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Department of English

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Submitted and Defended by:

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**The Role of Cultural Awareness in Developing EFL Learner's Pragmatic  
Competence**

**The Case of First Year Master Students at the Department of English  
University of Biskra**

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***Declaration***

*I, Nabila Hadjam, do hereby declare the work I presented in my dissertation is my own and has not been submitted before in any institution or any university for a degree.*

*This research work was conducted and completed at Biskra University.*

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## Dedication

❖ **All thanks to my family :**

*I want to thank my mother Chafiaa, my father Said, brothers Kaci, amine and my sisters Fairouz Ibtisem and Imane for their support all these years.*

*My aunts and uncles (both sides) their sons and daughters. The favorite uncle I have ever had (Djoudi cheboubi). My nephews (Abdullah Bacha and Younes Bacha).*

*All love and thanks to my second mother **Guenidi Hadjer** for everything*

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is concerned with the role of cultural awareness in developing EFL learners' pragmatics competence. The master one students of the department of English at Mohamed Khider university of Biskra face hurdles during their learning journey. One of the challenges is enhancing pragmatic competence. There is a growing body of research on the importance of pragmatic competence in the target language as well the role of culture in EFL learning. Moreover, the research aims to highlight the significant role of cultural awareness in developing students' pragmatic competence. The sample of this study was purposely selected to suit the research scope assuming the students have already acquired a sufficient linguistic level. In order to investigate this problem, we hypothesize that cultural awareness could improve EFL learner's pragmatic competence and develop their proficiency level as well. To investigate the issue a qualitative approach was adopted to analyse the data gathered. A questionnaire was distributed to 30 students of Master One level. The discussion of the findings indicates that student's culture plays an important role in EFL learning and learners are often aware of this. Pragmatic competence is nearly non-existent for most of them. Students acknowledged that they are not totally adept in pragmatics. Because this is their first interaction with pragmatics, it is a difficult module for them. They also understand the connection between pragmatics and culture. According to learners, mastering the English language needs both pragmatic skill and cultural understanding. Furthermore, they believe that culture can help students improve their pragmatic skills and cross-cultural communication. To conclude the research hypothesis is confirmed. Learning English language is not limited to its grammar rules it goes beyond linguistic aspect to achieve communicative competence. Cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are essential components to realize language proficiency.

**Key Words:** EFL, English learning, culture, cultural awareness, communicative competence,.

## **List of Acronyms**

**EFL:** English as Foreign Language

**SLA:** Second Language Acquisition

**L1:** First Language

**L2:** Second Language

**FL:** Foreign Languages

**TL:** Target Language

**ELLs:** English language learners

**SL:** Science of the Language

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## **Introduction**

Cultural awareness is the recognition of the presence of cultural differences and the importance of each culture in the construction of a diverse society. EFL students want to learn a foreign language for a variety of reasons, depending on the objectives they set for themselves. A learner must reach an appropriate degree of communicative competence in order to acquire any language. On the other hand, pragmatic competence refers to the mastery of both language and social competence during communication.

In each language learning situation, language and culture are inextricably linked. Culture is acquired in two ways: explicitly and implicitly. To study another language, a learner requires more than linguistic proficiency. This suggests that culture plays an important influence in language acquisition. At master one level, EFL students begin taking pragmatic lectures. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the context in which words are spoken and the meaning they convey. The current research looks on the effect of cultural awareness in the development of pragmatic competence in EFL students. To put it another way, the more EFL students grasp the target language culture, the better equipped they are to speak effectively without misconceptions or communication hurdles.

The study is divided into three sections (chapters). The first chapter provides an overview of culture as a concept, its relationship to ELLs, and its implications for language development and communication. We also addressed about communication and communicative competence. The purpose of the chapter is to examine the relationship between language acquisition and culture. It also sheds light on cultural awareness and its critical role in the successful acquisition of a foreign language.

The second chapter is entitled pragmatic competence. The purpose of this section is to uncover the challenges that learners confront when learning a foreign language. It also looks

into the function of cross-cultural pragmatics in achieving pragmatic competence and developing effective communicative skills. In addition, the chapter provides a comprehensive overview of pragmatics as a linguistic discipline. It also concentrates on determining pragmatic competence and its utility. As a result, this study offers information on pragmatic competence and its relationship to L2 instruction with cultural considerations. The third chapter is a field work assessment. The data gathered through distributing questionnaire to students. We used as sample master one level at Mohammed Khider university of Biskra. English department of Biskra has 167 master one students in the branch of SL. We took thirty students as a sample to analyse and assess their answers to the survey.

### **1. Background of the Study**

The acquisition of any language is for the purpose of being used as a mean of communication. In this sense, English Language Learners (ELLs) main objective from learning the language is to use it appropriately. Taking into consideration the context in which the social interaction between interlocutors takes place. English language proficiency involves not only mastering the linguistic aspects (pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary), but it also requires the knowledge of certain aspects and features of the speakers and listeners culture. The knowledge of others' social-cultural aspects may determine what interlocutors say, to whom, how to say it, in addition to where and when to say it. That is to say, a successful intercultural communication between interlocutors encompasses having a good pragmatic competence. The current research investigates the role of cultural awareness in developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence. That is to say, the more EFL students are aware of the target language culture, the more they are able to communicate properly without encountering misunderstandings and communication barriers.

## **2. Statement of the problem**

The importance of cultural awareness in teaching/learning process cannot be neglected in EFL classrooms. It provides a way to improve learners' communicative competence and most importantly their pragmatic competence. When exposed to the native English language, many EFL students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra encounter difficulties to understand it; although they are learning it for a long time. This could be, due to the fact that they are not enough communicatively competent, and more specifically, they are not pragmatically competent.

Pragmatic competence is a fundamental aspect of communicative competence. Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic competence as "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" (p. 96). It means that, effective use of language requires an understanding to the language in context. That is to say learners cannot use or even understand any foreign language unless they are aware of its socio-cultural context, and its native speakers' social and cultural norms.

To become proficient in English language, both teachers and learners should give more importance to the target language culture. Therefore, teaching and/ or learning a new language without the knowledge of its culture remains insufficient and cannot achieve its main objective, which is helping students to be communicatively competent (knowing what to say, to whom, where, when and how to say it appropriately).

The current study aims to spot the light on the important role cultural awareness in enhancing EFL learners' pragmatic competence. It also attempts to detect what EFL students at Mohamed Khider Biskra should take into consideration, in order to be pragmatically competent. This latter may help them recognize breakdowns, overcome misunderstandings, and therefore, to use the language appropriately according to the context in which it occurs.



### **3. Research Questions**

This investigation was carried out to reply to these following questions:

**RQ1:** In what way does cultural awareness be related to pragmatic competence?

**RQ2:** What is the role of pragmatic competence in the students' understanding of the target culture criteria and its impact?

**RQ3:** To what extent the use of the target language culture can help EFL students overcome their pragmatic competence difficulties?

### **4. Research Hypotheses**

To answer the research questions, research hypotheses was suggested which it will work as guide to investigate the problem at hand. We proposed the taking after investigate hypotheses:

**RH: Therefore** it is suggested as hypothesis that if cultural awareness could improve EFL learner's pragmatic competence. Thus, it can develop their proficiency level as well.

### **5. The Research Aims**

The overall aim of this study is to investigate the role of cultural awareness in developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence.

### **6. Significance of the Study**

This study is designed to highlight researchers' perspectives and views about the suggested study, and how they provided unlimited of data sources. Scientists had different views about the significant role of the cultural knowledge in developing the practical abilities of English learners as a foreign language in the field of pragmatics.

## **7. Research Methodology**

### **7.1 The Choice of the Method**

To demonstrate the assumption made in this dissertation, and to accomplish the research aims, a qualitative approach will be adopted using a case study as a research design. To answer research questions, and to test the proposed hypothesis a semi-structured questionnaire for students will be used as data collection tools. The analysis of students' answers will provide the necessary elements in this research.

### **7.2 Population and sampling**

The population of this study will be EFL master students at Biskra University (n=167). As a sample we will choose a group of (35) members randomly. This sample has been chosen, because master one students start taking pragmatics courses in this level with a different other new modules which have relation with the domain of pragmatics such as (sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and mastery of the language). It gives the opportunity to get more information about pragmatics courses and how do students apply and react with it, to know if they are enough culturally aware and what should be added to help them improve their pragmatic competence.

### **7.3 Data Collection tools**

Since we have chosen a qualitative method as a research approach, the students' questionnaire is more appropriate and related to this study. Students' attitudes and views about culture and pragmatic competence will provide the study with realized evidences.

## **8. A Provisional Structure of the Dissertation**

This research will be divided into two main parts: the theoretical part and the fieldwork. The former include two chapters, which for studying the two variables. The first chapter focuses on culture, its definition, characteristics, components, relationship between

culture and language, in addition to awareness, and cultural awareness and its importance to EFL learners. The second chapter; however, will focus on the second variable, which is EFL learners' pragmatic competence. The latter part will cover the description, the analysis and the discussion of the main findings of the data accumulated from the students' questionnaire, teachers' interview.

# **Chapter One: Cultural Awareness**

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## **Introduction**

Language and culture are essential elements in any communication process. This suggests that one cannot be present without the other because language reflects other people's culture. The interaction process varies depending on the context and the language at present. This means that the way people interact and communicate in a given language reflects what they value, believe, and do.

Culture is a complicated term when it comes to its definition. It is said to be the pursuit of knowledge in all fields of life. Moreover, it is seeking perfection to reach intellectual conscience and reason. There is no consensus for the definition of culture; therefore, some scholars define culture as shared beliefs, thoughts, and values that characterize a national or ethnic group from another. Language is a system of communication. It is composed of verbal, written symbols which allow human beings to express themselves and their feelings. The correlation between Language and culture makes the acquisition of any language rooted in the knowledge of a certain culture.

EFL learners require reasonable knowledge and proficiency to acquire a foreign language. Cultural competence for EFL learners holds importance to second language acquisition and application. Cultural awareness means knowing and embracing cultural differences such as ideas and attitudes. The communication process relies on the foundation of cultural awareness, which refers to the important role of cultural awareness for EFL learners. This chapter tackles culture as a definition, its characteristics, its components, the relationship between culture and language, in addition to awareness, and cultural awareness and its importance to EFL learners. This chapter presents clear insights into cultural awareness and its fundamental role in the successful acquisition of language learning.

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## 1.1 Definition of culture

Culture determines the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the music we listen to, the games we play, the way we talk...etc. Culture, as a word, is originated from a French word, which, in turn, is rooted in the Latin word “colere”. It means tending to the earth and growth or nurturing and cultivating. Culture is an environment created by men who cultivate their way of life through time. The latter can be defined as people’s way of life, which developed through their thoughts, behaviours, and interactions with others in society. Culture represents a social heritage from ancestors through generations, such as traditions, norms, and values. (Final, n.d.)

Academics define culture as a network of knowledge made up of thoughts, feelings, and habitual contact with people. Furthermore, it represents claims and views of the world. Hence, culture as knowledge of tradition is the representation of a unique mutual sentiment and the views of interconnected individuals. Culture differs from one group of individuals to another because of the demarcation of human beings by race, ethnicity, nationality, and social constructions as a whole. (S. Wyer, Chiu & Hong, 2016)

Researchers like Robert Bierstedt, Edward B. Tylor, and Malinowski agreed that culture is a result of man-made knowledge, morals, and customs. And that it is the complex of the whole. Culture includes habits, capacities, art, and literature achieved by an individual as a member of society. As a result, culture can be defined as the shared religious utterances, knowledge, and behaviours inherited and passed down from generation to generation. Culture is at the heart of civilization, and no society can exist without it. The major distinction between humans and animals is culture, and it is a heritage that is passed down through generations. It encompasses every aspect of people's expression and behaviour. A group's culture encompasses their entire way of life (Khatoon, n.d.)

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## **1.2 Components of culture:**

The interactions and customs of a community define its culture. Each society has its own particular culture, and each consists of three different aspects or components. The first aspect is the cognitive component, which signifies the correlation between an individual, and his knowledge about the universe's creation and existence. The cognitive element is quite different when comparing primitive and advanced societies. Primitive society is built upon beliefs in gods and superstitions, while the advanced one is constructed on the application of scientific experiments. The second material feature denotes all physical things humans use and the degree of their value. In other words, it is related to technological developments, and that is perceived through hand-made elements such as artefacts, furniture, and different types of housing. The third normative component is formulated from people's values and norms. These values and principles serve as guidelines for society's behaviour. Values are common norms that define what is acceptable, desirable, and unpleasant. ("Culture: Definition, Functions, Characteristics, Elements of Culture", n.d.)

## **1.3 Characteristics of culture**

Culture can be described as everything inside a civilization that is passed down through tradition rather than physiologically through our DNA. Consequently, culture includes intellectual, artistic, scientific, religious, and philosophical cultures. It also includes material culture, architecture, eating habits, and inventions, which are a part of a culture as family structures, norms, regulations, laws, and political systems. Therefore, describing a culture or comparing it to another should consider these factors. (Horn, n.d.) Sociologists and anthropologists could not reach a consensus over the definition of culture. However, they all agreed that culture has some significant characteristics.

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### **1.3.1 Culture is learned**

Humans do not inherit any socio-cultural characteristics from their parents. To illustrate, cultural acquisition is learned through the association of others. Individuals have innate needs like food, sleep, desire...etc. The way people fulfil those biological needs differs cross-culturally. ("Culture: Definition, Functions, Characteristics, Elements of Culture", n.d.). Culture is a unique feature for humans. It is acquired from the society in which we were brought up. Culture is learned from one generation to another through the enculturation process. Thus, it is neither a genetically inherited behaviour nor an instinctive one. Enculturation is a process of learning culture to become a member of that society's culture. That refers to obtaining knowledge about all aspects of culture ("Culture: concepts and characteristics", n.d.).

### **1.3.2 Culture is transmitted intergenerational**

Mitchell B. Whitaker defines cultural transmission as the transmission of thoughts, beliefs, and norms through social interaction between and within generations. Cultural transmission takes place when elements of culture are passed down through time (Mitchell, 2016). The intergenerational transmission of culture denotes how values, knowledge, and practices prevail from one generation to be transferred to the other. Therefore, cultural transmission is the process of reproduction of culture in each successive generation (Gisela, 2009). The exchange of goods or services between generations is called intergenerational transmission. Effective intergenerational transmission of culture happens through social learning and the interchangeable transmission of thoughts and perspectives. Through parental influence, culture can be both learned and shared. It means that the growth of a family leads to the introduction of traditional practices. Thus, the newly acquired customs become routines practiced by the new generation



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### **1.3.3 Culture is symbolic**

Culture as a complex concept is characterized by having a symbolic nature. It is mainly shared and passed throughout the use of a set of symbols and meanings. The symbolic nature of culture allows teaching and learning human communication. A culture is a form of communication that uses symbols. The skills, expertise, attitudes, ideals, and motives of a group are some of its symbols. In a civilization, symbol meanings are learned, and actively perpetuated through its institutions. Culture is in continuous evolvement through time. It is symbolically coded and passed down throughout eras ("Symbolic Nature of culture", 2021).

### **1.3.4 Culture is Dynamic**

Social communication allows people to form a relationship with individuals from different backgrounds. The latter facilitates cultural interaction and change. The contact between cultures aids the process of exchanging ideas and symbols. This gives culture a dynamic quality that helps the integration of cultures and transformation. The dynamic nature of culture gives the changing factor many benefits. The essential one is adapting to the alterations that environments face with time ("Culture: Definition, Functions, Characteristics, Elements of Culture", n.d.).

