

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra
Faculty of letters and Languages
Department of English



Improving EFL Learners' Communicative Competence through Integrating Cultural Insights

Case study of Third Year LMD Students of English at Batna University

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(Science of language)**

Presented by:

Miss Manel Arroussi

Supervisor:

Mr. K. Bouteraa

Board of Examiners

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Introduction

The last decades have witnessed vast changes in our understanding to how languages are taught and learnt. Empirical results from linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology have better established the complex nature of language learning. These results have shown that communication is a vital point in language learning, and that the degree of success achieved in this process depends much on how meaning is negotiated in communication. This concept of language learning explains the emergence of communicative approaches of L2 teaching over the last decades whose pedagogical goal is to develop learners' communicative competence, i.e. the ability to use linguistic system in an effective and appropriate way respecting the socio-cultural aspect of the target language. Thus, learning how to communicate in a cultural context provides more meaning and value to the communication process because when isolating language from its cultural dimension becomes senseless and meaningless. Cultural competence, being one of the fundamental elements of communicative competence, affects learners' communicative level. The more students know about the social and cultural side of the TL speech community, the better their communicative competence becomes. However, the incorporation of the cultural dimension in the third year LMD classes is not given much importance which reflects negatively on students' communicative level. The reason might be the lack of exposing learners to communicative cultural contexts in which students get acknowledged about the real use of language in such situations.

The main concern of this paper is to help language teachers better understand the relationship existing between integrating culture and learners' achievements in communication, for improving their classroom practices and so helping learners to develop their communicative abilities through integrating the cultural and social side of the target language in their classrooms. In the two first chapters constituting the literature review, the interest firstly was to review the historical background of the term competence and communicative competence, and we stressed on communicative teaching approach and how to apply it in EFL classroom, shedding light on the main points that concern it. Secondly, we focused on culture inclusion in teaching a foreign language in general and in improving learners' communicative aspect in particular.

1. Background and Significance of the Study

The application of communicative methodology is not an easy task; in fact, it represents a challenge to language teachers since it requires an understanding of the complex and integrated nature of the theoretical concept of communicative competence. When we turn to the practical side of the concept of communicative competence, we hypothesize that students' competence in communication is not in the expected level that the communicative teaching approach draws. One of the reasons that are considered as an obstacle for enhancing learners' communicative competence is the lack of the exposure to the cultural aspect. Students learn how to communicate away from the cultural aspect. This research is conducted to emphasize the role of integrating the cultural aspect of the target language as a basic element to develop learners' communicative competence. Hence, cultural aspect, among other aspects like the pragmatic or linguistic one, is important in building learners' communicative competence. This study also gives an overview on related notions of communicative competence, and more important, how to achieve it. Furthermore, it investigates the main points that the CLT approach focus on, what kind of activities that should be addressed to the students, and also suggests some cultural rules and norms of the target language that students must know in order to be competent in real life communicative contexts.

This research is concerned with 3rd year LMD students of English at Batna University and their disabilities in practicing communication this is mainly because of the lack of exposure to cultural contexts which role is to enhance learners' competence in communication. It encourages teachers to focus on the general objective of the communicative approach which is creating more communicative contexts integrating the cultural and social dimension in the classroom.

2. Statement of the Problem

EFL classes are generally part of societies whose culture is far from the target language culture. This is the case of 3rd year LMD classes of English in Batna University, where the norms of foreign language are often very strange to the students. This unfamiliarity towards the cultural and social norms of the target community causes an obstacle for the learners to be at ease in communication and might be the reason of the

deficient level of their communicative competence. Although the CLT approach insists of integrating the cultural aspect in the classroom and focus on the fact that the desired goal is to communicate in real situations, culture and communication are far from being implemented in the classroom. As a result, students' level of cultural and communicative competence would not be at the expected level that the CLT approach draws. The fact that the lack of communication opportunities in the class, and the students' limited knowledge of the socio-cultural rules are the reasons of being students incompetent in real communicative situations, pushed us to look for the issue so to attract teachers' attention to the seriousness of this problem

3. The Hypothesis

It is hypothesised that integrating the cultural dimension in the EFL classrooms improves learners' communicative competence.

4. Basic assumption

We assume that third year students of English are not adequately competent in communication because of the lack of exposure to the cultural aspect of the TL.

5. Objectives of the Study

Our main objectives are:

- 1- To clarify the concept of communicative competence as a general term and in FL teaching/learning.
- 2- To determine the role of the CLT approach in improving learners' communicative competence.
- 3- To analyse the importance of the socio-cultural aspect for the learners' communicative competence.
- 4- To investigate the relationship between students' knowledge of socio-cultural rules and their achievements in communicative contexts.

6. Limitation of the Study

Along this study, we will be limited to the analyses of the role of integrating culture on third year LMD students' communicative competence. Focus will be made on isolating the cultural element without attributing much concern to other factors like pragmatic or linguistic elements for instance.

7. Methodology Design

a- Choice of the Method

In order to draw the link between integrating the cultural aspect of the target language and the development of the 3rd year LMD students' communicative competence, we opted for the use of the descriptive method, which will permit us to identify this relationship, and moreover, to collect the needed data about the subject under investigation. An experimental method would be of no usefulness if we consider that nothing new would be tested and that we will only report and analyse conditions of the current situation.

b- Population

Students of the department of English at Batna University attitudes toward the subject under investigation are of relevance in this study. Students of English at Batna University enrolled for the academic year 2012/2013.

The choice of these subjects is related to a number of facts. First of all, in relation to the 3rd year students' knowledge of our subject that has been developed through previous years of studying English. Secondly, in relation to the linguistic background if we consider that they come from different streams, with different abilities and difficulties that first and second year are expected to erase, and more importantly, this choice is based on learners' complaints during our studying experience.

Students' sample

Since our objective of study is not to get all the students' perceptions of the problem, we used simple random sampling technique; the questionnaire will be administered to 30 students of third year LMD students chosen randomly.

9. Data Collection Tools

Questionnaires: In order to obtain the perception of students and teachers, a questionnaire is designed for this for both populations. The questionnaire is used as the main source of data and seems the most appropriate tool for its guarantee of the respondents' anonymity and the short period of time if compared to the interview for instance.

Piloting

Piloting the questionnaire was of a great relevance since it permitted us to bring important corrections in both students' and teachers' questionnaire.

10. Data Analyses

All the obtained data will be presented in tables, statically analysed to be interpreted. Answers are going to be presented in terms of numbers and percentages.

Introduction

The idea of competence and communicative competence in its modern guise has its origin with Chomsky's (1965) distinction of competence/performance and the reframing of Saussure's (1922) langue/parole. Few years later, several developments occurred in the field of studying language theories made by many researchers resulted in the construct of the term communicative competence. This chapter gives an overview on the notion of competence and its origins; it also gives a clear definition of communicative competence and teaching competence of communication in a foreign language.

I.1 About Competence

Saussure's distinction of langue/parole led to the appearance of Chomsky's linguistic theory and his distinction of competence/performance. However, they explain each of the two paradigms in different points of view.

I.1.1 Langue and Competence

In 1922, Saussure introduced the three controversial terms: "language", "langue" and "parole", according to Lyons (1996) in his analysis of Saussure's three concepts, he claims that "language" is the faculty of speech or ability to speak that all human beings possess, where as "langue" is composed of all aspects and features of language taken as a whole assuming that it is an individual's possession, "Saussure's langue refers to languages as supra-individual entities" (p.15). "Parole" is the actual use of utterances; and an external appearance of langue, "it is the usage of the system but not the system" (Lyons, 1996, p. 14). A good deal of confusion happened among linguists in translating these concepts to English, since Saussure is from Swiss origins, however, it is understood in English, as a language that, "the product of the use of a langue is language, and, if it is the product of speech, it is parole" (Ibid).

