation. (28, 58%) of the teachers select topics to discuss in the class that help students to discover new facts and information about the English culture. Moreover, (28,58%) make the learners to do some plays and motivate them read extract from the English Literature that is a useful tool to introduce some cultural aspects about the target culture.

## **Conclusion**

The present study disclose that third year EFL students have a big desire to learn the English language. It is also reveals that both the teachers and the learners recognize the important role that culture plays and its essential part to be integrated in the teaching and learning processes. At this point, the role of the teacher is essential to help the learners to overcome the difficulty of learning a foreign language by using suitable and coherent strategies that allow them to enhance and support the learners in reaching their comprehension and effective communication. However, teaching a foreign language without taking into consideration its culture is a useless task. Additionally, cultural aspects should be presented in the foreign learners classes. For that, we have to allow and encourage teachers to use the following strategies to motivate and help their learners to learn a target language easily: vary classroom activities, reading some sources about English Literature, learning cultural items, comparing between source and target culture, making plays as well as classroom discussion.

# *General conclusion*

## Conclusion

Teaching EFL mission is to develop EFL students' ability to comprehend and produce forms of language in order to improve their learning outcomes. For that, the present study emphasis the raising of the learners' awareness of cross-cultural differences between source and target languages. Because, appropriate use of language is connected with cultural values, situations, interlocutors, and other variables as it mentioned earlier, foreign language teachers should be foreign culture teachers, having the ability to experience and analyze both the home and target cultures.

It is obvious that culture and language are interrelated, if one of them separated, the other remains incomplete, it will be meaningless. So, in EFL classes, the students should be taught the foreign language with its culture in order to make the students acquire the target language cultural background as well as have the ability to compare the underlying values and beliefs in students' native culture with the target culture. Therefore, the role of the foreign culture cannot be neglected while deciding to teach the target language to EFL learners. Thus, the teachers should keep in mind that the matter of teaching a foreign culture is very important and that EFL learners must have a prior knowledge about the target language culture.

The present research represents a variety of approaches to teaching and assessing foreign culture. By including such activities in the foreign language curriculum, students will gain an understanding of how to enter into intercultural situations not only in successful communication, but in building meaningful relationships with target language speakers.

The analysis of the teachers' questionnaire and the students' interview confirmed the stated hypothesis and illustrated the role that English Cultural Concepts' play in helping the

EFL students to improve their proficiency in learning English and identified how culture affects the students' ability to learn and comprehend the English language.

Finally, the findings of the study shows that incorporating culture in the curriculum as a fundamental module will improve the students' ability to communicate appropriately in different situations within a foreign community because acquiring and learning of English Culture is not arbitrary but a necessary knowledge. In other words, If teachers want to prepare students for success in interconnected world, intercultural competence must form an integral part of the foreign language curriculum.

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# *Appendices*

## Appendix 1

### *“Students’ interview”*

Many EFL students of Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, face several difficulties on learning English as a foreign language due to different facts, the most popular one is: the little knowledge of the English Cultural Concepts’. This interview is conducted in order to identify the importance of knowing those concepts’.

By answering the below questions, you will help us to clarify how English Culture help students to develop their language learning skills.

#### **Section One: Background Information**

Age:

*Do you like to speak and listen English?*

Yes

No

*If no say why?*

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## Section Two: Concerning Culture

1- Do you like to know about the FL Culture?

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2- Do you feel that the FL Culture is necessary for comprehension?

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3- Is the teaching program the only source to know the FLC?

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4- What aspects of FLC are you interested in?

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5- Do you think that learning a Foreign Language without Cultural Information is complete?

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6- In what way Culture helps you in developing your language learning skills?

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7- How do you think that Culture affects your learning?

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**Thank you for sharing your thoughts**

## Appendix 2

### “Teachers’ questionnaire”

**Dear teacher,**

The following questionnaire is conducted to obtain information about “The Role of English Cultural Concepts’ Comprehension on Learners’ Proficiency on Learning English”. This questionnaire is serves as a data collection tool to identify their importance on developing students’ understanding of the English language. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions.

#### Part One: General Information

1- What is the degree of your qualification?

2- How long have you been teaching English language?

3- Do you teach Culture in your classroom?