### **1.3.5 Culture is integrated**

Integration refers to the process of unifying or blending into a whole; integrated culture means that all components of culture are interlinked. To illustrate, cultural integration is the ability of individuals to acquire more than one culture. Cultural integration denotes the adaptation of another culture's essence while maintaining the native culture intact. It can be said that cultural integration represents a kind of cultural exchange (Cultural Integration: Definition & Examples).

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### **1.4 The relationship between Culture and Language**

Language is a native and extrinsic system of unpredictable sound symbols formed deliberately, according to Edward Sapir. On the other hand, Wardhaugh (2002) defines language as the understanding of norms and principles. He also defines it as the process of saying or doing things through the use of sounds, utterances, and phrases. That is to say, language covers not only knowledge, but also the ability to use said knowledge to interact/communicate specific aspects. (ELMES, 2013) Culture represents the general background about society's practices like works of arts, literature, norms, attitudes, and artefacts...etc. It explains the knowledge about society's way of life (Language, culture, and learning, n.d.). Learning a foreign language necessitates a substantial quantity of cultural and linguistic information. The latter establishes an insurmountable link between a society's culture and its language. A fundamental key to learn any language is to understand the link between language and culture. Furthermore, there is a fine line between language and culture because learning a foreign language entails becoming familiar with its culture as well. Claire Krumsch states that, "the people express facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. In other words, language expresses cultural reality". Language is used by society to communicate, and the way it is used reveals cultural identity and distinguishes societies from each other (Kramsch, 2000).

### **1.5 The Integration of Culture into Language Learning**

Language, arts, habits, religion, and social habits are all part of any culture. Adapting the behaviours and beliefs of another culture is referred to as cultural integration. It can be said that cultural integration is a form of cultural exchange. An individual accepts the norms and principles of another group without disregarding his own culture (Muller, 2021). Culture and language are frequently regarded as interwoven, and their relationship is intricate. Language encompasses more than just words, grammatical principles, and sentence structure;

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it also encompasses cultural standards, social institutions, and cognitive processes. Understanding these culturally distinct circumstances, as well as a culture's linguistic principles, is essential for effective language acquisition. Learning a foreign language entails learning about the attitudes and beliefs of a foreign society (Williams, 2019).

When learning a language, having a complete understanding of the vocabulary and grammar rules is insufficient. Knowing how to say "Nescafe" and "cake" in French, for example, does not automatically qualify you to place an order in a Parisian coffee shop. This shows that understanding language rules isn't enough to start a conversation between people from various cultures. To put it another way, cultural acquisition creates a context in which meaningful expressions can be made ("Is Understanding Culture Essential to Learning a Language?" 2017).

The incorporation of culture in language learning is the procedure of incorporating cultural aspects into the language acquisition process. According to Mourad Touati Foreign language study broadens one's linguistic horizons via influencing language comparisons. It also provides frames into another culture, implying that it is concerned with the human social experience. Involving culture in language learning could erase learner's communicative pragmatic issues; moreover, it provides clear view to the target language speaker's views and values. Finally cultural integration in language learning may aid into developing critical thinking and understanding to historical and social situations (Touati, 2016).

### **1.6 The importance of Culture in EFL Learning and Teaching**

Culture has significant role in EFL learning process. There are different prospects that treated the importance of culture in language acquirement. A communicative side sees that including culture in the process of learning language aids the development of discussions skills in any given context. Another one, views the more student is acquainted with the target language's culture the better it increases the academic value of the language. This shows that

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the learner begins to appreciate the language they are learning as they become familiar with its culture. Under the competency-based approach, a thorough understanding of the complexity of the meaning of a language requires knowledge of the language culture. From this point of view, cultural knowledge presupposes a level of competence necessary to grasp the authentic sense of a language (Hoang-Thu, 2010). Roh (2001) expressed the idea that, the ultimate goal of foreign language instruction should be to educate students how to understand both language and culture. Thus, learning a language automatically points to the study of its culture.

### **1.7 Culture and communication**

Communication is, in general, interplay in a social setting. A transmitter (source) and a receiver are frequently involved in communication. It entails the exchange of signals between the interlocutors. These messages could be expressed verbally or visually, and they could be expressionistic or pictorial (photographed). Communication entails the use of visual symbols, body movement, and vocal sounds. There is always a process in which someone originates a meaning purpose that is passed to the interlocutor, no matter how it is done (receiver) (Fatimayin, 2018). Communication has multiple forms, intercultural and interpersonal communication. Intercultural communications portray the link between the individual and the culture. Intercultural communication is the study of the effects of different cultures associating with one another on communication behaviour ("Defining intercultural communication", n.d.). As a result, one perspective on intercultural communication is transmission of information in symbolic intercultural spaces (Arasaratnam, 2013). Interpersonal contact is defined as the spoken or nonverbal exchange of information, notions, and feelings between two or more individuals. It frequently includes face-to-face communication using sound, facial expressions, feelings, body language, and gestures. The success of transmitting messages to others is used to assess one's interpersonal

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communication skills ("Interpersonal Communication: Definition, Importance and Must-Have Skills", n.d.).

Contact among human beings is a means of formulating social relationships. Individuals interact with each other by exchanging ideas, opinions, beliefs and traditions using language. This demonstrates that human interaction is a communication process whereby cultural characteristics are exchanged ("Culture and Communication"). The connection between communication and culture is private and unfamiliar. First, cultures are formed by contact; that is, communication is the way through which cultural characters are created and communicated, whether they are conventions, roles, rules, rituals, laws, or other patterns. Even though the intention behind individual's interaction with others is not to create culture, the latter is born due to said interaction. That is to say, cultures are the "residue" of that communication. Culture and communication, in all of its manifestations, are intricately intertwined and interrelated. It is observable how communication allows culture to spread and be repeated. Through the recurrent engagement and interchange permitted by the communications process, both communications and the media promote a culture's values and schemas ("Culture and Communication").

### **1.8 The importance of culture in communication**

Mutually communication and culture have an impact on one another. Culture has an impact on how individuals communicate with one another. Furthermore, communication can alter the receiver's and transmitter's perceptions of culture. Culture gives the tools that teach people how to behave in various situations and how to understand the actions of others. As a result, communication is regarded as an essential component of culture. Individual communication styles change in parallel with societal advancements and changes (Giri, 2006). Culture plays a major role in communication. As an individual works and socializes, he conveys information to others and interprets what is conveyed to him. Culture's characteristics

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influence these communications, so learning about these features can help to identify issues, address them, and become better at communication. ("The Effect of Culture in Communication – Glassdoor Career Guides", 2021)

Culture has an impact on the communication process. Misunderstandings and tensions might arise from cultural differences among people involved in the transmission process. Culture is typically described in simplistic terms as the way of life of people in society. Culture differs from one group to the next, and these differences may impact the level of trust and openness with which people from different cultures may converse. As a result, cultural differences must be recognized to promote effective communication (Monippally, 2001). The communication process between people from various cultures necessitates a significant amount of creative background knowledge on both sides. Consequently, culture plays a significant role in the communication process. Recognizing cultural differences helps to avoid miscommunications and misunderstandings ("Impact of Culture on Communication - 1153 Words | Essay Example", 2019).

### **1.9 Intercultural communication**

The verbal and nonverbal contact between people of diverse cultural origins is known as intercultural communication. 'Inter-' is a prefix that signifies 'between' and refers to cultural differences. Intercultural communication is communication between cultures; therefore, it comes from a cultural perspective. This term, sometimes, represents a single person attempting to communicate in a foreign environment. But, it is more commonly used to depict a two-way street in which people from both cultures attempt to enhance their communication. Intercultural communication is an exchange of symbols between speakers. It seeks to create mutual meanings in a given context. Code exchanges deduce the intentions of each message and form cultural interpretations ("Defining intercultural communication", n.d).

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Communication, according to Hall (1981), is culture, and culture is communication. He also points out that communication debates often lead to cultural references and vice versa. According to Jandt (1995), Culture is the social and artistic heritage of each society. Communication allows people to learn and share information about society's culture. Comprehension of communication and how culture influences the interaction process are essential for understanding how people from various backgrounds relate to their thoughts and opinions (P. Chamberlain, L. Guerra & B. Garcia, 1999). Inter-Cultural Communication examines how cultural symbols, values, and behaviours differ between cultures during cross-cultural interactions. Intercultural communication can be defined as the processes by which meanings and messages are shared and understood across cultures.

### **1.10 Characteristics of intercultural communication**

The figurative exchange between two different cultural communities is referred to as intercultural communication. It is an attempt to talk about shared meanings in a collaborative setting. The intercultural communication characteristics include the following concepts: symbolic exchange, process, and different cultural communities, negotiate shared meanings, an interactive situation, and an embedded societal system. The symbolic exchange is spoken or visual signs used during interaction. The employment of verbal and nonverbal symbols by a minimum of two people to achieve common meanings is referred to as symbolic interaction. Because of its interrelated nature, intercultural communication is defined as a process of an intercultural encounter. Different cultural communities are the third attribute, which is defined as a wide term. A cultural community is a collection of individuals who interact inside a certain unit and sustain a set of common traditions and lifestyles.

The general purpose of any intercultural communication interaction is to negotiate shared meanings. The first degree of concern in intercultural commercial negotiations or intercultural romantic relationships is that we want our messages to be comprehended. As the

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interpretation of the meaning and its intention overlap during communication, a great level of shared meanings is often established. According to the concept of interactive situation, every communicative transmission takes place in a relational, psychological, and a physical context. Interactive situation expresses the different contexts in which conversations take place. History, politics, economics, social class, formal institutions, and policies, as well as community or organizational environments, all impact the process and outcome of actual intercultural communication encounters. Hence, it makes communication a societal embedded system (Ting-Toomey & C. Chung, 2012).

### **1.11 Barriers and difficulties of intercultural communication**

Communication is an essential element in any society. People convey feelings, thoughts, and messages through interacting with others. Intercultural communication represents an interchange between people from different cultural backgrounds. It is a continuous activity in which the outcome will always be different due to many factors such as individual cultural origins, situational conditions, and settings (Seeger & Gustafsson, 2021). The contact between people from diverse cultural social groups may lead to miscommunications and misunderstandings. The latter could lead to quarrels and problems between interlocutors. The confusion and awkwardness may occur during an encounter between people with distinct backgrounds. As a result, effective intercultural communications faces barriers and challenges. Scholars recognize four major barriers that make intercultural communication less effective: Ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudice, and discrimination.

#### **1.11.1 Ethnocentrism**

Ethnocentrism is the view that the behaviours, conventions, methods of thinking, and ways of being of one's cultural group are superior to those of other cultural groups. It means that individuals' tendency to evaluate other social groups' traditions and thoughts based on their cultural standards and customs. Thus, preconceived ideas obstruct fair evaluation of



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other distinct cultures (Seeger & Gustafsson, 2021). Ethnocentrism is dedication taken to its extreme. It denotes the inability to believe that another culture's behaviours, customs, methods of thinking, and ways of being are as good or worthy as one's own. Ethnocentrism becomes a barrier when it prohibits a person from even attempting to understand another's point of view, whilst it thwarts all attempts at empathy it becomes a barrier to intercultural communication (H., 2017).

### **1.11.2 Stereotyping and prejudice**

Stereotypes are erroneous or misrepresentative perceptions of another race, ethnic group, or culture. Stereotypes represent a commonly held. Yet, it is a simplistic and set image or idea of a specific sort of person or thing. They are just means of categorizing and generalizing from the massive amounts of data we receive regularly (H., 2017). People resort to stereotyping to eliminate uncertainties and make sense of the world's views (Seeger & Gustafsson, 2021). According to Macmillan dictionary prejudice is an irrational belief or feeling, especially a dislike for a certain group of individuals (Prejudice (noun) definition and synonyms: Macmillan Dictionary). Prejudice is a predetermined judgment or opinion held by members of a particular group that is not founded on personal experience. Prejudice can be positive or negative, depending on whether one feels positively or negatively about a person. Prejudice and stereotypes present an obstacle to the communication process. Stereotyping and prejudice are a set of issues that are difficult to solve because they exist at a subconscious level (Seeger & Gustafsson, 2021). These problems stem from our tendency to classify people into in-groups or out-groups. Prejudice and stereotypes create communication hurdles. Preconceived notions and generalizations lead to subjective judgments of people's actions, attitudes, beliefs, and conventions. Effective intercultural communication becomes practically impossible as a result (Jayaswal, 2009).

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### **1.11.3 Discrimination**

Discrimination is an unjust treatment based on a person's religion, race, or other personal characteristics. Discrimination is defined as the overt actions of excluding, avoiding or separating oneself from other groups. Discrimination takes stereotypes and prejudices a step further by putting them into practice, whether overtly or covertly (H., 2017). Biases and manifestations of discrimination are frequently motivated by a strong affinity for and devotion to our own culture rather than blatant antagonism toward another group. Consequently, the construction of our cultural identity can occasionally result in resentment, hatred, and discrimination directed against people who are not part of that culture. Cross-cultural contact between the different cultural entities becomes impossible due to discrimination (Unit 3 Barriers in Intercultural Communication, n.d.). To conclude, stereotyping, prejudice discrimination, and ethnocentrism are great influences on the process of intercultural communication. They are barriers and challenges that make harmony and understanding between distinct people from different cultural backgrounds poor and ineffective.

### **1.12 Cultural awareness**

Cultural awareness is the knowledge about the existence of differences between cultural groups whether tradition, religion, thoughts, or behaviours. Cultural awareness is the acknowledgment that our own culture varies from person to person and group to group, as well as from our target language. Understanding people's cultures allow us to communicate with them more successfully, going beyond words and syntax ("Importance of Cultural Awareness in the Workplace: How to Become More Culturally Aware | Easy Llama", n.d.).

Cultural awareness is a significant part of learning English as a foreign language. Cultural awareness, according to el hussari, is a process in which students are allowed to create their common world of interaction and experience by learning the meaning of a text in a specific context of foreign language acquisition (Romania), 2017). Cultural awareness,

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according to Tomlinson (2001), entails a gradually emerging internal intellect of cultural equality, a greater perception of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures link and differ (cited in Maria & Vassiliki, 2015)

### **1.13 The role of cultural awareness in EFL Learning**

Learning a foreign language in general and English, in particular, involves a solid understanding of its grammar principles and how to apply them. It also requires an understanding of certain aspects and traits of its culture. Language, on the other hand, is regarded social and cultural phenomenon since its use is linked to social and cultural values in general. Every culture has its own set of cultural standards for discourse, which differ from one culture to the next (Tzotzou & Kotsiou, 2015). Research on cultural awareness concluded that language and culture are interrelated. Hence learning the English language automatically denotes the acquisition of its culture as well.

English foreign language students need a degree of familiarization with the language's culture for several purposes. First, culture aids in the improvement of communicative skills amongst learners. The more students are familiar with the culture, the easier they adapt to the English language's communication methods. Second, it assists in comprehending linguistic and behavioural patterns for the target language at a more conscious level. Moreover, culture helps improve intercultural and international understanding. Culture awareness works as a mechanism that makes interlocutors or learners aware of their potential errors. Mistakes might appear in comprehension, interpretation, translation, and communication. A cultural awareness acquisition imparts a flavour to the English language and opens wider perceptions of reality (Romania, 2017).