Chomsky's distinction of competence/performance came as a reaction to Saussure's langue/parole, this reaction was revolutionary and provided a better sense than Saussure's

theory did about langue/parole. For Chomsky (1965), competence refers to the tacit knowledge of the language and differs from person to person, he claims that it is related to the mental capacity of the individual, Lyons (1996, p. 15) states “it refers to something psychological or mental (i.e. something in an individual’s mind or brain)”. “Performance” in Chomsky’s sense is the production and understanding of utterances, Philips and Tan (2009) defined Chomsky’s performance as the formal recognition of competence, they argue that the notion of sentence means the hidden knowledge in the mind (competence) whereas utterance is the apparent side of the language, “sentence is a concept related to competence, while utterance to performance”. In another sense, performance (the actual use) defines one’s competence (the knowledge of language)

Concerning the comparison between Saussure’s “langue” and Chomsky’s “competence”, Chomsky’s (1965) theory of competence contradicts in some points with Saussure’s definition of langue, for example, Saussure (1922) views “langue” as a social phenomenon and has nothing to do with the individual, he proposes that it is related and governed by the society and not manipulated by the individual but rather it differs from a society to another, he states “elle est la partie social du language, exterieur à l’individu” (p. 31). By contrast, Chomsky (1965) views “competence” not as a social product, but rather, as an individual property on the grounds that it is controlled by the mental and psychological capacity of the individual that differs from person to person and can be developed, controlled, used or even lost. Lyons (1996, p. 15) states “it is based on psychology and presumes individual differences between human beings”.

According to Lyons (1996), it seems that Chomsky refuses to identify his notion of “competence” with Saussure’s “langue”. In his book: *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965), he commented “necessary to reject [Saussure’s] concept of langue as merely a systematic inventory of items” (p. 31), instead, he returns to a rationalist model of underlying competence as “a system of generative processes” (ibid). Philips and Tan (2009) deduced that this may explain reasonably, events of linguistic innovation in unexpected situations, as well as relevance of words and interpretation in particular situations, because the person’s competence allows him to generate and to invent new and unheard linguistic utterances.

To sum up, Chomsky came up with the term “competence” not as a substitute to Saussure’s “langue”, but as reaction to it, so there should be no association of the two terms.

I.1.2 Chomsky’s Competence

Although Saussure’s “langue” is considered as one of the most important linguistic concepts of the 20th century, Chomsky’s revolutionary “competence” found more echo. The reason might be, as supposed by Lyons (1996), that knowledge of a language including the ability to generate an infinite number of sentences from a limited set of grammatical rules (competence) is more important than possessing the appropriate language system (langue).

Before Chomsky introduced the term competence, he first presented theory of “generative grammar” in the mid 1950’s, which was the main source of constructing his linguistic theory. According to Lyons (1996), it is defined as a set of rules that generate the sentences of a language and put together to achieve a structural description. For him, a language was defined as being a set of sentences being defined in turn as grammatically well formed strings of words. However, in Chomsky’s original presentation of generative grammars as models of competence (linguistic competence), Lyons (1996, p. 19) claims “there is no question but that it is [linguistic competence] the language of the speech community that is held to be internalised by individuals and subsequently stored in their brains as knowledge of a language”. Philips and Tan (2009) claim that Chomsky considers competence as an innate knowledge of rules; they state “it is to be innate because one apparently does not have to be trained to acquire it, and it can be applied to an unlimited number of previously unheard examples”. Obviously, this assumption is applied in the realm of the first language (native language). Furthermore, in addition to the terms of generative grammar and linguistic competence, Chomsky came up with the term “language faculty” which was one of his major concerns, it is explained by Philips and Tan (2009) “the internalized system of rules of the language that makes the person able to generate the infinite number of sentences”. The individual’s competence, which is represented mentally

and clearly shown by his understanding of acceptable usage of language, is defined by his grammatical knowledge (Chomsky, 1965).

Afterwards in the 80's, Chomsky went deeper to give a better explanation to the term competence and draws a distinction between: a- knowing the forms of the language, b- the ability to use the language that one knows, and c- actually using it. He argues that the underlying system of language that Saussure calls it "langue" is often more associated with knowledge and ability. He clearly states "the term competence entered the technical literature in an effort to avoid the slew problems related to "knowledge" but it is misleading in that it suggests "ability", -an association I would like to sever-" (p.59).

I.1.3 Criticism of Chomsky's Competence

Although Chomsky's brief definition of competence and performance in the opening section of his book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965)* is unexceptional, there is much he has to say about both that have been widely criticised. For Lyons (1996), some of the criticisms are valid, others are not.

Let us consider the following passage which was from the first section of his book:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker and listener, in a completely homogenous speech community who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of language in actual performance. (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3).

It is clear that what Chomsky is concerned with here is linguistic theory, Lyons (1996, p. 2) criticised the idea of "the ideal speaker-listener" as an "artificial construct" as well as the "homogenous speech community". Chomsky's (1965) generative grammars theory as models of linguistic competence, considers linguistic competence of the native

speakers' speech community held to be internalized and stored in their minds as knowledge of language and they ought to be ideal and perfect, Lyons (1996, P.19) explains "the ideal speaker-listener is held to know his/her language perfectly". Furthermore, there are many criticisms from other linguists like Selinker (1996), and Riley (1996) who argue that this theory is too idealistic. Selinker (1996) for example, claims that it might be acceptable to apply the notion of idealisation in a native speakers' speech community (first language acquisition), but when it comes to second language acquisition, it is quite difficult to apply this notion; the learner of a second language may make mistakes related to grammar or spelling, or may have had problems in memory or attention etc. He states "we can agree, for example, with this point that Chomsky's "ideal speaker-listener" a prerequisite to the competence/performance distinction, has been quite difficult to translate into the realm of second language acquisition (ideal learner?), the attempt causing much confusion" (p.94). Riley (1996) criticised that Chomsky's competence is unwarranted and completely misdirected.

These criticisms led to the broadening of the original concept of "linguistic competence" to "communicative competence" introduced by Hymes (1972).

I.2 Communicative Competence

The theory of communicative competence was introduced as a result of the Chomskyan revolution in linguistics. A reaction to Chomsky's somewhat limiting definition of the scope of linguistic theory left the way open for Hymes (1972) to propose the complementary notion of communicative competence, in which the focus is not on a well formed sentence but on one which is appropriately used in a specific context.

I.2.1 Early Sociolinguists Contributions

Chomsky's linguistic theory of competence/performance opened the way to many language researchers in order to broaden the concept of competence.