#### Part Two: Concerning Culture

4- In teaching culture to EFL students do you consider that culture is:

- Values, Traditions and religion.

- Statistics and Institutions.

- Way of thinking.

5- In teaching culture do you think that culture helps the FLL:

- To clarify the language.

- To incorporate aspects of the language.

- To work together efficiently.



6- In teaching Culture do you agree that Culture aid ELF:

- To develop a collective identity.

- To develop social interactions.

- To understand which actions are acceptable or are unacceptable.

7- In teaching English to FLL do you notice that culture help them :

- To understand explicit meanings.

- To develop language learning skills.

- To increase the ability to communicate successfully.

### **Part Three: The Importance of Culture**

8- Do you consider that teaching a foreign language without teaching its culture is possible?

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9- Do you think that culture is a part of the language, or a separate item?

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10- How does the implementation of culture influence your profession?

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11- How do you as a teacher support your learners and motivate them to learn about the English culture?

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12- What are some of the ways you use that celebrate success in making students learn the culture of the English language?

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**Thank you for your cooperation**

## الملخص الأدبي

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى دراسة أهمية تعلم وتعليم ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. بالتالي، معرفة الثقافة الإنجليزية يساعد متعلمين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بكفاءة. بما أن دراستنا تستند على فرضية واحدة، أنه إذا المتعلمين يعرفون المفاهيم الثقافة الإنجليزية "مستوى تعلمهم سيتحسن، قدمنا استبيان للمعلمين لجمع البيانات عن وجهة نظر المعلمين في ضرورة إدراج ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية في فصولهم الدراسية، وكذلك استراتيجياتهم لتحفيز المتعلمين لتعلمها. أيضا، قمنا بلقاء مع طلاب السنة الثالثة بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة لجمع بيانات حول مواقف الطلاب نحو ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية ومصطلحاتهم في تعلم و تعليم الثقافة الأجنبية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تهدف الدراسة أيضا إلى تعريف الثقافة، وإظهار العلاقة القائمة بين الثقافة واللغة والدور الذي تلعبه في تدريس وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أو كلغة ثانية. أيضا قمنا بتسليط الضوء على كيفية المعلمين أو الطرق التي يستخدمها المعلمون لتعليم الثقافة في صفوف اللغة الانجليزية. ونتيجة لذلك، فإن نتائج هذه الدراسة توضح أن المتعلمين مهتمين و يقيمون تحديا لمعرفة المزيد عن ثقافة الآخرين، فضلا عن دورها في تمكينهم من التواصل بنجاح في سياقات مختلفة، وتظهر أيضا أن تعليم الجانب اللغوي للغة دون المعرفة الثقافية ليس كاملا .

## ***Résumé***

La présente recherche vise à examiner l'importance de l'apprentissage et l'enseignement de la langue culture anglaise dans les classes EFL. Ainsi, la connaissance de la culture anglaise aide les apprenants EFL à apprendre la langue anglaise de manière efficace. Depuis notre étude est basée sur une hypothèse, que si les apprenants connaissent les concepts anglais culturels »leur niveau d'apprentissage permettra d'améliorer, nous avons soumis questionnaire aux enseignants pour recueillir des données sur les enseignants point de vue dans la nécessité d'inclure la culture anglaise dans leurs classes, ainsi que leurs stratégies pour motiver les apprenants à apprendre. En outre, nous avons fait une entrevue avec étudiants de 3ème année d'anglais à l'Université Mohamed Khider de Biskra pour recueillir des données sur les attitudes des élèves à l'égard de la culture de la langue anglaise et leur intérêt pour l'apprentissage de la culture étrangère et l'enseignement. En outre, l'étude vise également à définir la culture, démontrer la relation exister entre la culture et la langue et quel rôle il joue dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de l'anglais comme langue étrangère ou seconde. Nous versons également la lumière sur la façon dont les enseignants ou les moyens les enseignants utilisent pour enseigner la culture en Anglais classes de langue. Par conséquent, les résultats de cette recherche se rendent compte que les apprenants sont intéressés et sont difficiles à apprendre sur les autres de la culture, ainsi que son rôle dans leur permettant de communiquer avec succès dans des contextes différents, il montre aussi que l'enseignement que la partie linguistique de la langue sans connaissance culturelle n'est pas complète.