#### **1.14 The Relationship between Cultural awareness and Pragmatics**

Pragmatics is a field of linguistics that focuses on language use in societal settings and the manner in which individuals create and obtain meaning through language (Kada, 2017). Pragmatics is a part of linguistics associated with what a speaker suggests and what a listener infers from factors such as the situational context, the people's mental states, prior interaction, and other considerations ("Pragmatics in Linguistics: Definition and Examples", 2022). Additionally, language mastery requires a level of cultural awareness. Culture acquisition promotes respect for diversity and intercultural communication knowledge and facilitates knowledge acquisition of the target language's culture. Studying culture denotes the process of imparting cultural information. The grasp of cultural aspects of language is called cultural awareness. The latter aids at the foundation of pragmatic competence since learning about culture cultivate pragmatic competence in foreign language learning. Pragmatics as a branch of linguistics studies language in context. Pragmatic competence is described as the ability to recognize the context and properly comprehend other people's speech within that context (Bing, 2019).

The study of language in context is referred to as "pragmatics." Furthermore, its primary goal is to investigate how a speech develops meaning as a part of the social and situational context in which it is placed. One of the numerous problems of pragmatics is that language expertise alone, such as grammar and vocabulary, is insufficient for intercultural interaction. Instead, the field contends that the meaning of a speech is dependent on the context in which it happens and cannot always be read literally. Accordingly, a speaker from a different cultural background must not only be fluent in the target language but also have the required socio-pragmatic knowledge to infer the meaning (Stadler, 2018).

Finally, pragmatics as a field relates language learning with cultural knowledge of the target language at hand. The communication process takes place between different individuals

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from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Miscommunications may take place if the meaning of the message is not interpreted accordingly to the intent of the sender. Pragmatics, as a result, creates a bridge that helps the process of conveying the message correctly in a given context. In addition, it provides consideration to the cultural aspect of members of society. Cultural awareness and pragmatics are weapons that enforce the effective process of sending and receiving messages between two or more people.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter at hand provided insight into the culture, cultural awareness, pragmatics, and communication. It defined culture as shared beliefs, customs, values, and thoughts in certain social groups. Culture is the main characteristic that distinguishes between communities or tribes. Human beings tend to embrace what is familiar and develop prejudice to foreign elements such as other cultures. Communication is a significant tool to send or receive messages, whether spoken or conveyed through body language. Awkwardness and misinterpretations may take place if the meaning of the message is diverted from its original intent. The knowledge about other social groups' cultures is a beneficial element to develop communicative competence during conversations with strangers.

Pragmatics focuses on the language in context and insists on the differences between interlocutors from a cultural point of view. It establishes a link between language and culture since the acquisition of language encompasses the study of culture as well. Cultural awareness and pragmatics are fundamental means to healthy and effective intercultural communication. EFL learners cannot study language as a system of rules and grammar. Mastery of language is not sufficient enough to formulate relations or correlations from people with distinguished cultural roots. Learning a foreign language requires an understanding of the target language's

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cultural components. Thus, cultural awareness is a necessary factor in intercultural communication.

## **Chapter Two: Pragmatic competence**

## **Chapter Two: Pragmatic competence**

### **Introduction**

The study of language and how it is used is known as pragmatics. Pragmatics is concerned with how factors such as physical and social circumstances influence the use of language and its components. Pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that encompasses a wide range of concepts and characteristics. Cognitive pragmatics, intercultural pragmatics, speech acts, sociolinguistics, and pragmatic ability make up the latter. The study of suggested and inferred meanings is the focus of pragmatics. Pragmatics is interested with the textual and contextual meanings of language in a particular cultural setting.

Foreign languages acquisition requires pragmatic competence and cultural awareness. Students face difficulties with the second language learning. These difficulties may be the result of lack of pragmatic competence or the full knowledge about the language rules and principals. The chapter at hand seeks to discover the obstacles learners face with foreign language learning. In addition, it investigates the cross-cultural pragmatics role in achieving pragmatic competence and realizing successful communicative skills. Furthermore, the chapter will provide general overview on pragmatics as discipline in linguistics. Moreover, it will focus on discovering the pragmatic competence and its utility. Consequently, this research will provide data about pragmatic competence and its relation with learning languages with the inclusion of culture.



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## 2.1 Definition of pragmatics and its development

Human beings form relationships through the communication process. Communication is a tool that helps conveying messages between speakers. The major characteristic of any communication is that the utterances of interlocutors go beyond the literal meaning. Philosophy and linguistic theories focused on capturing aspects of communicated meaning whether linguistically encoded messages (semantic) or contextually derived ones (pragmatic). From Anna papafragou journal article under the title “pragmatic development” it is viewed that pragmatics is the acknowledgment of intent. Pragmatics is a type of intention recognition that entails inferentially recreating the meaning that the speaker had in mind. In addition to the fact it goes further than the literal meaning of a statement (Papafragou, 2018).

Pragmatics is the study of natural language’s use in communication. That is to say, pragmatics denotes the analysis of the correlation between languages and their users in philosophy and linguistics. The study of how rules that pertain to the physical or social context (broadly understood) in which language is employed determine both technical and non literal components of communicated linguistic meaning is known as pragmatics (Duignan, n.d.).

Pragmatic as an area of linguistics seeks to put meaning in context. It is the study of utterance choices made while using language, reasons behind those choices and their effects as well (Crystal, 2014). “Pragmaticus” in Latin “pragmaticos” in Greek are words imply the meaning “pragmatical” since they have roots in the ancient Greek and Roman scholastic works. These scholars started pragmatic discussions which led to the conclusion that pragmatics originates from philosophy of the language. Linguistic philosophy focused its study on language symbols (semiology) until the 1930’s when the term “pragmatics”

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surfaced. Early pragmatics represented a branch of semiology under philosophers' studies. Thus, pragmatics as a field of linguistics has its origins in philosophy (Unubi, 2016).

Pragmatics goes back to philosophical thoughts of the early 19th century and was brought in by the American philosopher Charles W. Morris (1901-1979) as one of the three aspects of semiotic. Charles Morris (1938), a philosopher interested in the science of signals or "semiotics," is credited with the founding of modern pragmatics. Semiotics, according to Morris, consists of three (3) broad branches: (a) syntax, which is the prescribed link between signs; (b) semantics, which is the proper association between signs and the objects to which they refer; and (c) pragmatics, which is the formal relationship between signs and the interpreter, which is the language user (Unubi, 2016)..

The term pragmatics was coined by Charles Morris (1938) to refer to the study of signs in relation to the objects they are applied to. Morris distinguished three distinct branches of inquiry: syntactic, semiotic and sign-oriented pragmatism. The study of formal relations of signs to one another is an early form of sign analysis. Moreover, Morris contribution to the field of linguistics was seen through the study of signs' origin of use, this helped the growth of pragmatics from 1930 to 1946 as subfield of linguistic. During the 1970's pragmatics developed and became a branch of linguistics (Bint Abdulghani & Abubakar Abdullahi, 2021).

### **2.2 Function of pragmatics in English language learning**

Pragmatics studies in EFL classes aids students to explore the correlation between the uses of language in context appropriately. That is to say, matching utterances with the environment in which communication takes place. The purpose of pragmatics instruction is to help students become acquainted with the spectrum of pragmatic devices. In addition to analysing practices available in the target language. It rather study language features than to insist on adherence to a certain target-language standard. Learners can keep their cultural

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identities and participate more completely in target language communication. In addition, it assists at gaining a greater control over both the intended force and the outcome of their contributions with this type of education. Manuals should put emphasis to students that language is not composed only with grammatical and lexical aspects, but also it reflects context by which situational and social factors are respected in communication. To summarize, pragmatics is a weapon used to study foreign language from its different aspects and constituents (Deda, 2013).

### **2.3 Communicative Competence**

Communicative competence is the capacity to communicate successfully ideas, perspectives, feelings and situations between speakers. Communicative competence refers to the skill in speech use, or to engage in a culturally acceptable manner. Communicative competence helps to make sense and complete social tasks with efficacy and fluency through lengthy interactions. In English language learning, communicative competence denotes the aptitude to display socio-cultural components of cultural correctness (Lynn, 2015). A learner's capability to communicate effectively through language is referred to as communicative competence. It was defined by Canale and Swain (1980) as composing ability in four areas: The rules and the words, Appropriateness, cohesion and coherence, and the use of communication tactics ("Communicative competence", n.d).

### **2.4 Models of communication**

So far, many models of communicative competence were developed. In our study we will deal with: Canale and Swain's model, Bach man's model, and Celce\_Murcia et al model.

#### **2.4.1 Canale and Swain's model**

Michael Canale and Merrill Swain (1980) developed a model of communicative competence to further clarify the notion: Grammatical competence, sociolinguistic

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competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The linguistic system includes **grammatical competence** refers to a person's understanding of grammar principles, such as the construction of words and sentences. Furthermore, it identifies the literal meaning of vocabulary (semantics) and sound production (phonology). **Discourse competence** (generating larger bodies of texts with respect to cohesiveness and coherence). Functional dimensions, on the other hand, include **strategic competence** (communication methods for dealing with interactional breakdowns and learning strategies) and **sociolinguistic competence** (socio-cultural rules that define acceptability) (Sarimsakova, 2020).

### 2.4.2 Bachman's model

Bachman (1999) put out an enormously influential model of communicative language skill. He sought to bring a compatible model to the preceding works about communicative competence. He categorized competence and performance into three: **Language competence** (i.e. experience and understanding items), **strategic competence** (i.e. the ability to put these items into practice in communication), and **psycho physiological** aspects are all factors to consider (i.e. mental processes affecting the actual performance). Bachman put forth a combination between the knowledge and the performance under the banner of communicative language capability (Tunay AU & Özlem, 2020).

### 2.4.3 Celce Murcia et al

At first in 1995, this model advocated that communicative competency includes actional competence (the ability to interpret and produce all significant speech acts and speech act sets). As the center circle, discourse competence is placed, followed by **sociocultural competence, linguistic competence, and actional competence** as the three parameters of the encircling triangle (Tunay AU & Özlem, 2020). Celce Murcia (2007) amended the communicative competence model, placing actional competence within interactional

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competence. This model, which has a versatile hierarchy, has connotations such as cultural education, environmentally shaped discourse, as an equilibrium between language as system and language as formula (i.e. formal grammar and speech acts), emphasis on communicative interaction, and a focus on various strategies from time to time (Dwika Herdiawan, 2019) .

### **2.5 Communicative competence in EFL**

Learning any foreign language requires a considerable amount of knowledge about the skills and their application. Communicative competence has been a primary goal for second and foreign language students, and models have been expanded to encompass linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, tactical, language comprehensive abilities, and other characteristics of language. Teachers and scholars suggest that schools and colleges use a communicative language teaching method and activities, as well as current technologies and cooperative learning, to achieve a high level of forthcoming skill in English as a foreign language (Sabri Thabit, 2018). Language competence in EFL means the learners' ability to master the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing of the target language. When the individual demonstrates an effective use of language skills in the context accordingly, it means that he achieved a required level of unrestrained proficiency in English Foreign Language learning (Alami, 2014).

### **2.6 Relationship between communicative competence and pragmatics**

Pragmatics is the capacity to communicate meanings to assert certain ideas or emotions. Communicative competence on the other hand, refers to the linguistic resources knowledge in language. That is to say, communicative competence refers to the awareness of the appropriate contextual use of the particular language's linguistic resources (Nordquist, 2020). Furthermore, communication competence is the component of our linguistic knowledge that enables us to choose the communicative system we want to employ and, when

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that system is language, to connect the situation's aims and social context with the constructs in our linguistic repertoire through pragmatic functional choices. Language users adapt lexical items both consciously and unconsciously while making these decisions in order to alter the social distance between the source and the recipient. To conclude, communicative competence corresponds to the realization of the pragmatic ability to communicate in a given context (Stalker, 1989).

### **2.7 What is pragmatic awareness?**

Pragmatic awareness is the understanding of pragmatics that is cognitive, reactive, and expressive. It consequently necessitates knowledge of the rules and conventions that govern proper language use in communicational settings and among individuals of diverse speech groups. Pragmatic awareness is nurturing individual's pragmatic ability in the target language. It requires the study and use of both socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic language norms. Pragmatic awareness reflects students' awareness about the difference of speech acts between their native language and the target language. In addition, pragmatic awareness denotes the knowledge about the language components of target language and the way to use that language in different contexts (Yıldız Ekin & Atak Damar, 2013).

#### **2.7.1 Pragmatic Ability**

The word pragmatic ability relates to both understanding of pragmatics and the application of this knowledge. This term encompasses the four basic channels of communication, the receptive ones, listening and reading, and the productive ones, speaking and writing. Pragmatic ability refers to the expertise of using language to accomplish objectives in language interaction, or rather, competence in handling language communication in a sociocultural context. Additionally, the latter requires knowing the measure to which an

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utterance is adequate to other users of the language in transmitting the speaker's intended meaning (Wyner & Cohen, 2015).

### **2.7.2 Pragmatic Failure**

Thomas (1983) described pragmatic failure as the incapacity to comprehend what is conveyed by what is uttered and meant. Therefore, pragmatic failure is the failure to accomplish the speaker's intention during communication. When two speakers are unable to understand each other's intentions, pragmatic failure occurs. As a result, interpersonal communication breakdowns take place. There are two types of pragmatic failure: The first is pragmalinguistics failure, which refers to speech act tactics that have been improperly transferred. Second, sociopragmatics failure is caused by differing intercultural notions of what constitutes good linguistic behaviour (Shen, 2013).

### **2.8 Definition of Pragmatic Competence**

The term pragmatic competence is closely related to second language learning or foreign language learning in general. In *second-language learning* (L2) research, pragmatic competence is defined as the ability to make and comprehend expressions (discourse) that are appropriate for the L2 socio-cultural setting in which interaction occurs. Language socialization results in pragmatic competence in the native language (Kecskes, 2013). In 1997, Crystal identified pragmatic competence as the focus on studying language from the users' perspectives. Moreover, it spotlights users' choices and constraints they face while using language in social circumstances. In addition, pragmatic competence studies the effects of language use on interlocutors in the process of communication (Tello Rueda, 2011).

Earlier in 1980, Chomsky suggested that pragmatic competence is the knowledge of the situations and approach in which (the language) should be used for diverse purposes. In the models of communicative competence by Canal & Swain, pragmatic competence was

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recognized as sociolinguistic proficiency. It means the understanding of contextually appropriate language use. Recently, Rose (1999) offered a working definition of pragmatic competence, which has been widely accepted by inter-language pragmatics researchers (ILP). He portrays the idea as the aptitude to employ available linguistic resources (pragmalinguistics) in a contextually proper manner (socio-pragmatics)(Tello Rueda, 2011).

### **2.9 The Utility of Pragmatic Competence**

The capacity to use language successfully in a social environment is known as pragmatic competence (Taguchi, 2009). It is the key to communicating effectively in a second language. In the EFL classroom, communicative and grammatical competence are clearly taught and cultivated, but pragmatic competence is sometimes disregarded. Native speakers, on the other hand, use this competence to instinctively label a non-native speaker as a competent communicator ("The Importance of Developing Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Classroom", 2015). Language competency is not limited to grammatical proficiency, but also to its use in efficient and suitable way in the target language. Thus, pragmatic competence is a useful constituent for learning foreign languages as well as achieving communicative competence. The latter represent an essential factor in cross cultural communications.