During the communicative era of 1970's, a number of sociolinguists called for the development of the term competence, and turn it into a notion that would provide a better reflection of real life language use (communicative competence). John Oller (1976, 1979, 1981), for instance, whose theory of underlying competence in which he claims that the object of interest is language as it is used for communicative purposes. There is also Hymes (1972), who is considered as the main constructor of the foundations of the theory of communicative competence, differentiated between communicative competence (the use of language appropriately in social situations), and linguistic competence (the knowledge of rules of grammar), and emphasized the relationship between them. Additionally, he included a new type of ability (the ability for use) which is defined as "the individual's underlying potential to realize a possible, feasible and appropriate speech act (Shohamy, 1996, p.139). Canale and Swain (1980) were one of the first contributors of the development of communicative competence theory, but their contribution related more to theories of second language learning. Their argument was that linguistic competence should be viewed as part of communicative competence since rules of grammar are meaningless without rules of use. Whereas Hymes (1974) viewed communicative competence as including-ability for use-, Canale and Swain (1980) had a different point of view, they excluded -ability for use- from their study of communicative competence, instead, they included -ability for use- in what they called "communicative performance", which they defined as the actual production of competence and realization of this production in real second language situations (Shohamy, 1996). After the 70's and 80's studies on communicative competence still developing. A number of steps which have been taken in the followed years to construct the theory of communicative competence indicate that there are moves in that direction. The emergence of Bachman's (1990) theoretical studies, for instance, played a role in giving the construct of communicative competence a wider view; he gave a definition of communicative language in educational contexts in a broader conception than found in other studies such as Hymes'. Other contributors such as Spolsky (1989), Taylor (1988), Celce Murcia et al (1995), Us-juan and Martinez-flor (2006)...etc were helpful in giving the communicative competence construct a clear definition that goes along with the evolution in language use by time because the definition of communicative competence still in a continued development and many researches and investigations are held to fit changes that occurs in language use by time.

I.2.2 Hymes' Work

It is useful in any discussion of Hymes' notion of communicative competence to bear in mind its origins.

On communicative competence (1971, page reference to experts in Pride and Holmes, 1972, p. 269, 293) developed from a paper presented at the Research Planning conference on Language Development among Disadvantaged Children held at Yeshiva University, June 1978. Hymes points to the relevance of the linguistic theory to the language development of children, and he selects, from among the linguistic theories available to him, that presented by Chomsky (1965). In his theory, Hymes explains that the child who is actively involved in the speech community with an unconscious interpretation, will be able to master an infinite ability of producing and interpreting any grammatical sentence of language with a finite experience in few years within contexts in which socio-cultural factors play a fundamental and constitutive role (Riley, 1996). This was Hymes' foundation and the basis of constructing the theory of communicative competence where his main focus was the first language acquisition.

And then, as Riley (1996) claimed, unintentionally, Hymes' notion of communicative competence moved further away from Chomskyan paradigm and was adopted by those applied linguists who used the term to refer to knowledge of rules of use. They agreed on Hymes' idea that rules of grammar would be useless without rules of use and applied his theory of communicative competence on second language teaching, and second language acquisition using methodologies falling within the communicative approach of language teaching in which the focus is on communicative purposes rather than the linguistic rules.

We can say that Hymes' work on the presentation of the theory of "communicative competence" played a role in further studies that relied on his concept to come up with effective approaches and broader definitions of terms related to teaching a second or a foreign language.

I.3 Definition of Communicative Competence

The term communicative competence was coined by Dell Hymes (1972) who defined it as the knowledge of both rules of grammar and rules of language use in a given context. His work clearly demonstrated a shift of emphasis among linguists, away from the study of language as a system in isolation -seen in the work of Chomsky (1965)- towards the study of language as a system of communication.

I.3.1 Hymes' Definition of Communicative Competence

According to Chomsky (1965), linguistic competence is the knowledge of language that enables the speaker-listener to produce and understand an infinite number of utterances and distinguish between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. He believes that linguistic competence can be separated from communicative competence and studied in isolation. However, Hymes (1972) disagrees with Chomsky in this point, he considers that linguistic competence and communicative competence are inseparable and believes that the notion of linguistic competence is unreal and there is no progress without studying forms of language along with the ways in which they are used. In another sense, Hymes (1972) did not claim that a language user do not need to have an accurate knowledge of linguistic forms or usage, but rather, he claimed that the perfect knowledge of linguistic form is not enough to make him/her communicatively competent language user. Wolfson (1989) supports Hymes in his opinion and points that grammatical competence is an inseparable part of communicative competence and indicates that Hymes emphasises that

Communicative competence is what enables the person to perform appropriately in speech events. It includes not only grammatical competence, which allows a person to judge to what degree something is formally possible, but also the competence to judge feasibility, appropriateness, and to what degree something is in fact done.

(Cited in Riley, 1996, p. 115).

So, Communicative competence for Hymes includes the whole of linguistic competence plus the knowledge of the rules and conventions for using language items in contexts.

I.3.2 Components of Communicative Competence

As stated earlier, Hymes focuses on the point that for language to be used in communication, the speaker must possess both capacity to construct grammatically correct sentences and also the competence to produce socially appropriate utterances. Communication then, depends on communicative competence and communicative competence can be seen inclusive of many components, these components should be mastered or at least acknowledged by the speaker-hearer for better understanding in communicative contexts. Several linguists and sociolinguists categorised communicative competence components into: linguistic component; discursive component; socio-cultural component; and strategic component.

A-Linguistic component: It is the mastery of language code itself (syntactico-morphological, semantic, and morphological) rules. Shohamy (1996, p.143) defined it “linguistic component includes knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology”

B- Discursive component: It is a knowledge and understanding of different types of discourse (formal/informal speech) and of their organization as a function of the situation of communication within which they are produced. Moreover, it is the mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a competent social situation. For Shohamy (1996, p.143) “discursive component is related to mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres”. Schechter (1996, p. 144) relates her definition to cohesion and coherence in written or spoken text, “discourse knowledge is viewed as cohesion and coherence”.

C-Socio-cultural component: It is the knowledge of the social rules and norms of interaction between individuals, including knowledge of cultural history and of the relations between social objects. It is also the ability to use and respond to language appropriately given the setting and topic and the relation between people communicating. Shohamy (1996, p.143) defines it “knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use”.

D- Strategic component: it is concerned with the strategies of communication and how to use them. For Van EK (1995), it is the ability to use compensatory to resolve communicative problems and deficiencies (break downs in communication).

I.4 Continued Developments of Communicative Competence

Hymes' (1972) conceptualization of communicative competence has been further developed by researchers such as Canal and Swain (1980) and Canal (1983), Bachman (1990), Celce-Murcia et al (1995), and many others, who attempted to define specific components of the construct of communicative competence.

We will shed light only on two main models of communicative competence that were considered as the first works that attempt to broaden the term of communicative competence: Canal and Swain (1980) in their framework of communicative competence, and Bachman's (1990) model of communicative language ability.

I.4. a- Canal and Swain's Model(1980)

The first theoretical model to address a broader concept of the components of language was that of Canal and Swain (1980). Spolsky (1989, cited in Shohamy, 1996) notes that the development of communicative competence theory had an indirect effect on theories of second language learning, and offered a theoretical basis for teaching language for communication since it is related more to Hymes' notion of communicative competence that was concerned to some extent to second language teaching.