### **2.10 Pragmatic competence in Foreign Language Context**

Pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication, because a lack of it can lead to failures in interaction. This can have serious effects in some circumstances such as pragmatic failure. Pragmatic competence in foreign language context represents the thread that connects between the grammatical skills acquired and pragmatics. A foreign language acquisition requires not only studying grammar, but also the ability to communicate those skills learned. In a foreign language classroom, pragmatic competency serves three purposes: The first step is to obtain enough exposure to target language input. Second, it aims to



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increase pragmatic and Meta pragmatic awareness among students. Furthermore, it allows for the application of practical knowledge (Tello Rueda, 2011). One of the foundations of teaching English is pragmatic competence. The goal of language education is to teach students how to use a language appropriately and effectively in various interactional settings. It is critical to raise students' pragmatic awareness as well as provide them with some useful strategies for maintaining successful communication in a variety of settings with a diverse selection of interlocutors (Takkaç Tulgar, 2016).

### **2.10.1 Teaching and Learning Culture as Pragmatics of interaction**

Teaching and learning language automatically refers to learning and teaching culture as well. Culture education has a significant role in language acquisition. It motivates students to study language and facilitates communication. Instruction of language and culture are interwoven. Language educators teach the language's culture and learners perceive that culture whether it is overtly included or excluded in the syllabi. Culture is expressed through language. When someone decides to learn Korean, for example, he or she is not just interested in the language's linguistics, but also in gaining new abilities. Cultural variety in the classroom does not have to signify group isolation and division; rather, it should increase students' knowledge and ability to comprehend the interdependence of cultures and peoples (cited in Wu, n.d). Studying a language should be infused into its cultural context. The acquisition of language's culture enhances pragmatic competence. As result pragmatic competence leads to effective intercultural communication. To conclude, teaching and learning culture is a form of pragmatic interaction. This means that, pragmatic ability and efficiency aids at the correct transmission of the meaning. Consequently, the process of communication between people from different cultural backgrounds is successful when the individual is pragmatically competent. Since learning and teaching language is closely

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interlinked with culture. Intercultural communication is a pragmatic interaction between skilled and efficient foreign languages' interlocutors.

### **2.10.2 Cross cultural pragmatics**

The term cross cultural refers to cultural comparisons and specifically tries to address concern regarding the incidence, prevalence, and causes of cultural variance and complicated problems across a broad range of domains. Cross cultural denotes the differences between cultures, reasons, features, and similarities as well (Ilesanmi, 2009). Pragmatics is a part of linguistics that examines what a speaker implies and what a recipient infers from aspects such as the situational setting, the individuals' mental states, the previous conversation, and other variables.

Cross-cultural pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies how language obtains meaning via context and socio-cultural implantation. Although meaning is not intrinsic in the words we speak, we must analyse them using contextual information. The dynamics between the speaker and his or her interactional partner(s), and the shared knowledge we have with our interlocutors. In particular contexts, cross-cultural pragmatics investigates culturally inspired patterns of interpersonal communication preferences. Cross cultural pragmatics assists at understanding cultural variations and enables learners' at the correct use of foreign languages during communication. The field of cross-cultural pragmatics is thus defined as the study of different cultures' speech behaviours and norms. In addition, it focuses on contextually derived meaning, the suitability of language use in various cultural contexts, and the implications and issues associated with pragmatic competence acquisition (Stadler, 2018).

### **2.11 Challenges in Developing Pragmatic Competence for EFL Learners**

Pragmatic competence is a necessary element in language learning and foreign languages education in general. EFL students face difficulties and issues to achieve pragmatic

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competence in the target language. Kasper (1997) sees that the challenge arises from the fact that it is impossible to teach this skill directly. Competence, whether linguistic or pragmatic, is not something that can be taught. Learners' competence is a form of knowledge that they have, can acquire, develop, use, or lose. The question for foreign or second language teachers is if they can organize learning opportunities to promote the development of pragmatic competence in L2.

It is obvious that learning a foreign language necessitates not only a thorough understanding of the structural aspects of the language, but also the ability to apply these linguistic forms appropriately in relation to the social and cultural aspects of the language. They are in most cases, distinct from those of the learner's native tongue. Learning how to acquire these components appears to be a difficult task for the instructor, who is primarily responsible for helping students in the proper acquisition of the language. Another issue is that most learners focus on the language's form as essential aspect in obtaining foreign language competence (Oda & Mahmoud, 2016). The process of providing learners with opportunities to build communicative competence, which includes pragmatic competence as a key part of language learning, appears to be a problem for the entire educational system. Pragmatic competency is difficult to achieve since each learner has a varied learning rate. In addition, learners approach language education from different perspectives.

### **2.12 Cross Cultural Pragmatics competence in EFL learning**

Cross-cultural pragmatic competence, according to LoCastro, is the ability to utilize language successfully in a social situation. Interlocutors of different languages may not share the same cultural standards in varied global communities. Due to the norms of different cultural origins in the social environment, this leads to misinterpretation. As a result, EFL teachers should support their students in developing cross-cultural pragmatic ability. EFL students can eliminate misinterpretations caused by cultural differences if they develop cross

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cultural pragmatic competence. The latter is considered as fundamental component for successful communications in social settings (Bardis, Silman, & Mohammadzadeh, 2021).

For EFL learners cross cultural pragmatic competency is crucial to master the target language at hand. Acquiring grammatical skills of foreign language is not enough to communicate ideas or views in cross cultural contexts. In the EFL environment, the cultural traits of a target language may be a significant element in determining the amount of pragmatic dynamics of L2 learners in the target language. As a result, in addition to pragmatic skill, students of foreign languages must have a cultural foundation in the language they are learning. This will aid in the elimination of misunderstandings and misinterpretations during the communication process.

### **2.13 Cultural barriers in EFL learning**

Cultural obstacles are problems that are based on cultural variables and impede educational programs from working properly. These obstacles are frequently complicated, and they are founded on groups of people's values and ideas. Several educators in international settings, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, have long overlooked cultural differences and barriers in all forms of system enterprises such as instructing parents about proper nutrition for their infants, urging farmers to alter the way they garden and foster their crops, and in empowerment and community building programs (Caffarella, 2010).

Cultural barriers are customs that present obstructions that stand in the way of comprehending or teaching/ learning wholly distinct languages. Cultural barriers are issues that obstruct learning process such as demeanour, religious views, etiquette, and social norms. Cultural barriers may be identified as critical characteristics. These characteristics are detected during the language acquisition process. Cultural barriers restrict the effective learning process (Alinezhad, 2015). Due to the sheer distinct methods of understanding,

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seeing, hearing, and interpreting the world supplied by cultures, effective language learning among different cultures is particularly difficult and serious.

In EFL learning cultural barriers cannot be avoided. Educators express methodological dogmatism or cultural preconceptions. There are no alternatives that combine the best practices from their own culture with the culture brought into the classroom by their students. Another barrier is the absence of classroom materials that would make them more user-friendly. Usually the objective of teaching English as foreign language is to follow and finish the syllabi. Furthermore, Students are not given time to adapt to a new culture-related situation. Teachers frequently employ video and film to supplement students' cultural knowledge. The videos and films presented may not be relevant to the target language's culture (Hossain, 2016).

Cultural barriers are like a cold which cannot be escaped. EFL students begin by viewing English as a bland subject rather than a conversational reality. They don't have the aptitude to study English because neither their parents nor their English teachers at school encourage them to do so (Ahmad, 2015). Cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are essential features that can eliminate cultural barriers and realize successful cross cultural communication. English as foreign language education is essential factor to communicate in intercultural settings. As English became a worldwide shared language the inclusion of its culture is significant to achieve pragmatic skills and knowledge. Those skills aid at grasping the four skills of any language education.

### **2.14 The impact of pragmatic competence on EFL learning and teaching**

Pragmatics is a collection of skills that enables individuals to know what to say, to whom, and how to say it in a given situation (what, how, whom, and when). When a student learning English is asked "how are you?" in England, does he need to give a complete and extensive rundown of his recent life or can they simply respond with "All good" or "Not

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bad?" Isn't it self-evident that the latter is correct? It depends on the situation and who the interlocutor is speaking with: If the person is a doctor at a hospital for instance, his patient might offer him a more thorough response that's appropriate for the situation. Studying pragmatic provides a skill to figure out how to use English appropriately in different situation. The proper use of English for example when to communicate a request or permission to the elderly with civility and respect (Macalla, 2017).

Teaching and learning pragmatics for EFL is a tool that aids students at detecting when and how to use certain expressions in one context. Furthermore, it provides a chance to analyse the socio-cultural references of language items. Moreover, pragmatics is necessary to establish language competency and the use of language in different settings. To conclude, pragmatic competence is the foundation for successful Communicative language ability. It allows language learners at obtaining the skills to communicate thoughts and beliefs in cross cultural communication situations. Additionally it eliminates socially awkward situations and miscommunications rooted from cultural differences. Furthermore, it grants students with both socio-pragmatics and pragmalinguistics capabilities in the English language they are learning. As a result, the latter has a favourable impact on proper language usage and aids in avoiding pragmatic failure.

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### **Conclusion**

The chapter at hand provided a thorough background on the branch of pragmatics. Pragmatics is field of linguistics that is interested at studying the use of language in context. Among the elements the chapter covered was Pragmatics and its function in EFL. Pragmatics studies in EFL classes aids students to investigate the correlation between the uses of language in context appropriately. Communication is the process of exchanging utterance between speakers to convey certain messages. Communicative competence is the ability to deliver effectively the intention of the speaker to the receiver. For English language student communicative competence represents the facade that shows that his journey of foreign language learning is fruitful.

Pragmatic awareness on the other hand, is fostering individual's pragmatic ability in the target language. Pragmatic awareness reveals students' attentiveness about the diversity of speech acts between their native language and the target language. Culture is the set of virtues, behaviours, beliefs, and customs that distinct between social groups. Studying language incorporates the acquisitions of cultural aspects as well. The latter assists at the foundation of pragmatic competence since learning about culture cultivate pragmatic competence in foreign language learning.

The chapter concluded the correlation between pragmatic competence, EFL learning, and communicative competence. Teaching and learning pragmatics in EFL is a strategy that helps students recognize when and how to utilize specific expressions in a given situation. It also allows you to investigate the social contexts of linguistic items. Additionally, pragmatics is required to build language competency and the suitable use of language in various contexts. In short, pragmatic competence is the bedrock of effective communicative language ability. It enables language learners to develop the ability to articulate their views and beliefs in cross-cultural circumstances.

## **Chapter Three: Field Work**



## **Chapter Three: Field Work**

### **Introduction**

The current Chapter focuses on putting the previous two theoretical chapters into practice. It summarizes the information gathered from the student's questionnaire. The latter serves as a common ground for analysing students' views toward pragmatic competence in EFL learning in terms of cultural awareness. The purpose of the survey was to gather EFL students' opinions on the significance of cultural awareness in the development of pragmatic competence in EFL learners. In accordance with the research aims and hypotheses, the current chapter will give a complete analysis of the acquired data.

### **3.1 Research approach**

Research is the process of finding answers to particular problems. Scientific research is based on using a suitable research approach that fits the research nature. Qualitative approach is humanist or idealist method that is based on the comprehension of a study inquiry. People's sights, experiences, attitudes, behaviour, and interactions are examined using qualitative methods. It generates data which is not numerical. Incorporating qualitative research with intervention studies is a research method that is gaining traction in a variety of fields (Pathak, V. Jena, B. & Kalra, S. 2013). Qualitative research is based on data gathered via first hand observation, such as a questionnaire. We will utilize the qualitative method to analyse and evaluate the results obtained from the questionnaire. Since the aim of this study is to collect EFL students' attitudes toward the role of cultural awareness in developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence. This method of investigation is used to obtain insight into a phenomenon by investigating the attitudes and views of those who have encountered it.

### **3.2 Students questionnaire**

#### **3.2.1 Sample**

The target group for this study is Master One English Division students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. Because English students begin taking pragmatic lectures at master one level. Master One students were chosen to answer the questionnaire. It aids the study's goal of relating pragmatic competence to culture. A purposive sampling technique has been chosen in which only students who have studied pragmatics are chosen to take a part in our study. As a result, the researcher was able to gather comments from 30 students who are familiar with pragmatics and its significance.

#### **3.2.2 Aim of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire is a research means comprised of a series of thorough questions designed to gather various perspectives and information from individuals. A questionnaire is a quicker way to assess a substantial percentage of participants' behaviours, dispositions, interests, thoughts, and intentions. As a result, the goal of using this data collecting instrument is to get the essential information regarding Master One students' perceptions of pragmatic competence and its relationship to cultural awareness.

#### **3.2.3 Description of the student's questionnaire**

This survey has (25) questions of various types, including closed-ended and open-ended questions. It also contains multiple choices and Yes or No questions as well. This questionnaire was created for Biskra University Master One EFL students to study the importance of cross-cultural awareness and its relationship to students' pragmatic competence development. The questionnaire is divided into three sections as follow:

**Section One:** The section is under the title “General information”; it contains four questions “Q1-Q4”, the goal is to get personal information about the students such as their gender, how

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often they use English, their learning journey, and the challenges they face when it comes to the skills of learning a foreign language.

**Section Two:** it is comprised of six questions entitled “Cultural awareness”. These questions seek to uncover student’s perception about cultural awareness as a term and their own definition about pragmatics as a field of study.

**Section Three:** It is entitled “Culture and Pragmatics” There are fifteen questions in this section. The objective of these questions is to evaluate how students feel about culture and pragmatics, as well as whether they see a link between the two. We would like to learn what they think about language acquisition requirements and whether culture plays a role in establishing pragmatic competence.

### 3.2.4 Analysis of the students’ questionnaire

This part is dedicated to the examination of the students' questionnaire responses. The analysis was completed in four days utilizing an Excel sheet to construct charts, figures, and tables.

#### 3.2.4.1 Section one: General Information

##### Item 01: The Gender

**Table: 3. 1 Gender**

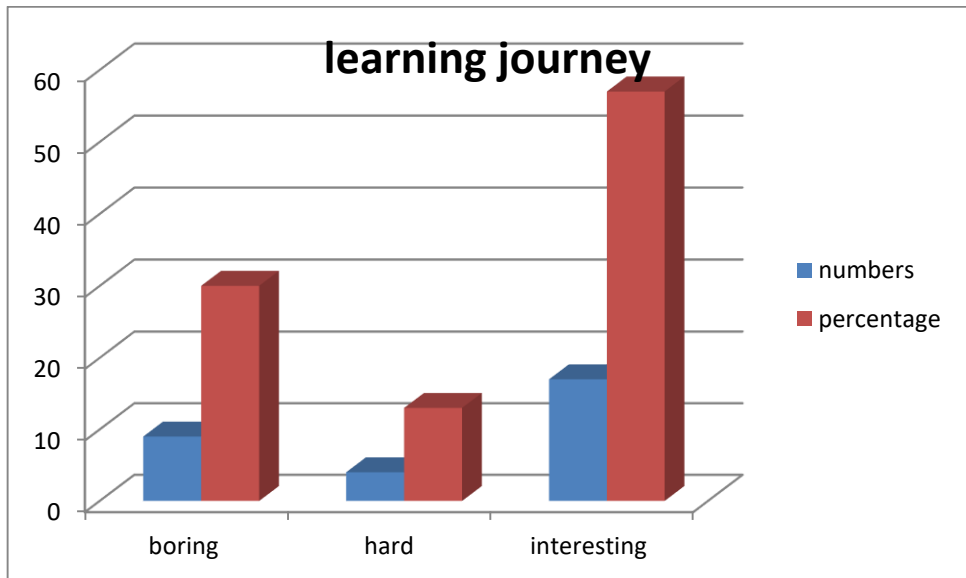
Options	Number	Percentage
a) Male	05	17%
b) Female	25	83 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

The number of females in this table is 25 (83 percent), while the number of males is 05 (17 percent). It is apparent that females make up the majority of master one-year students; this

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indicates that female respondents have a greater desire to learn English as a foreign language than male respondents.