Their argument is that linguistic competence should be seen as a vital part of communicative competence. The model includes four competencies under the heading of communicative competence: grammatical competence i.e. knowledge of language code; sociolinguistic competence i.e. knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use in a particular context; discourse competence i.e. knowledge of achieving coherence and cohesion in a spoken or written text. Pragmatic competence is essentially included in this model under sociolinguistic competence. Canal and Swain (1980, p. 30) described it as "socio-cultural rules of use". They added strategic competence i.e. the ability to avoid and correct mistakes in communication. They claim that a valid measure of language ability needs to include these four components. Nevertheless, this model has been criticised by Shohamy (1996) on the grounds that it is not known how the different components interact among each other. From the other hand, and despite the criticisms, she indicates that this

framework put foundations to teaching and learning a second language, she stated “it is not important to emphasize that the acceptance of Canale and Swain framework was not necessarily an indication of the strength of the model, but rather an indication of the state of the art in language teaching and learning at the time” (Shohamy, 1996, p .144)

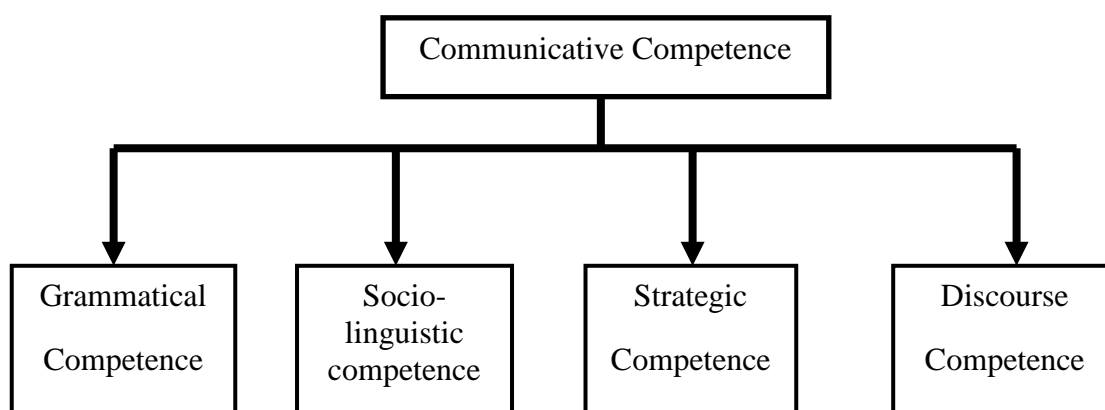


Figure. 01 Canale and Swain’s Model (1980)

1.4.b-Bachman’s Model (1990)

The most important development in constructing the theory of communicative competence was the emergence of “Communicative Language Ability Model” of Bachman (1990), who claims that, unlike Canale and Swain’s framework, this model focus on the point that language components interact with each other, along with the context in which language use occurs. He further indicates that he adopts Hymes’ sense that communicative competence is not limited to linguistic competence (Shohamy, 1996).

This model includes three elements, namely language competence, strategic competence, and physiological mechanisms. Bachman (1990) explains that language competence comprises two further components: organizational and pragmatic competence. On one hand, organizational competence consists of grammatical competence (knowledge of vocabulary, graphology, semantics, morphology, phonology and syntax), and textual competence (discourse competence) which means cohesion and coherence. On the other hand, pragmatic competence consists of illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. The former referring to knowledge of speech acts and language functions and

the latter referring to knowledge of how to use language functions appropriately in a given context. Apart from language competence, this model also includes strategic competence and psychological mechanisms. The former refers to the mental capacity to implement language competence appropriately in the situation in which the communication takes place, whereas the latter refers to the neurological processes that are involved in language use. However, this model has been praised by many scholars such as Skehan (1990), who clarifies that there is coordination between components. However, Spolsky (1989, cited in Shohamy, 1996, p. 149) criticises it by “being too complex and difficult to apply”.

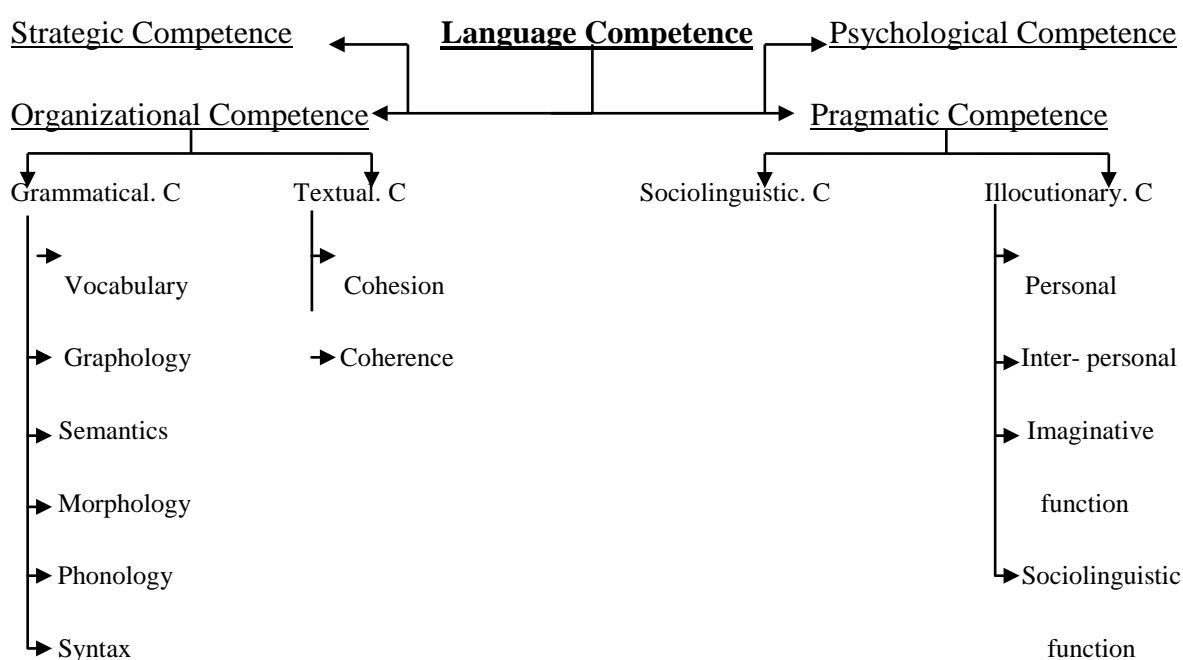


Figure. 02 Bachman's Model (1990)

I.5 Communicative Competence and L2 Teaching and Learning

Since our goal in this paper is to focus on teaching competence in communication, we will describe the main ideas of the CLT approach (the functional-notional approach).

The ultimate goal of teaching competence of communication is to enable EFL students master the language structure along with developing their communicative abilities. However, many research projects exploring the role of instruction in learners' communicative development have been inspired by the question: can communicative

competence be taught? Kasper (1997) argues that while communicative competence cannot be taught, students should be provided with opportunities to develop their communicative abilities. As a result, the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) arose, for the purpose of fulfilling communicative goals of the second language.

I.5.1 Communicative Language Teaching Approach

The main aim of the CLT approach is to focus on the communicative aspect of language rather than focus on the linguistic one. Widdoson (1978, p. 1) assumes that in this approach “language is automatically taught as communication by the simple expedient of concentrating on notions or functions rather than on sentences”. CLT and the traditional methods such as the Audio-Lingual Method and the Direct Method are similar in that they all aim at teaching language for communication. The Audio-Lingual Method for instance relies on imitation, repetition and drills, whereas the Direct Method tries to establish a direct link between the target language and meaning by immersing students in a rich sample of the structural and lexical items (Widdowson, 1978). However, according to Widdoson (1978, p. 3), the focus on grammar does not help learners; “learners need to develop their communicative abilities, and encouraged to communicate using constructs other than rote memorized patterns”. He points that meaningful communication supports language learning and intends to provide opportunities in the classroom in an attempt to engage learners in the target language and that classroom activities must focus on the learner’s needs to communicate information and ideas. Berns (1984, p. 5), an expert in the field of communicative language teaching, supposes that the focus must be on form along with meaning in social contexts. He writes that “language is interaction; it is interpersonal activity and has a clear relationship with society, in this light, language teaching has to look at the use (function) of language in contexts, (both linguistic and social context)”.

For many educators, the CLT approach is a flexible method rather than a defined set of teaching practices in the meaning that learners are required to be active and participate freely in the classroom activities without any pressure or obligation. Nunan (1991) claimed that “CLT is usually characterized as a broad approach to teaching, rather than as a teaching method with a clearly defined set of classroom practices”. He drew the basic features of this approach, and listed some characteristics of classroom practices, such

as focussing on learning to communicate through interaction, engaging learners in learning process i.e. making the learner an active element in the classroom, and also making learners' own personal experience an important element in the classroom learning. As these features show, the communicative approach is concerned with the unique individual needs of each learner who can acquire the desired skills rapidly and agreeably if we apply the idea of making the language relevant to the world and the outside environment rather than making it relevant only to the classroom.

Concerning the methods and techniques used in this approach, they are several and various; teachers use them to approve their classroom practices as well as their students' communicative abilities. According to Habermas (1975), allowing learners to choose what they want to communicate about freely and choosing a topic that aims to focus on different social meanings enables them to feel at ease while communicating and gives the opportunity to each student to speak and express thoughts and opinions and share or exchange experiences. Other techniques proposed by Widdoson (1678), such as using authentic language and classroom exchanges where students engage in negotiation and cooperate between each other taking the form of pair and group work, he also suggested fluency-based activities that encourage learners to develop their confidence, role-plays in which students practise and develop language functions, as well as grammar and pronunciation focused activities.

I.5.2 Methodological Framework of CLT

In CLT approach, several activities must be practised by learners in order to develop their abilities in both linguistic as well as communicative aspects. A suggested framework of CLT by Lebbal (2006, p. 37) contains pre-communicative activities and communicative activities. The former includes structural activities and quasi-communicative activities, and the latter includes functional communication and social interaction.

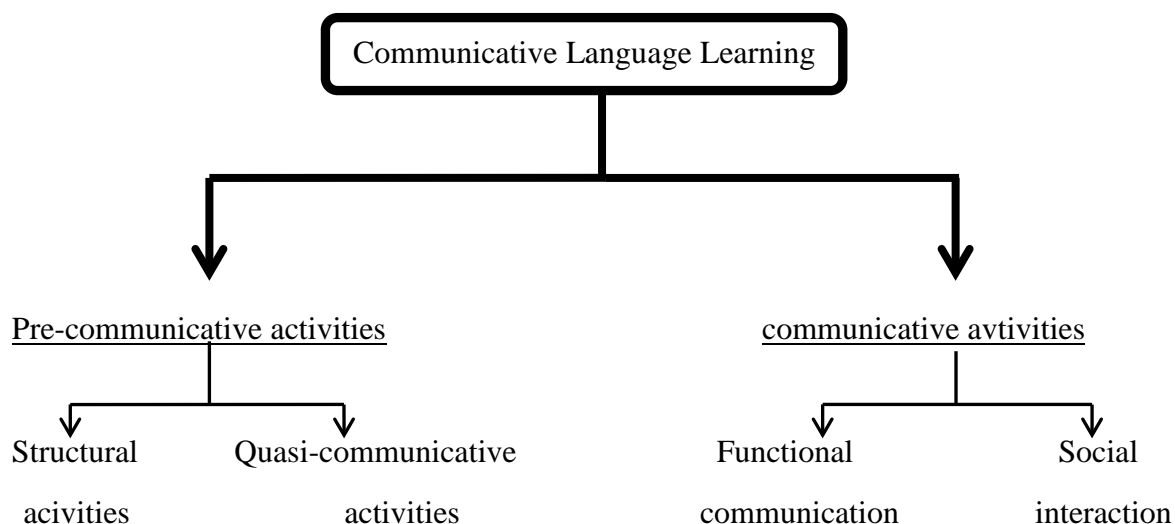


Figure. 03 A suggested framework of the CLT approach

1-Pre-communicative activities: In this kind of activities, the learner will practise some activities before being able to communicate, they are a kind of preparation for communication activities, they include two kinds of activities: structural activities that are important for the correct structure of language whose goal is to enhance the learners' linguistic knowledge by learning grammar rules (regular/irregular verbs, tenses...etc). Quasi-communicative activities, the learner apply the grammatical rules in social contexts in the classroom. In this stage, learners have an acceptable level of communicative abilities in which they are able to arrange grammatically correct sentences in social context.

2/Communicative activities: In this kind of activities, the focus is on the learners' abilities in communication. They include functional activities that focus on language functions; in which the learners move further to learn the different functions of language such as greeting, thanking, apologising...etc and actually use them in communication in the classroom, they also learn notions related to time, location, space...etc and use them in real conversations with each other in the classroom. Social interaction activities are such activities whose goal is to focus on the social interaction among learners. In this stage, they learn about the social rules used in the target language such as how to talk with a friend, a boss, a teacher, a higher economic or social status person...etc. Learners will be able to interact with each other about personal topics of mutual interest.

Subsequently, in CA, a combination of activities may be found. For example teachers can use motivational activities which are meant to add an element of enjoyment in the classroom. Example, games, songs, physical activities, puzzles...etc. There are also activities which enable the students to learn the language while at the same time being involved in a real activity like finding facts. Example, gathering information outside the classroom, interviews with peers and others. In addition to this, there are activities which simulate reality within the classroom situation and enable to broaden the context of language learning outside its walls. For example, improvisation, role playing, story-telling...etc. In teaching grammar in particular, the teacher can use activities in which part of the information is supplied and students are required to supply the remaining information, so as to communicate in a more real situation. For example, interacting with one another on the basis of incomplete information or interacting with others to change their opinion. We can find group activities which are widely used to create opportunities and share personal feeling and emotions. For example, small groups or pairs solve problems or discuss issues concerned with personal experiences. Furthermore, these activities allow students to focus on the activity rather on the language. For example, small group discussions around topical or political issues, making recommendations and arriving at conclusions about concrete problems. In order to improve the students' four skills, some activities are applied. For example in reading, previewing materials before reading, using the SQ3R strategies (survey, question, read, recite, and review). In writing, reassembling language to build sentences and paragraphs.

I.5.3 Focus on Form and Focus on Meaning

“Teaching a foreign language is not tantamount to giving a homily on syntax structures or learning new vocabulary and expressions” as (Thonasous, 2001, p. 26) stated when it comes to a mere communicative era, where the functional aspect of the target language reflecting the different social meanings and systems that control it and regulate the linguistic attitudes and behaviours is stressed more than ever, and more the form of the sentence which once isolated from its communicative token, or use it as an independent unit becomes useless and meaningless. Therefore, a foreign language learner is asked to look deeper and adequately handle it for best communicative effect. In this context Hymes states “Being competent in communication involves more than just an understanding of the syntax and range of expression within a language”. (1972, cited in Baker, 2003, p. 45). Consequently, language teaching and learning is no more devoted to the unique teaching

and learning of the pure linguistic systems, but largely expanded to include the social aspect of the language and stressing of the communicative goal, as explained by Hymes (Ibid) “language teaching has also changed to incorporate this link between society and language”. We can say that the above suggested activities draw a link between the form of messages and their meanings in social contexts.