**Item 2: How do you describe your learning journey?**



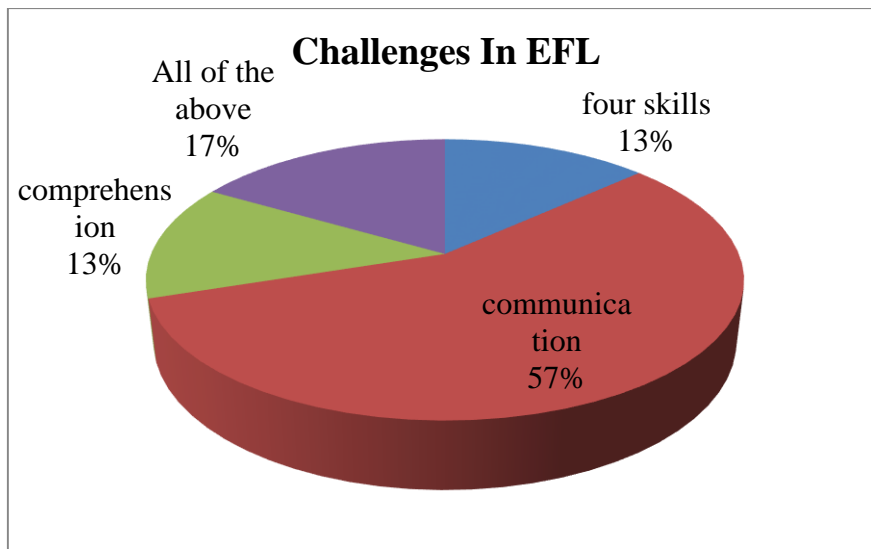
**Figure 3.1** Students' Description about Learning Journey

The purpose of the proposed inquiry was to see if the students were motivated to learn English. Furthermore, the question was designed to gauge their interest in English as a foreign language. According to the results, seventeen students (57 percent) said that learning English was an enjoyable experience. Nine learners (30%) expressed weariness with English language learning, while four others (13%) claimed that learning English is difficult.

**Table 3.2: Learning English**

Options	Numbers	Percentage
Interesting	17	57%
Boring	9	30%
Hard	4	13%
Total	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Item 03: What are the difficulties you face as EFL learn**

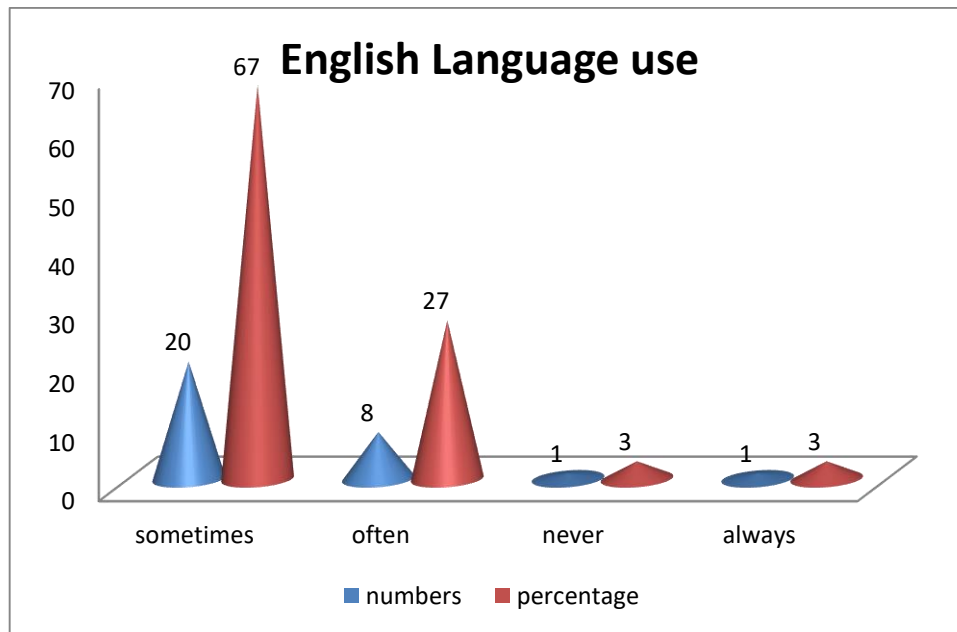


**Figure 3.2EFL learning difficulties**

The purpose of the inquiry was to lay a foundation for understanding the issues those students at Biskra's Mohamed Khider University experience. Language learners face a range of challenges during their studies. For this question, students were given several options. Fifty-seven percent of them experience issues with communicating. When it comes to communication, they have problems. Communication issues can reflect the difficulty to communicate thoughts, feelings, and ideas using foreign language. In addition it can mean the inability to communicate with foreigners. On the other hand, thirteen percent of pupils, or four kids, believe their issue is one of comprehension. This means that students will run into a language comprehension issue. The same number of students (four participants) is having difficulties learning the four English language skills. This can be attributed to a variety of factors, but learning a foreign language is a process that demands dedication and time. All of the following alternatives were chosen by 17% (five students). This implies that English language learners struggle with comprehension, communication, and all four skills.

**Item 04: Do you use English language when you interact with others?**

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**Figure 3.3** English language use

We made a list of questions. We asked the participants how frequently they use English with their classmates and other people in general. Sixty-seven percent of students (20 learners) communicate with people in English on occasion. This displays their eagerness to use English and put the rules and ideas they've learned into practice. Eight students (27%) use English frequently, whereas one uses it never and always. Since the sample was conducted on thirty m students of master one level. The majority of students are said to use English on occasion. The options never and always were chosen one per each only. Furthermore, an appropriate percentage of students who utilize English account for 27% of the total population.

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3.2.4.2 Section Two: Cultural Awareness

Item 01: Do you think culture is important in EFL learning?

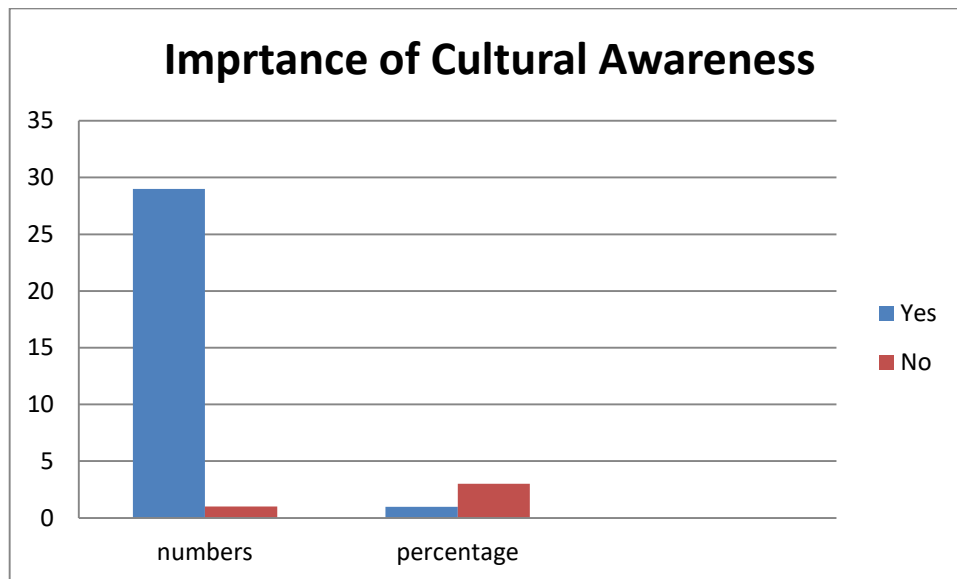


Figure 3.4 Importance of Cultural Awareness

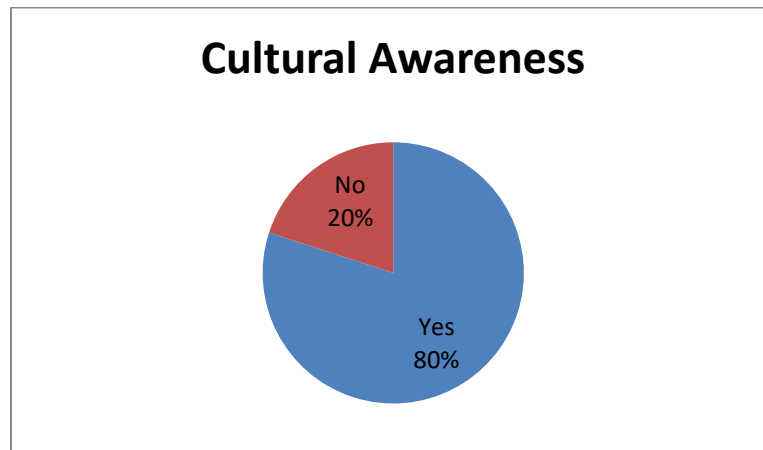
Students were asked whether they believed culture was important in EFL. They all agreed that understanding the culture of the target language is an important part of learning English. Twenty-nine students (97 percent) responded positively, while the option No, we only found one student who chose it. It is suggested that the student understand that culture does not matter in EFL learning. It is possible that she/ he rely solely on language mastery without the cultural component.

Options	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	29	97%
No	01	3%
Total	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3.3: Importance of culture

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## Item 02: Are you familiar with the phrase cultural awareness?



**Figure 3.3 Cultural Awareness**

The question aimed at discovering whether students are acquainted with the term cultural awareness or not. We noticed that the majority of students have knowledge about the latter. The majority (80%) represent twenty four students from the total number of students' population which is thirty. The minority (20%) on the other hand, represent just six students. They expressed that they have no knowledge about cultural awareness.

Options	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	24	80%
No	06	20%
Total	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table3.4: Familiarity with cultural Awareness**

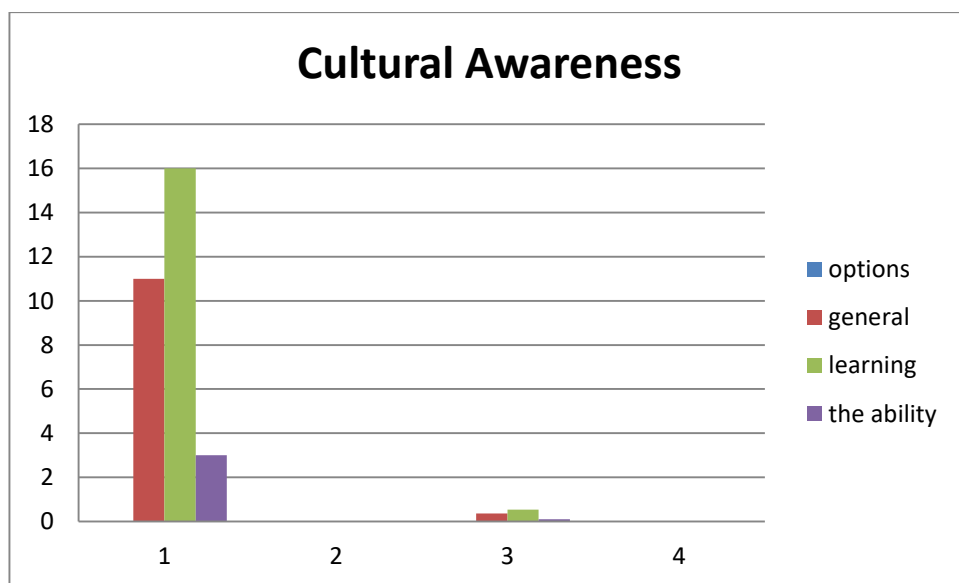
## Item 03: What is cultural awareness?

The chart below depicts learners' responses to questions about cultural awareness. We wanted to learn about one student's definitions of cultural awareness. We gave students definitions and let them choose what they thought was the best definition for cultural



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awareness. The first option defined cultural awareness as "general knowledge about the culture of a society." According to the results, eleven students (37 percent) chose this definition for cultural awareness. This suggests that some students regard cultural awareness as general knowledge about a specific group of people or society. The second alternative presented cultural awareness as learning a foreign language while immersing oneself in its culture. It was chosen by sixteen students (53 percent). Cultural awareness, according to the majority of students, is the incorporation of culture into foreign language learning. Cultural awareness was identified as the third option for forming relationships with foreigners. Three students (10%) chose this option and found that cross-cultural knowledge is the ability to form relationships with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.



**Figure 3.4 Definition of cultural awareness**

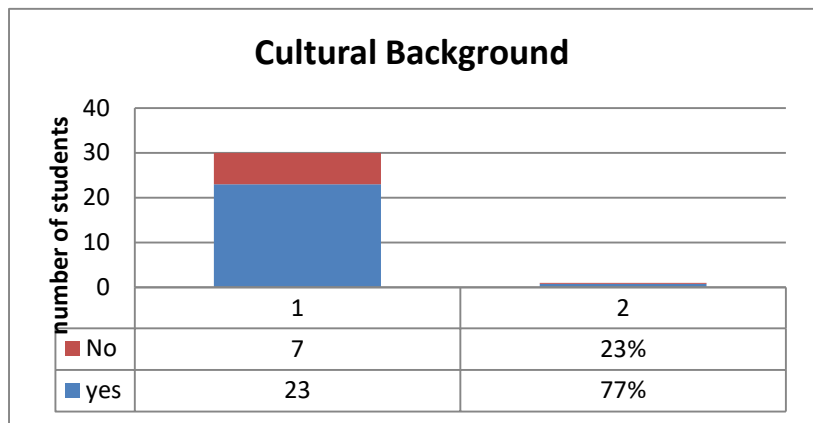
<b>Options</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
General knowledge about society’s culture.	11	37%
Learning a foreign language with its culture.	16	53%

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The ability to form relationships with foreigners	03	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.5 Definition of cultural awareness**

**Item 04: Do you think cultural background is necessary for acquiring English language?**



**Figure 3.5 Importance of cultural background**

In order to, obtain the data relevant to our research topic. We asked the students if they thought cultural background was essential to learning English. Twenty-three students (77%) agreed with the statement and answered yes, while seven students (23%) disagreed and answered no.

**Item 05: what is pragmatics?**

Mohamed Khider University Master 1 students were asked to define pragmatics. The goal is to depict their own pragmatic understanding as a module they study for the first time in master one level. According to the findings, the majority of learners regard pragmatics as a subfield of linguistics. Others have stated that pragmatics is the study of the hidden meaning of language in context. Some define pragmatics as the attempt to decipher the intended meaning behind utterances in order to comprehend the message. This entails studying

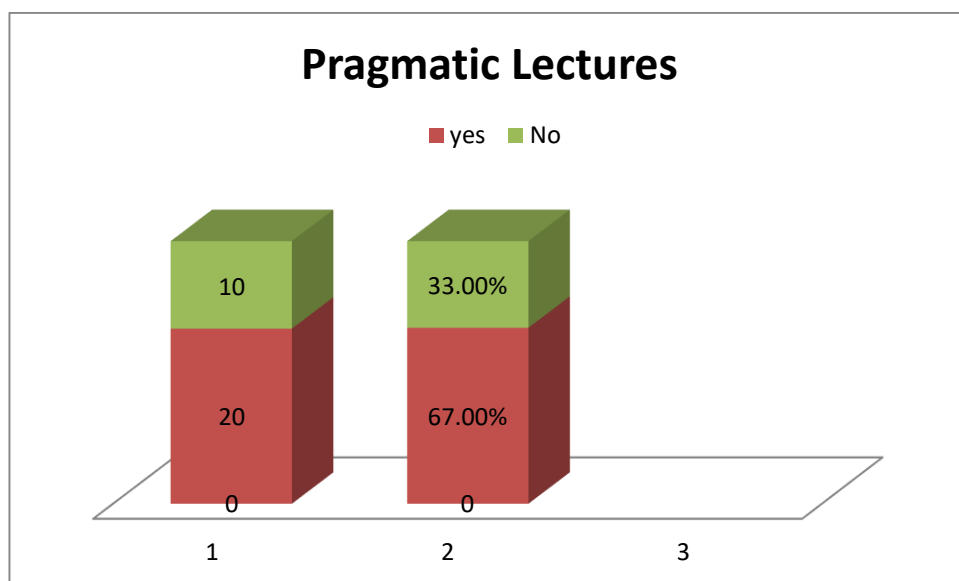
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language in context. A number of students stated that pragmatics is the study of linguistic forms and their users. To summarize, the majority of students provided a coherent and correct definition of pragmatics by focusing on the concept. The study of language in use is known as pragmatics. Few students, on the other hand, chose not to provide us with a definition for pragmatics.

### **Item 06: Do you often encounter difficulties to understand pragmatic lectures?**

We asked English students if they face difficulties during pragmatic lectures. The results show that twenty students (67 percent) answered that they have difficulties during pragmatic lectures. It could be attributed to the fact that it's their first time studying the module of pragmatics. Ten of them (33 percent) expressed that they don't face challenges with pragmatic lectures.

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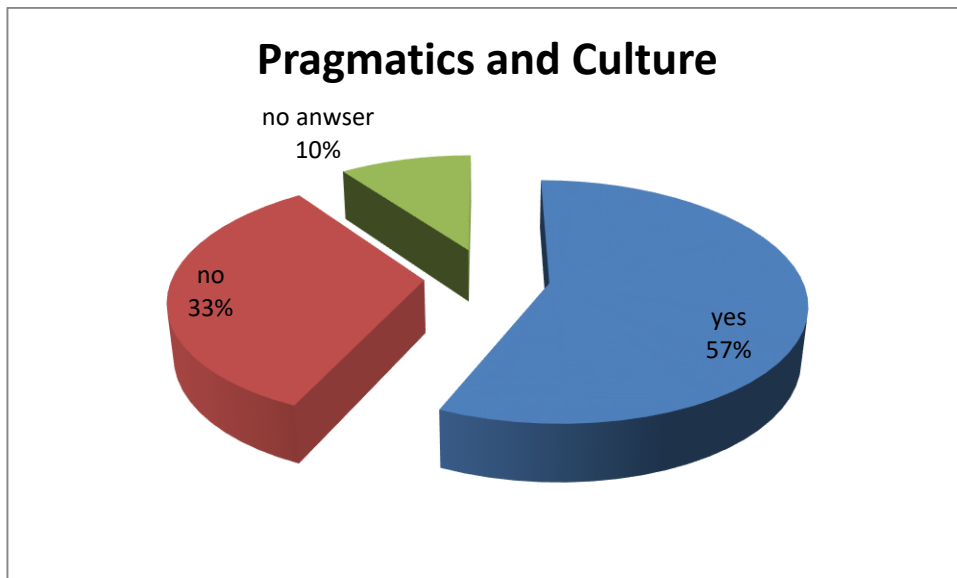
**Figure 3.6 Challenges in pragmatic lectures**

### 3.2.4.3 Section Three: Culture and Pragmatics

This section of questions seeks to see the students' views about culture and pragmatics, in addition to establish the role of cultural awareness in the development of pragmatic competence.

**Item 01: Is there a relationship between pragmatics and culture?**

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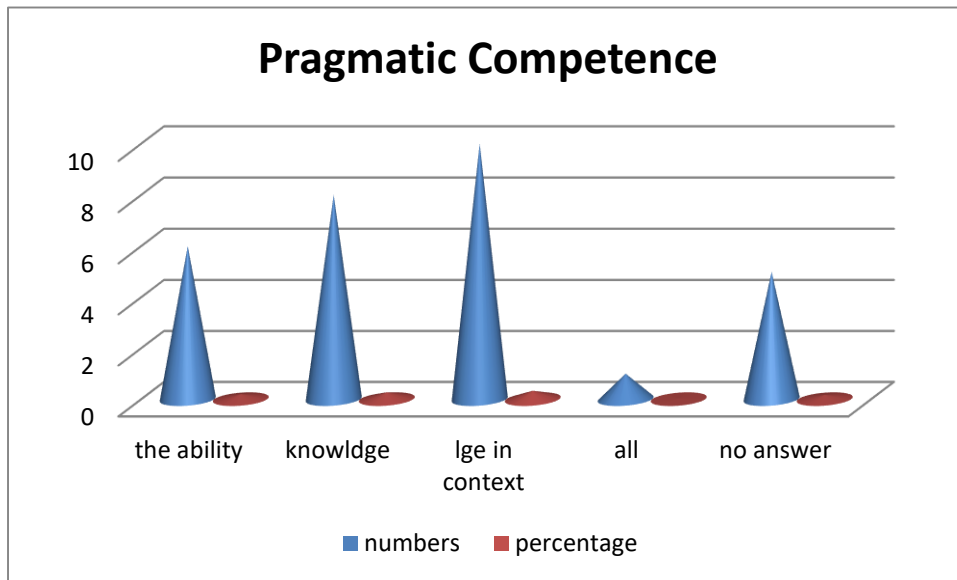


**Figure 3.7 Pragmatic and culture**

In order to pick learner's thoughts about pragmatics and culture correlation we asked them if there is connection between the two. The students were given choices to answer yes or No. The results show that seventeen (57%) believe that there is correlation between the two. This shows their interest in learning the English language with its requirement. On the other hand, ten students (33%) think that there is no connection or whatsoever between culture and pragmatics. Furthermore, we encountered three students (10%) who chose not to answer this question. Furthermore, students were asked to explain why they thought the answer was yes. Few participants stated that pragmatics is required when using language in a specific context. According to them, cultural background is important in communication. Others explained that pragmatics is concerned with language in context. Culture is also embedded in that context. Moreover, we came across an answer that asserted that culture is required to understand the context of certain language use. Another proportion pointed out that in order for successful communication between individuals to occur, a person must have a certain degree of cultural knowledge. So that the listener grasps what the speaker is saying.

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**Item 02: What is pragmatic competence?**



**Figure 3.8 Pragmatic competence**

We wanted to learn more about pragmatics as a discipline. As a result, we asked the students about their perceptions of pragmatic competence. They were given definitions that they might use. Pragmatic competency, according to six students (20%), is the ability to understand what the speaker is saying. Eight others (27%) opted to respond that pragmatic competence is complete understanding of the speaker's goal. Furthermore, ten students (33%) thought the latter was the study of language in context. According to one student (03%), all of the definitions are correct. We had five participants (05%) who didn't respond to the inquiry.

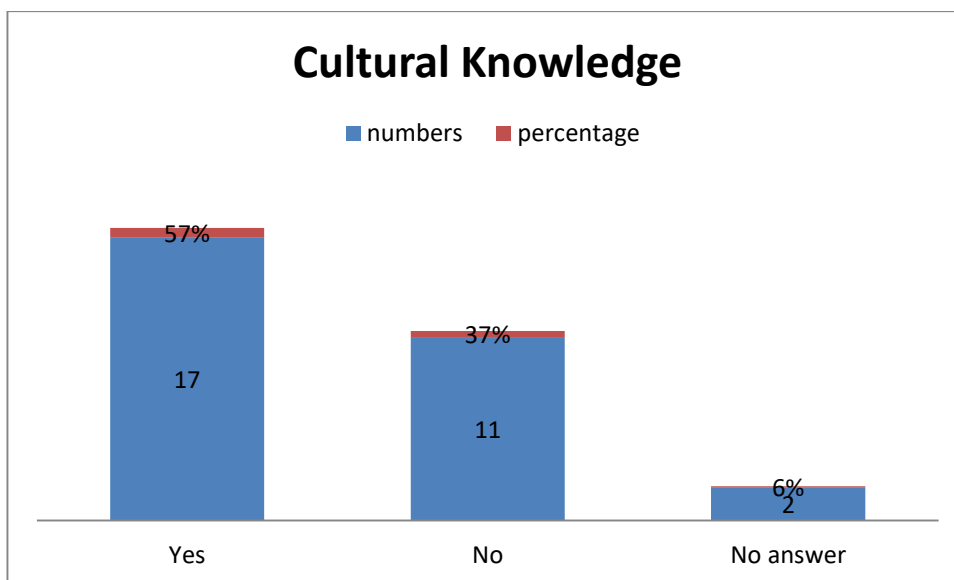
Options	Number of students	Percentage
The ability to receive the speaker's meaning.	06	20%
The full knowledge about the speaker's intention.	08	27%
The study of language is context.	10	33%
All of the Above	01	03%

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No answer	05	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.6: Pragmatic competence**

**Item 03: As an EFL learner are you fully equipped with cultural knowledge about the language you are studying?**



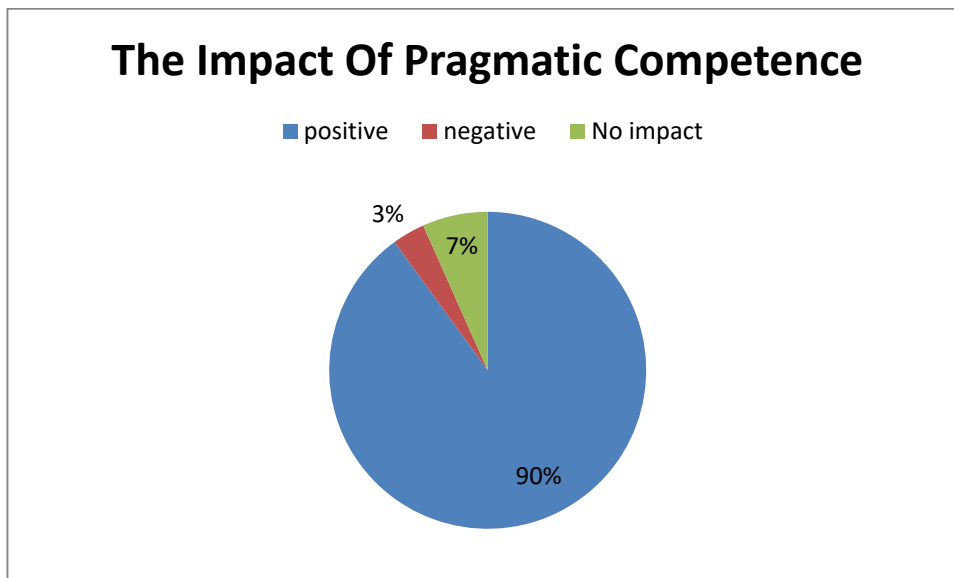
**Figure3.9 Cultural background**

EFL learners require more than just grammar rules to be competent in a foreign language. We conducted a research that included a question about their ability. We asked them whether they see themselves culturally competent and if they have enough knowledge about the English language’s culture. First, seventeen students (57 %) expressed that they are equipped with cultural knowledge in their target language. Second, eleven learners (37 %) noted that they lack cultural knowledge about the language they are studying. It could be

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caused by many factors that participated in the absence of cultural background. We found two students (06 %) who favoured to leave the question unanswered.

### . **Item 04: How is the impact of pragmatic competence on learning?**

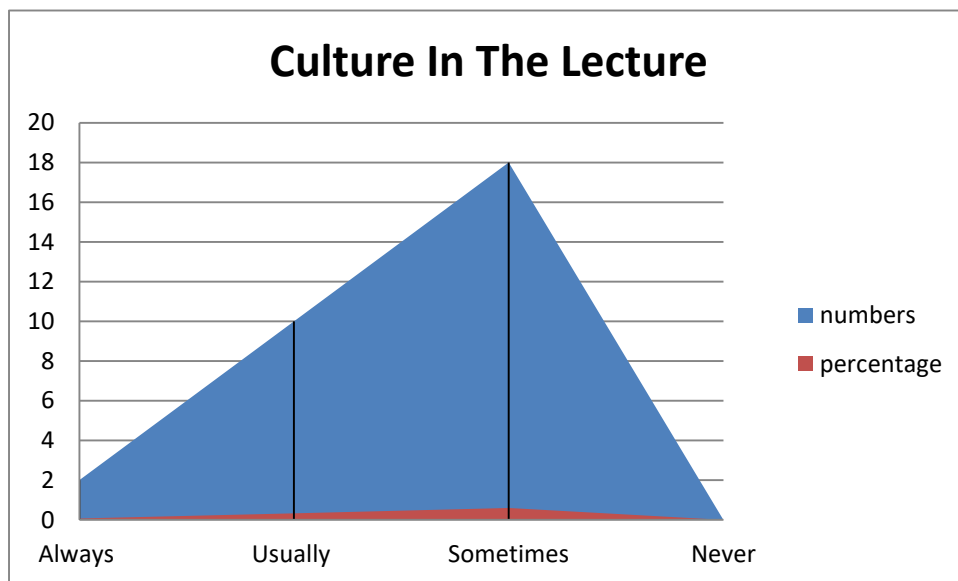


**Figure 3.10 The Impact Of Pragmatic Competence**

Learners were requested to provide information about the effect of pragmatic competence on learning. This question aims to shed light on the role of pragmatic competence in the language learning process. Twenty-seven (90%) students said that pragmatic competence has a positive impact for language acquisition. Furthermore, two students (7%) indicated that there is no impact of pragmatic competence. However, one student (03%) said that it has negative impact. It can be said that the majority of participants see that pragmatic competence is crucial for learning a foreign language.



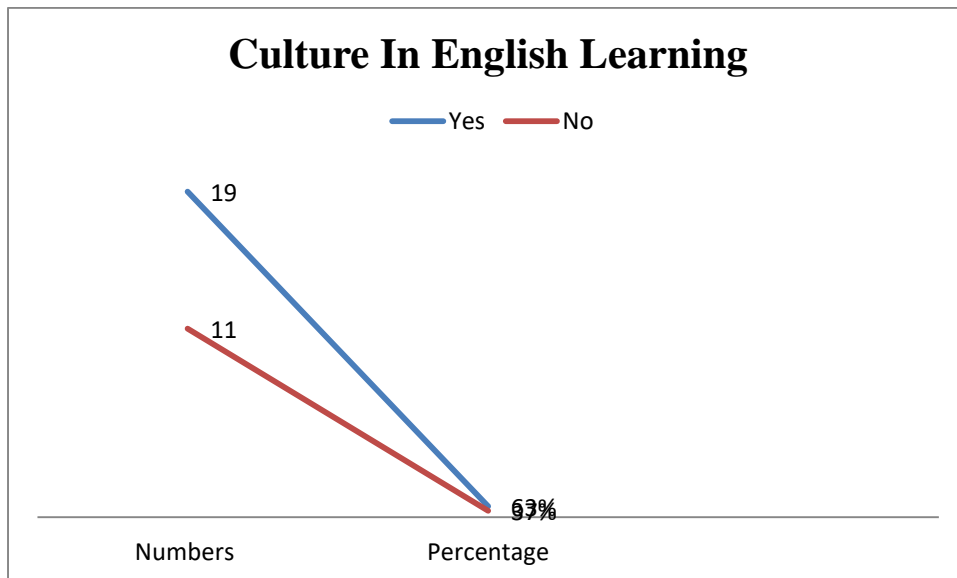
**Item 05: Does Your Teacher Include Cultural Elements During the Lecture?**



**Figure 3.11 Culture during the lecture**

Teachers are excellent sources of information and serve as mentors and advisors. They try to educate students various subjects using methods that they believe are appropriate. We tried to figure out whether teachers include culture while they teach. So we asked the students if they encounter cultural signs during the session. Eighteen students (60 %) said their teacher sometimes integrates ethnic themes during class. They are usually included, according to ten others (33%). Two students (07%) mentioned that their teacher always mentions culture. The findings demonstrate that teachers incorporate culture into their lessons on a regular basis. To put it another way, foreign language teachers understand the value of culture. The questionnaire demonstrates this. We didn't come across any students who disagreed with that remark or said that their teacher never emphasized culture in class.