I.5.4 The Role of the Teacher

The goal of teachers who use the Communicative Approach is to have students become communicatively competent. Widdowson (1978, p. 105) claims that “the challenge for second or foreign language teaching is whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that learners benefit the development of communicative competence”. To do that, the teacher encourages his learners to speak and express their ideas and opinions without emphasis on grammar and spelling mistakes. Widdowson (1978, p.19) suggests “teachers must focus on communication and meaning rather than accuracy”. Teacher also should listen to his students when they are speaking, he must step back and observe. Larsen-Freeman (1986) claims “teachers in communicative classrooms will find themselves talking less and listening more, becoming active facilitators of their students’ learning”. Gerngross and puchta (1984, p. 98) add “that the teacher be a patient listener is the basic requirement”. Also one of the major concerns of the teacher is that he/she should make the classroom more comfortable and enjoyable environment in order to motivate learners by creating communicative exercises which aim to develop their confidence in communication. Simmons and Page (2010) suggest some activities such as role-play, interviews, information gap, games, language exchanges, surveys pair-work...etc. Widdowson (1978) insists on the point that teachers are required to correct the learners’ mistakes after finishing the task instead of correcting while speaking and interrupting the speaking flow. He also advises teachers to use authentic materials such as films, songs, documentary videos, records...etc.

I.5.5 The Role of the Learner

Learners are required to speak and communicate rather than just repeat phrases. “The students do most of the speaking, and frequently the scene of a classroom during a

communicative exercise is active” Widdowson (1978, p. 53). Students are encouraged to interact with each other and with the teacher so as they learn from each others’ mistakes, they are required to participate in classroom communicative activities and be productive rather than receptive learners. Learners must create an active environment in the classroom by engaging in group work activities in order to make learning process more enjoyable and interesting. Learners should seek for communication opportunities outside the classroom with native speakers through different means of communication technology in order to learn the second language pronunciation (fluency, accuracy) and social rules and cultural norms (appropriateness), in order to use them inside the classroom while performing communicative tasks.

I.6 Psychological Factors in the Classroom

Since the main objective of the CLT approach is to focus on communication tasks and on the learner’s performance in the classroom, it is a hard task for him/her to stand in front of an audience and perform a communicative activity, if the learner fears of being watched by a large number of students or has certain psychological problems such as shyness, scene phobia, and troubles in pronunciation...etc, it could be an obstacle in learning process, and in performing communicative activities. The critical audience can influence the learner negatively and causes more psychological problems, but the teacher’s critics may have bigger effect on the learner. So, the role of the teacher here is to reduce critical judgments, increase praise and ignore the learner’s mistakes and focus on the meaning of the conveyed message. The teacher must put more regard on learners’ psychological issues and put in consideration that each learner is a special case in the classroom and each one is different in his attitudes, way of thinking, behaviour, personality, intelligence...

I.7 Problems Effecting FLL Competence in Communication

Learners’ problems in communication are reflected on their level of communication that may vary between poor and average, these problems are due to several factors. One of these factors is the amount of exposure to English language during their total learning process (from middle to secondary school). Taking into account that statistically,

classroom exposure to English is about 524 hours counting 3 hours a week for a period of 5 years (2 years in the middle school and 3 years in secondary school), remains insufficient to meet learners' communicative needs as explained by Mountford and Mackay (1978, p. 2)

When the English as a foreign language is taught to children at the primary school and early secondary levels of education, it is generally taught with a general aim and in mind-that is, it is regarded as a good thing for them to learn a foreign language as a part of a broad education. There is usually, however, no immediate and specific requirement for such children to make use of the language in many communicative situation.

They carry on stressing the fact that "inevitably what is taught to primary and secondary level children is not communicative knowledge of the English language use, but a knowledge of how the syntax and lexical rules of English operate" (ibid, p. 3). Hence, students arriving at University lack many aspects of the language that negatively effects their performances in communication stated by Brumfit (1979, p. 116)

The problem is that students who have received several years of formal English teaching frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or written mode.

Students' deficiency in communication may cover the vocabulary area, if we consider that the University learner must possess at least 3000 words at the university level, the learner then may be in the possibility to fluently handle the language and therefore communication as advocated by Laufter (1992, cited in Richards and Renandeya, 2002, p. 259) "knowing a minimum of about 3.000 words was required for effective reading at the university level. Whereas knowing 5.000 words indicated likely communicative success". Regard to all this statement, many questions arise: do FLL possess the 3.000 words required at university? And does the offered period of learning

English permit such number of words learning? And if the learner actually possesses this number of vocabulary, does he/she really use them in communication?

Conclusion

In this chapter we have distinguished between Saussure's "langue" (the individual possession of language) and Chomsky's "competence" (the underlying knowledge of a language which differs from person to person). This latter evolved to the revolutionary term of "communicative competence" that Hymes developed to include not only the accurate linguistic forms but also the social appropriateness. We added that communicative competence is multicomponential, on the grounds that several models have been emerged to distinguish between its different components. These studies of communicative competence have gone further and continued to be the main source of the emergence of CLT approach (functional-notional approach) which focus on the communicative aspect of the language and emphasizes the idea that learners should practise activities that enhance both of their structural and communicative abilities, it also emphasizes that teachers should take in consideration the psychological factors of their learners, because the main goal of this approach is to respect the learners' needs. Finally, we mentioned some of the factors that effects negatively on the communicative competence of the FLL; among them the short period of learning English and the vocabulary issue.

When it comes to develop EFL learners' competence about a language, which is the case of this study, competence in communication -formulated this way- is more appropriate term than communicative competence on the ground that the first deals with something measurable whereas the latter suggests a set of behaviours which need to be taken into account, and so hard to surround.

In the second chapter, we will investigate the role of the cultural aspect of communicative competence. The cultural and the social knowledge contributes in making the learner more competent in communication, that is why this humble work will emphasise the cultural and social aspect of learning English rather than any other aspect such as the linguistic or the pragmatic one.

Introduction

Since our major concern in this chapter is the cultural aspect of communicative competence, we will shed light on some features included in involving the target culture in L2 classroom and its effect on the learners' communicative abilities

It is important for the FLL to master the rules of use in cultural situations, that means understanding and responding appropriately in such situations which necessitate an awareness of the target language cultural dimension that includes the way of life of the English language speakers that should be taught and learnt in the classroom so that the FLL acquire the appropriate cultural knowledge.

The emphasis, then, in this chapter will be on the role of the learners' knowledge about cultural aspects of the SL and its effect on their proficiency in communication.

II. 1 Teaching Language and Integrating Culture

For many, the notion of teaching/learning a second language is restricted to teaching /learning a host of vocabulary, syntax and grammatical structures and rules governing it. The goal is to enable the learner to understand and produce the language through learning the four skills of language (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). However; it seems insufficient for the SLL to master the language, it sounds that learners need more than mastering the four skills. They need to the integration of an extra important element which is the cultural insight.