**Item 06: Based on your experience, do you think that learning English requires cultural awareness?**



**Figure 3.12 Culture in English language**

The purpose of the inquiry is to highlight the importance of cultural understanding in English learning. Nineteen respondents acknowledged that studying English needed cultural knowledge, according to the findings. If the response is yes, we asked individuals to explain why. Their responses were only partially justified. Their argument was that learning a language included knowing about the culture of that language. One person commented that learning a language necessitates cultural knowledge, and that we cannot truly learn a foreign language without it. Eleven people were against the idea and said no.

**Item 06: According to the previous answer, can you communicate with native speaker from completely different culture than yours fluently?**

In order to understand students views more accurately. They were asked whether they are able to communicate with people from different cultural background. They were given option Yes, No, or Maybe. Twenty students expressed uncertainty and answered maybe. This shows that they are not sure whether they can communicate correctly with foreigners. Eight respondents answered yes and showed their confidence in their own capacities and

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competence. At last two students were the only ones who said that they cannot communicate since they know their own level in the English language.

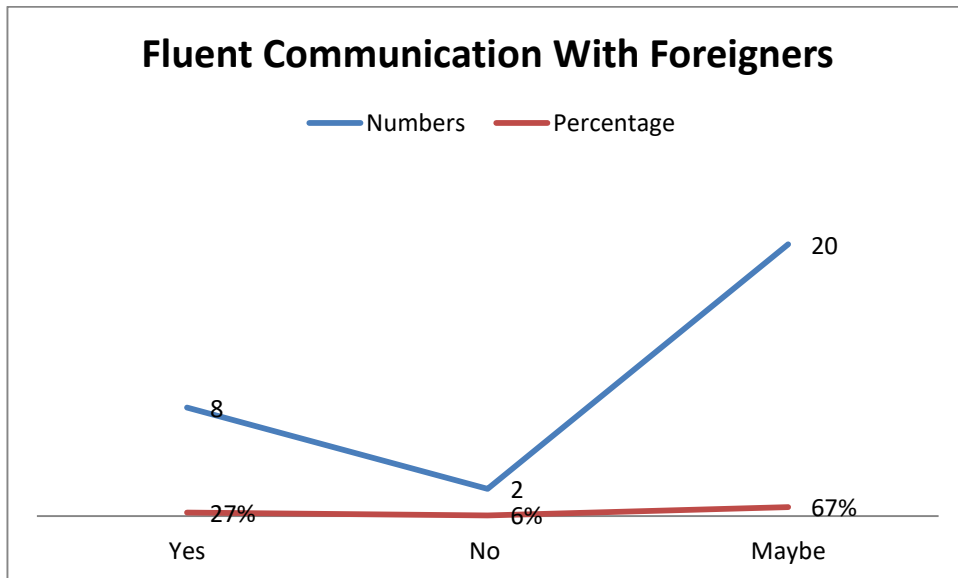


Figure3.13 Fluent Communication with Foreigners

Item 08: How do you see yourself if you are fully equipped with English culture?

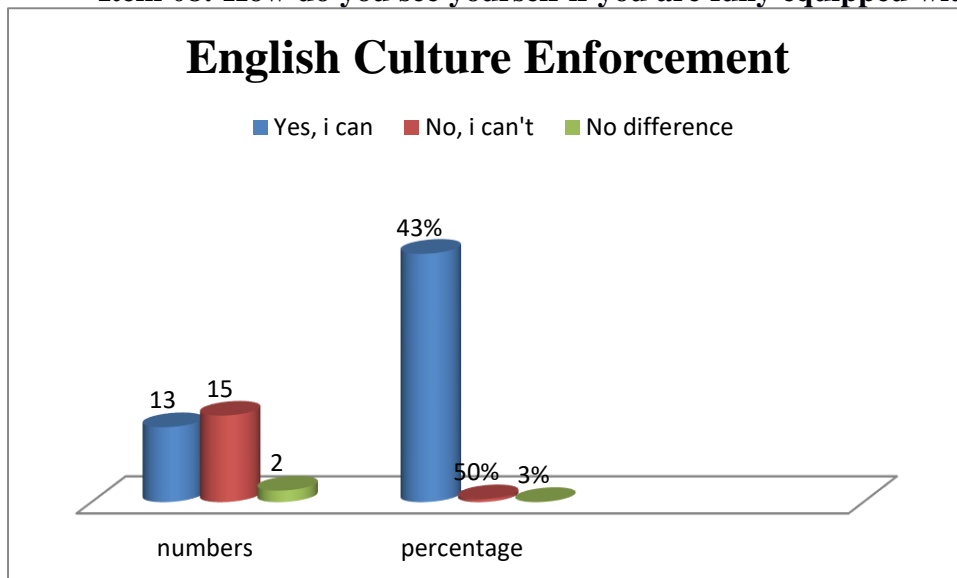


Figure3.14 English Culture Enforcement

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We used cultural enforcement to measure participants' linguistic competency. Twenty five (83%) people said they were more confident. This reflects their understanding of the role of culture in language development. Four other (14%), respondents expressed a lack of confidence, while only one person (03%) believes that it makes no difference if he or she is familiar with English language culture.

### Item 09: Can you interact with foreigners without knowledge about their culture?

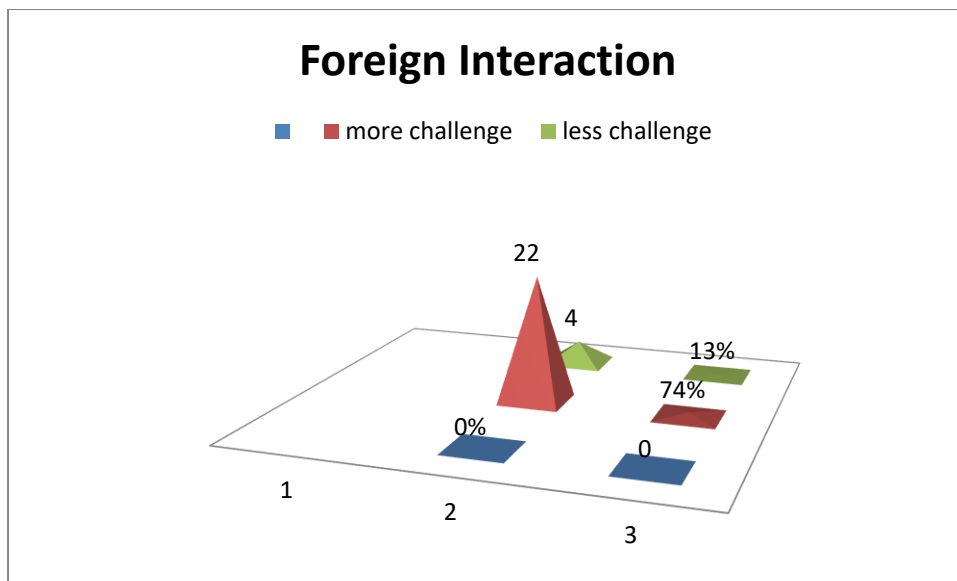
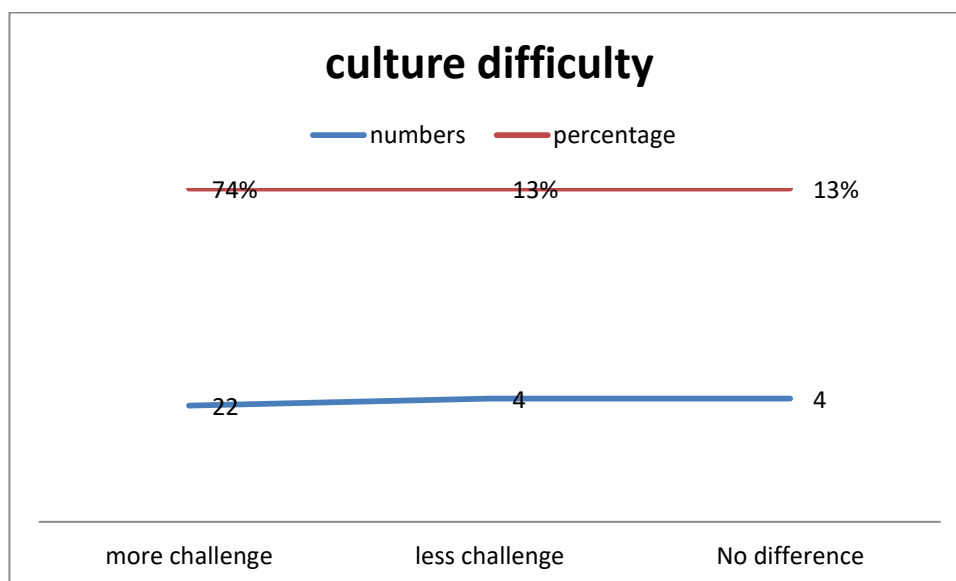


Figure 3.15 Foreign interaction

We inquired about the respondents' ability to interact with foreigners even if they were unfamiliar with their culture. The idea is to see if they can handle it and whether culture plays a part in cross-cultural communication. Fifteen people said they couldn't engage without knowing the speakers cultural background. They obviously understand the significance of cultural awareness. Thirteen learners, on the other hand, said they can communicate without knowing the speaker's culture. This is due to the fact that they rely solely on language ability without considering cultural factors. Finally, two individuals believe that whether students have culture knowledge or not makes no impact.

### Item 10: What do you think about the English culture?

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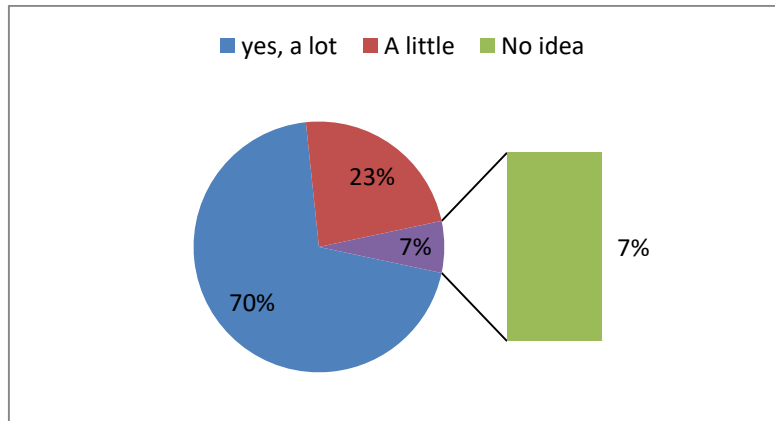


**Figure 3.16 Difficulty of the english culture**

We would like to discover how difficult the English culture is for EFL students. So we inquired what they thought of it. Twenty-two people said that the English culture is more difficult for them. That is, they have difficulty understanding the culture of the target language they are studying. Furthermore, four learners say it is easy and less demanding, while the remaining four believe it makes no difference and is neither more nor less challenging.

**Item 11: Is your teacher culturally aware about the English culture?**

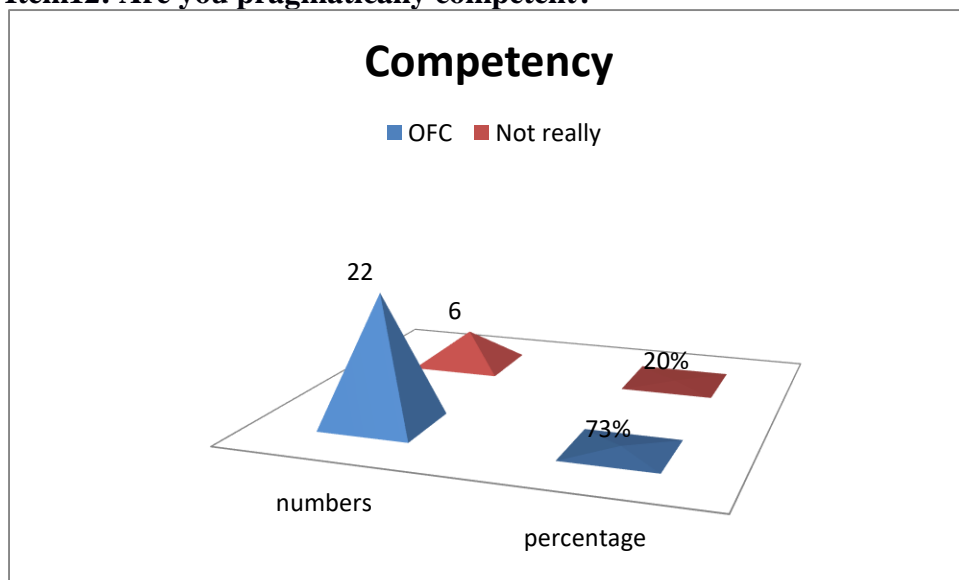
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**Figure3.17 Teachers Awareness about culture**

Students were asked about their teacher and their cultural awareness. The question aims to see the respondents' attentiveness during the lecture. Twenty one respondents answered that their teachers are culturally aware a lot about the English culture. Seven individuals said that it's just little, while two others expressed that they have zero idea about whether their teachers are culturally aware or not.

**Item12: Are you pragmatically competent?**

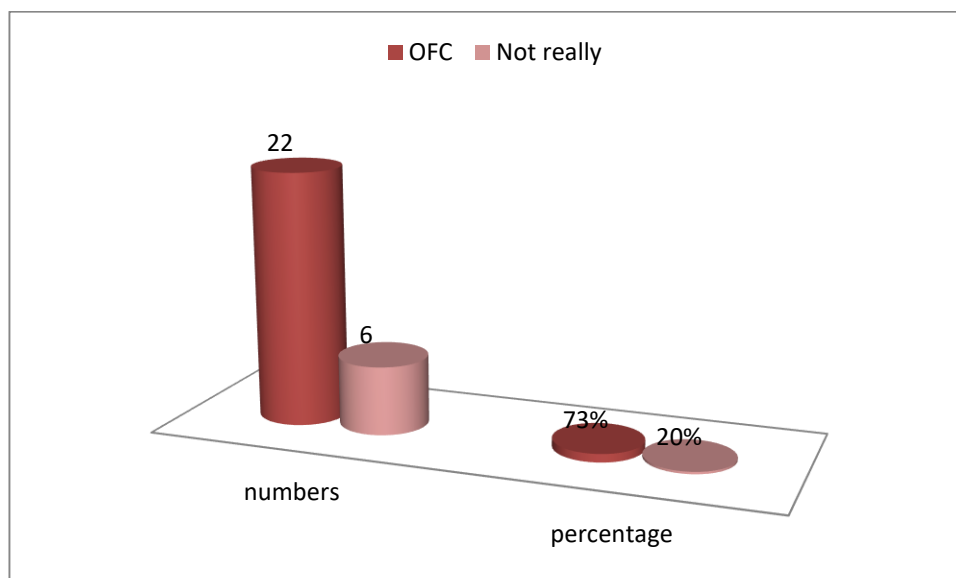


**Figure 3.18 Pragmatic competence**

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The goal is to assess EFL pragmatic skills at Mohammed Khider Biskra University. Twenty-two respondents claimed to lack pragmatic skills. It could be that they still miss a key feature that allows them to be pragmatically competent. On the other side, eight learners consider themselves pragmatically capable. We asked respondents to justify their choice. While mentioned that they dislike pragmatics as module or disinterested with it. Others noted that it's hard to be pragmatically competent. Furthermore, one individual emphasized that she just doesn't see herself pragmatically competent.