II.1.1 Definition of Culture

The current interest in the role of integrating culture in language teaching is due to a number of factors, political, educational, and ideological. However, before tackling the problem of involving culture in teaching language and in communication, we will first define the term “culture”

For Kramsch (1993), the definition of culture might be derived from two different prospective: humanities, and social sciences. The former defines culture that

It focuses on the way social group represents itself and others through its material productions, be they works of art, literature, social institutions or artefacts of everyday life and the mechanisms for their production and preservation through history
(p. 4)

However, the latter definition is more related to the social sciences, in which Norstand (1989) defines culture “it refers to attitudes and beliefs, way of thinking, behaving and remembering shared by members of that community” (p. 51, cited in Kramsch, Ibid). A similar definition mentioned by Brislin who supports Kramsch definition of culture, “culture”, he writes, “refers to widely shared ideals, values, formation and uses of categories assumptions about life, and goal directed activities that becomes

unconsciously or subconsciously accepted as right and correct by people who identify themselves as members of a society” (1990, p. 11, cited in, Ibid)

Furthermore, when it comes to integrating culture in teaching language, it is extremely accepted that language, to some extent, is taught in isolation, however, and for the above mentioned factors, it is taught as functions (use), and more regard is put on incorporating culture in L2 teaching/learning in to deepen the L2 learners knowledge about the L2 communities and erase the boundaries between cultures. As Kramsch (1993, p. 46) claims

Language continues to be taught as a fixed system of formal structures and universal speech functions, a neutral conduit for the transmission of cultural knowledge. Culture is incorporated only to the extent that it reinforces and enriches, not that it puts in question, traditional boundaries of self and other.

II.1.2 The Integration of FL Culture in L2 Classroom

Widdowson (1978, p. 1) claims that “someone knowing a language knows more than how to understand, speak, read and write sentences”. This statement reveals that the knowledge of the four skills is far to be sufficient and remains poor to meet all learners’ needs, because it only focuses on the forming and composition of a sentence. “Teaching a foreign language is not tantamount to giving a homily on syntax structures or learning new vocabulary and expressions” as (Thonassous, 2001, p. 26) stated when it comes to a mere communicative era, where the functional aspect of the target language reflecting the different social meanings and systems that control it and regulate the linguistic attitudes and behaviours is stressed more than ever, and more the form of the sentence which once isolated from its communicative token, or use it as an independent unit becomes useless and meaningless. Therefore, a foreign language learner is asked to look deeper and adequately handle it for best communicative effect. In this context Hymes states “Being competent in communication involves more than just an understanding of the syntax and range of expression within a language”. (1972, cited in Baker, 2003, p. 45).

Consequently, language teaching and learning is no more devoted to the unique teaching and learning of the pure linguistic systems, but largely expanded to include the cultural and social aspect of the language and stressing of the communicative goal, as explained by Hymes (Ibid) “language teaching has also changed to incorporate this link between culture and language”. The integration of the cultural element is not done by chance but was obligatory at the level of the language classroom practice, “without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete, for foreign language students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken” (Peck, 1984, p. 69).

Furthermore, even if culture is not consciously and openly involved in the language teaching/learning process, it remains present as an integral part, and any attempt to separate the one from the other or deny its existence will be inappropriate. Therefore, language teaching/ learning goes hand in hand with culture. Concerning teaching, Kramsch (1993, p. 74) claims that “language teachers are so much teachers of culture, that culture has often become visible to them” (cited in Clouston, 1997, p. 3). Simultaneously, and since teaching logically implies learning, so “learning a language as it is spoken by a particular group is learning the shared meanings, values and practices of that group as they are embodied in the language” (Byram and Fleming, 1998, p. 1). This means that language naturally contains culture and “the content of what we teach will always be in a way or another linked to culture” as assumed by a number of scholars Valdes (1986, 1990), Byram and Fleming (1998) Kramsch (1993) (all cited in Baker, 2003, p. 3).

Cultural importance in the FL teaching/learning process, attained higher degrees as such that even those who questioned the aim of integrating it in the language classroom come to accept that a teaching of the SL instils automatically culture like Guest (2002, cited in Baker, 2003, p. 4) says“...accept that in teaching English we will also be transmitting the values of English culture”.

II.1.3 Importance of Integrating Culture in Language Teaching/Learning

As explained above by Guest (2002) concerning the evident that language teaching includes indeed involving culture, since whatever the linguistic element to introduce holds a hidden cultural value. However, Pulverness (2003, p. 3) assumes that a foreign language may be to a certain extent taught or learned independently of any cultural element, he claims "...language can somehow stand alone and be taught/learned as a value-free symbolic system...". The use of "somehow" in this statement is not random, but intended for specific purposes, which proves that there is no absolutism or assurance in the perfect separation of language and culture mainly when it comes to teaching.

Furthermore, the idea of separation of teaching/learning language and culture had been already tested and experimented thanks to the behaviouristic approach which adopted language as an inclusive of rules and strings of words and sentences to be imitated and repeated, and totally rejected to put language in the social background when put outside the classroom context and facing other things than language drills. This proved its unsuccessful path, proving later on that any intention to neglect the cultural aspect of language would lead to a sort of boredom, mastering pure grammatical rules but unable to go further through the linguistic structures, which led Pulverness (ibid) corrects his first declaration and added "but the social nature of language militates against separating it from its original culture points of reference, ...it seems almost perverse to attempt to divorce language learning from its cultural implications". Which clearly reflects the significance of teaching culture by the same way of teaching language and shows that even unintentionally, culture would be present in the language to be taught/learned unconsciously as claimed by Peterson and Coltrane (2003, p. 1, 2) "in many regard, culture is taught implicitly, embedded in the linguistic forms that students are learning".

On the other hand, it would be impossible to master the language by stressing only one of its aspects, and to pass over the other, seeing that "linguistic competence alone is not enough for the learners of a language to be competent in that language" (Krasner, 1999, Ibid, p. 1) instead both language's aspects (the function and the form) have to go hand in hand constituting a unique entity because a "knowledge of the grammatical system

of a language (grammatical competence) has to be complemented by an understanding of culture (communicative or rather cultural competence)” (Byram, Morgan et al, 1994, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 1, 2), and “students will master a language only when they learn both its linguistic and cultural norms” (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003, p. 1, 2). In this manner, to give FL learners the opportunity to acquire the rules governing the language, by the way of learning new social values and meanings regulate them and give them the appropriate understanding as explained by Byram “...to provide the learners with the opportunity to acquire new competences and to allow them to reflect upon their own culture and cultural competence” (cited in Pulverness, 2002, p. 2).

Concerning learning the SL, there are differences existing in many respects between the first and the SL. In SL the learner is facing a new and unfamiliar social norms and attitudes beside the newness of the linguistic code itself. Buttjes (1990, p. 55-56, cited in Couston, 2001, p. 2) summarized the different reasons as how teaching of language is a teaching of culture and its importance in FL teaching as following:

- Language codes cannot be taught in isolation; it goes hand in hand with the cultural aspect.
- Teachers should go beyond correcting linguistic production in the classroom and become aware of the complex processes of intercultural transmission that the learner faces.

In this wise, the importance of integrating the cultural dimension is in the relationship existing between the linguistic code and their significance in the social context. Thus, by isolating the linguistic messages the result would be misunderstanding or no understanding at all as maintained by Pulverness (2002, p. 1) “to attempt to divorce language from its cultural context is to ignore social circumstances which give it resonance and meaning”. Politzer (1959, p. 100-101, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 3) also claimed “if we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols...”

Furthermore, what Kramersch (2001) herself seems to claim is that the target language allows learners to master grammatical forms, sounds, and meanings and to

respond upon, she adds “without the cultural dimension, successful communication is often difficult: comprehension or of even basic words and phrases (such as those referring to meals) may be partial or approximate and speakers and writers may fail to convey their meaning adequately or may even cause offence” (2001, p. 37, cited in Byram and Fleming, 1998, p. 4).

II.1.4 The Aim of Integrating Culture in L2 Classroom

Culture holds its significance from the role it plays in the language classroom when it affects the learning process by providing meanings and values required to facilitate learners’ understanding and so to improve their language learning.