**Item 13: Do you think that pragmatic competence is important for English language education?**

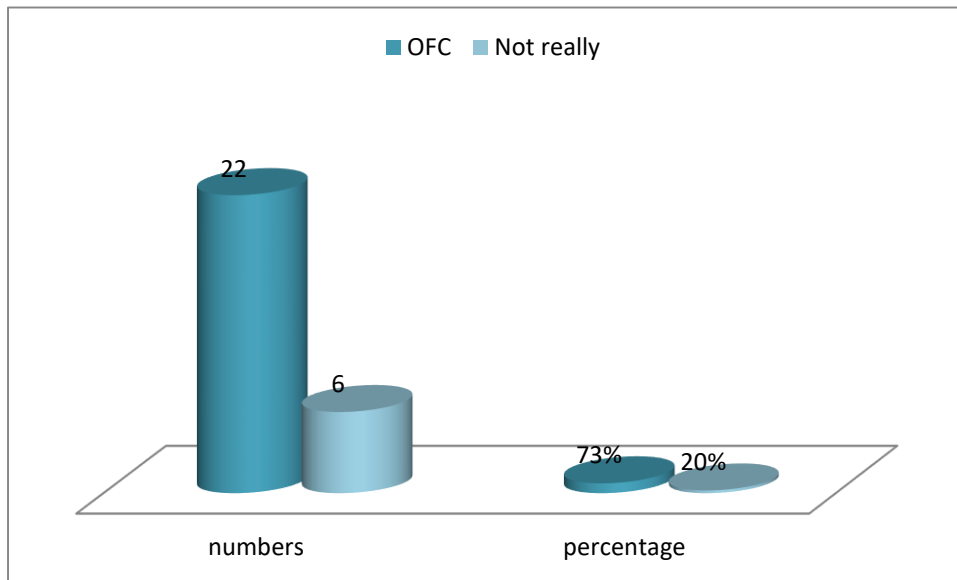


**Figure3.19 Importance of Pragmatic competence**

The findings show that twenty seven respondent see that pragmatic competence is crucial in language education. That is 90 percent of the population we sampled in our study on. Whereas three students believe that pragmatic competence is not necessary in English language education. It presented 10 percent of the population.

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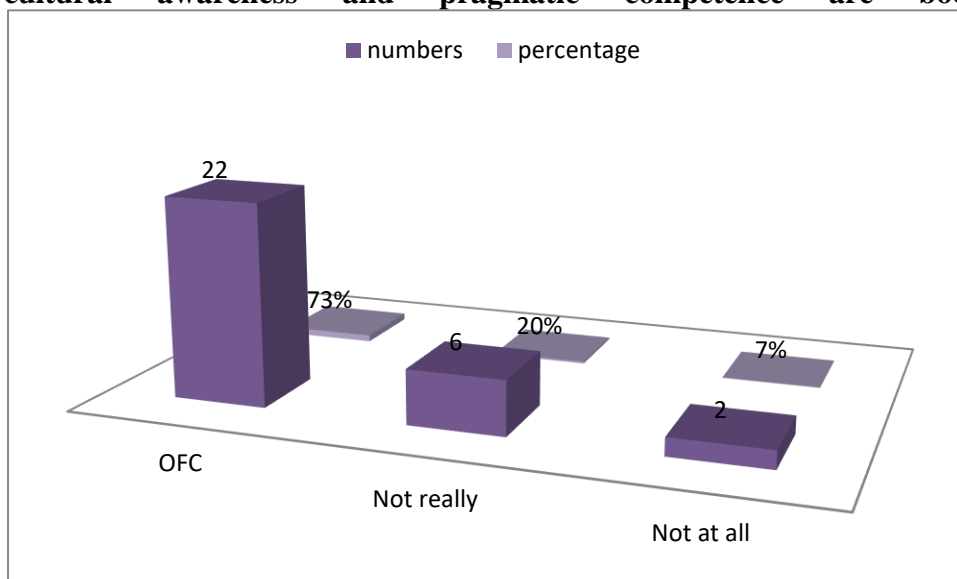
## Item 14: Can cultural awareness improve pragmatic competence?



**Figure3.20 Cultural Awareness role**

We asked respondents if they see that cultural awareness builds up pragmatic competence. The majority answered yes. Twenty eight (93%) students think that culture enhances pragmatic competence. However, just minority represented by three respondents (07%) think otherwise.

## Item 15: As an EFL do you think that the level of proficiency can be enhanced if cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are boosted as well?





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### **Figure3.21 Language proficiency in relation to Pragmatic competence and cultural Awareness**

This questionnaire was created to help us achieve the goal of our research. We asked several questions. Students were asked what constitutes linguistic mastery for any language learner. Twenty-two (73%) respondents believe that improving cultural awareness and pragmatic competence helps people improve their language skills and communicate effectively. Six others (20%) believe that improving cultural awareness and pragmatic skill is insufficient to improve language proficiency. Two more (07%) people believe that proficiency is unrelated to the two criteria indicated earlier. To summarize, the majority of people agreed with our recommendation. Learners believe that in order to achieve a specific level of language mastery, they must be both pragmatically competent and culturally insightful.

### **Conclusion**

The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed in this chapter. The latter was given out by hand to master one student at Mohammed Khider Biskra University. The questions were divided into three pieces to arrange the questionnaire. We began the investigation by asking generic questions about the respondents, such as their gender, learning journey, and how frequently they speak in English. The second section of the survey focused on cultural awareness. We began by exploring the significance of culture, as well as the term's familiarity and possible definitions. The purpose was to understand culture and cultural awareness from the perspectives of the participants. Henceforth, we began the third segment by requiring learners to supply information, definition about the field of pragmatics.

The third section focused on asking questions that could lead to a connection between the variables. It opened with questions regarding whether there is a link between culture and

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pragmatics, the definition of pragmatic competency, their own cultural knowledge of the English language, and whether lecturers integrate cultural elements during courses. Finally, the remaining questions were designed to determine whether they believe there is a link between pragmatic competence and cultural awareness, as well as what, in their opinion, constitutes language proficiency.

The research was successful thanks to the assistance of M1 students. Students are generally aware of the importance of culture in EFL learning. Whereas pragmatic competence is nearly absent for most of them. When it comes to pragmatics, students admitted that they are not entirely proficient. Pragmatics is a difficult module for them because it is their first encounter with it. They also recognize the link between pragmatics and culture. Learners claimed that mastering the English language needs both pragmatic competence and cultural awareness. Furthermore, they feel that culture aids students at strengthening pragmatic competence and cross-cultural communication.

### **General conclusion**

The English language became one of the most demanded languages. People from around the world seek to learn the English for several purposes. In Algiers, English is a part of curriculum starting from middle schools until the university. At the University of Mohamed Khider Biskra we conducted a research about cultural awareness and pragmatic competence. This qualitative research used master one student at the English department as a sample of the study. Cultural awareness is the understanding of cultural diversity as well as the significance of each culture in the building of a diverse society. EFL students have a range of reasons for wanting to study a foreign language, based on the goals they set for themselves. In order to learn any language, a student must achieve a sufficient level of communicative ability. Pragmatic competence refers to the ability to communicate effectively using both language and social skills.

The research is divided into three parts (chapters). The first chapter introduces culture as a concept, its connection to ELLs, and its consequences for language learning and communication. The pragmatic competence chapter is the second. The goal of this part is to highlight the difficulties that students face when learning a foreign language. The third chapter represented the interpretation of the data gathered through the questionnaire. With the help of M1 students, the research was completed successfully. The role of culture in EFL learning is well acknowledged among students. Most of them, on the other hand, lack pragmatic competence. Students confessed that they are not entirely skilled in pragmatics. Since it is their first interaction with pragmatics, it is a challenging module for them. They also comprehend how pragmatics and culture are interwoven. Learners reported that acquiring the English language necessitates both pragmatic and cultural competency. They also believe

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that culture might enable students improve their pragmatic competence and cross-cultural communication.

### **Limitations of the study**

During the process of every research project, researchers encounter a variety of barriers and obstacles that impede the development of the research process. This study's findings have to be seen in the light of several limitations. First, the lack of newly research that correlates between culture and pragmatics was the main obstacle that affected our research progress. Second, the number of interview participants was smaller than predicted. Moreover, the findings of this study cannot be generalized.

This study has investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards cultural awareness and pragmatic competence. Based on the finding, future researchers can further explore what constitutes pragmatic competency in other universities or with different populations. In addition, since this research study was limited with time, future researchers could extend the research study tools used to further understand this assessment method. For example, a comparison between the attitudes of the civilization and literature and science of the language branches of English in Biskra. It might highlight a new perspective for civilization and literature students. Furthermore, it could provide new data about pragmatics and pragmatic competence since this branch does not study the module of pragmatics. Exploring the communicative competence in relation with cross cultural pragmatics could also be a good idea for further research.

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### **Pedagogical implications**

Many recommendations for EFL students and teachers have been drawn from the findings of this study in order to efficiently achieve language competency. Based on the findings, the researcher suggests that professors use technology tools more frequently during lectures to motivate pupils. They should think about simplifying pragmatic lectures for students. Furthermore, teachers should emphasize the importance of pragmatics and cultural awareness to students. Teachers might devote more time to teaching the language as a whole, rather than just the syllabi. Students, on the other hand, are encouraged to share the responsibility of raising cultural awareness as university students and future researchers. They should also benefit from studying the culture of the target language to enhance their competency during communication.

Moreover, it is suggested that students use the English language more with their peers. It could help with gaining new vocabulary and ideas. Whereas educators can recommend students to read more about English culture, history, traditions, and how English language became globally used language. Achieving language competency is a long term commitment. Culture and pragmatic competence are essential components to it. It is suggested that learners should be more acquainted with both elements through discovering more about them.

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## Appendix One

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

I am currently conducting a research on cultural awareness and pragmatic competence. This questionnaire aims at collecting EFL students' attitudes toward the role of cultural awareness in developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence. You are kindly requested to provide the required information to the best of your knowledge. This information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

You are kindly asked to answer the questions below  
Your contribution will not be forgotten thank you in advance

### I. Section one : General information

Gender:

Female  Male

- Tick the correct answer

#### ❖ How do you describe your learning journey?

- Interesting
- Boring
- Hard

#### ❖ What are the difficulties you face as EFL learner?

- Four skills
- Communication
- Comprehension
- All of the above

#### ❖ Do you use English language when you interact with others?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Often
- Never



**II. Section Two : Cultural Awareness**

**1. Do you think culture is important in EFL learning?**

- Yes
- No

**2. Are you familiar with the phrase “cultural awareness”?**

- Yes
- No

**3. What is cultural awareness :**

- General knowledge about a society’s culture
- Learning a foreign language with its culture
- The ability to form relationships with foreigners
- Another if so explain:

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

**4. Do you think cultural background is necessary for acquiring English language?**

- Yes
- No

**5. What is pragmatics? provide definition:**

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

**6. Do you often encounter difficulties to understand pragmatic lectures?**

- Yes
- No

**III. Section three: culture and pragmatics**

❖ **Is there a relationship between pragmatics and culture?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain

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

❖ **What is pragmatic competence?**

- The ability to receive the meaning of a speaker
- The full knowledge about the speaker’s intention
- The study of language in context

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All of the above

❖ **As an EFL Learner are you fully equipped with cultural knowledge about the language you are Studying?**

Yes

No

• Please, Justify:

.....  
.....

❖ **How is the impact of pragmatic competence on learning?**

Negative

Positive

No impact

❖ **Does your English teacher include cultural elements during the lecture?**

Always

Usually

sometimes

never

❖ **Based on your experience, do you think that Learning English requires cultural awareness?**

Yes

No

If Yes .Explain your answer

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

❖ **According to the previous answer, can you communicate with native speaker from completely different culture than yours fluently?**

Yes

No

Maybe

❖ **How do you see yourself if you are fully equipped with English culture?**

more confident

less confident

no difference

❖ **Can you interact with foreigners without knowledge about their culture?**

Yes, I can

No, I can not

no difference

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❖ **What do you think about The English culture?**

- More challenging
- less challenging
- no difference

❖ **Is your teacher culturally aware about the English culture?**

- Yes a lot
- A little
- no idea

❖ **Are you pragmatically competent?**

- Yes
- No

Please, Justify:

.....  
.....

❖ **Do you think that pragmatic competence is important for English language education?**

- Yes
- No

❖ **Can cultural awareness improve pragmatic competence?**

- Yes
- No

❖ **As an EFL do you think that the level of proficiency can be enhanced if cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are boosted as well? .**

- Of course it Does
- Not really
- Not at all
- Another if so, please explain:

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

**Thank you so much for your time and participation.**

## المخلص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة دور الوعي الثقافي في تطوير الكفاءة البراغمتية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. يواجه طلاب الماجستير الأول في فرع اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة عقبات خلال رحلتهم التعليمية. أحد التحديات هو تعزيز الكفاءة البراغمتية. هناك مجموعة متزايدة من الأبحاث حول أهمية الكفاءة البراغمتية في اللغة المستهدفة بالإضافة إلى دور الثقافة في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. علاوة على ذلك، يهدف البحث إلى تسليط الضوء على الدور الهام للوعي الثقافي في تطوير الكفاءة البراغمتية للطلاب، وقد تم اختيار عينة هذه الدراسة عن قصد لتناسب نطاق البحث على افتراض أن الطلاب قد اكتسبوا بالفعل المعرفة الكافية باللغة. من أجل التحقيق في هذه المشكلة، افترضنا أنه إذا كان الوعي الثقافي يمكن أن يحسن الكفاءة العملية لمتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وبالتالي، يمكن أن يطور مستوى كفاءتهم أيضًا. تم توزيع استبيان على 30 طالباً وطالبة من مستوى الماستر الأول. استخدام نهج نوعي لتحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها. مناقشة النتائج تشير إلى أن ثقافة الطلاب تلعب دوراً مهماً في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، وغالباً ما يكون الطلاب على دراية بذلك. الكفاءة البراغمتية غير موجودة تقريباً لمعظمهم. أقر الطلاب أنهم ليسوا بارعين تماماً في البراغمتية. لأن هذا هو تفاعلهم الأول مع البراغمتية، فهو وحدة صعبة بالنسبة لهم. إنهم يفهمون أيضاً العلاقة بين البراغمتية والثقافة. وفقاً للمتعلمين، فإن إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية يحتاج إلى مهارة براغمتية وفهم ثقافي. علاوة على ذلك يعتقدون أن الثقافة يمكن أن تساعد الطلاب على تحسين مهاراتهم العملية والتواصل بين الثقافات. لاستنتاج فرضية البحث مؤكدة. لا يقتصر تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية على قواعدها النحوية بل يتعدى الجانب اللغوي لتحقيق الكفاءة التواصلية. يعد الوعي الثقافي والكفاءة العملية من المكونات الأساسية لتحقيق الكفاءة اللغوية

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية، الثقافة، الوعي الثقافي، الكفاءة التواصلية.