However, culture integration aims to achieve far beyond this function mainly because it may create as it may solve problems, and may generate positive, as well as, negative effects. The reason lying behind those effects is the meeting of the target and the first culture that learners bring to the language classroom, and that predisposes them to either accept or reject the new culture. Possible effects are the preconceived judgements, stereotypes, attitudes and feelings toward the foreign community, their customs, traditions, beliefs, way of life and so forth. Being prejudicial on the target culture may change students own culture and values since, what may be taught about the target culture may reflect on the native one.

Incorporating culture into the classroom activities points to raise learners’ awareness as a pedagogic objective by stimulating their intellectual curiosity and directing their critical thinking. Cultural awareness may be achieved through a careful selection on the part of the teachers of the texts, exercises and activities to be implemented in the language classroom, which must be neutral and containing no racist or things that may harm learners’ sensitivity or beliefs “ the challenge for those teachers who are interested in transcending the often new narrow limits of language teaching is to make cross cultural awareness a cultural issue in teaching and at the same time as developing students’ communicative competence” (Pulverness, 2002, p. 5).

II.1.5 To What Extent Culture should be integrated?

Be it openly admitted or no in the language classroom, culture remains an unavoidable and prominent aspect of the foreign language learning process so that “at any rate, FL learning is FC learning, and in one form or another, culture has been implicitly, been included in the FL classroom” (Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 2). What is arguable, however, is the amount of culture to be introduced into the language classroom mainly in relation to the other components of the curriculum such as grammar, syntax and vocabulary. A balance should be kept and an equilibrium must be maintained between all constituents as claimed by Baker (2003, p. 4) “...culture would surely be best approached in the same kind of systematic way as other aspects of language, such as grammar and vocabulary” and supported by Littelwood who advocates the value of culture learning but still keeps language proficiency “as the overall aim of communicative competence” (cited in Byram, Morgan et al., 1994, p. 6, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 4).

II.1.6 Tools for integrating Culture in the Classroom

FL teachers can take advantage of a variety of tools in order to integrate culture in the classroom; the teacher can be creative in using those tools as he/she may add his/her personal touch on the lesson and motivate the students in the classroom in order to obtain the desired goals of acquiring cultural competence. These activities are suggested by different educators such as Lee (2003), Omaggio (1999) and Klopff (1995).

- a. Picture Books*: they deal with personal, social, and political topics as other types of literature do. And the brevity of the texts allows for dealing with topics in a much shorter time in addition to the advantage that the texts that accompany the pictures are easier to understand for the simplicity of grammar and vocabulary.
- b. Music*: students will potentially internalise the elements of culture presented in the songs due to the message (lyrics) being combined with a melody that the students hopefully enjoy.
- c. Films and Radio*: historical films may be used in the classroom to give the students a glimpse of what was once the reality of the target language culture. History shapes the kind of people we are today. Exposure to authentic materials describing current events in the target language countries e.g. radio and broadcasts should be

incorporated in the FL classroom. Furthermore, students must be aware of the current reality in the TL countries, with this knowledge they are better equipped to create a more accurate understanding for themselves of the target language culture.

- d. Internet Technologies:* online newspapers and online chat rooms create opportunities for students to read authentic materials that could provide them with cultural knowledge. In addition, students can enhance intercultural exchanges via online chat rooms and they receive immediate responses and feedbacks. Also, reading online newspaper improve the students' writing and speaking skills and promote collaborative learning, makes them aware of the current social phenomena. Through means of online communication, the FLL will be able to interact directly with native speakers.
- e. Native Informants:* Native informants can be very useful for a teacher since they are sources of current information about the target language, as well as linguistic models for students. The teacher should prepare the students before the native informants come to class by suggesting them to develop a set of questions they would like to ask the informants in the target language.
- f. Reading and Realia:* students can see how the values and way of life in other societies are manifested in their customs and behaviours. The fact that students can compare and contrast, together with accompanying analysis activities help students learn to understand and accept different ways of dealing with basic human needs and see them as valid. (realia related for instance to birth and marriage notices).
- g. Videotaped Interviews and Observational Dialogues:* videotaped interviews and situational role-plays are a very good way to provide natural, authentic linguistic exchanges that include also paralinguistic information. They can be used to show conventional gestures and other cultural features, for example, appropriate social distance, eye contact, and the like. Moreover, when the students watch the videotaped materials, they should note certain behaviours and conventional linguistic expressions.

II.1.7 Problems Encountered when Integrating Culture

We may consider some problems when integrating culture in the FL classroom as long term problems and short term problems

II.1.7.a. For Learners:

When learners learn a foreign language, they are learning it by, and unconsciously, integrating its culture which remains an indisputable component of the language classroom as claimed by almost all educators, Zaid (1999, p. 112) among them “...culture and language are an integral part of the language acquisition process, one cannot learn a language without its culture”, supported in his position by Allwright (1996), who argues that “the socialisation of their learners into the target language community is the prime and ultimate goal of language teachers”.

For FL learners, culture is included in activities and not clearly distinguished by them among other materials, so, whatever the subject to tackle; the sentence structure for instance; takes its roots from the culture of the target community as affirmed by Widdowson (1978, p. 17) “a language course has to make use of topics areas of one kind or another”. Learners are confronted with a new situation in which they are not familiar with, where a new culture is presented to them. This newness could be an obstacle in learning process, nevertheless, it is a matter of time to get familiar with culture of the foreign language community, as claimed by Jordan and Roberts (cited in Byram and Fleming, 1998, p. 76) “everything new is strange until it becomes familiar and taken for granted”.

Seen from another perspective, there is another problem encountered when integrating culture, which is the proximity and/or distance of the two cultures: the learners’ one and the target. As mentioned by Warner, who reports how students at an African university had trouble understanding British texts “because of their entire lack of familiarity with English background, exemplified by Father Christmas, cricket jargon, and potting sheds” (cited in Ratuawati, 1996, p. 11).

II.1.7.b. For Teachers

There is a link between integrating culture and teaching language, even though it may not be overtly embodied in the FL classroom, culture is conveyed through the linguistic code itself. More importantly, and once again, integrating culture “doubles the usefulness of the lesson in adding another dimension and making it more interesting therefore easier to learn” (Vales, 1986, p. 121, cited in Taibi, 2001, p. 29). Consequently, many scholars, Risarger among them, claim its usefulness in language classroom and confirm that “language teaching should offer insights into the culture and the civilisation of the countries where the language is spoken” (cited in Byram and Fleming, 1998, p. 242).

However, integrating culture is no way a random task to perform but should obey to certain norms and conditions as well as to a specific pedagogy on the part of the language teacher which is of an absolute necessity. The teacher who besides providing with the linguistic competence, is furthermore and primarily asked to possess a sufficient and adequate cultural competence required to lead his or her learners to a beneficial instruction of both the linguistic as far as the cultural knowledge as maintained by Widdowson (1978, p. 242)

After all, the language teacher always has to know about something other than language he is teaching. Traditionally, this knowledge has been of culture associated with the particular language in question. Thus, the English teacher is expected to know a good deal about British and/or American institution, social costumes, and traditions and so on

The amount of knowledge the teacher possesses, should be carefully handled in regard to learners' interpretation and preparation to absorb such kind of information to which they may not be familiar hence, by adopting such attitudes, the teacher may enhance learners incorporation, their curiosity towards the target community and most importantly he may reduce the negative and/or psychological effects that may arise by integrating the foreign culture into the foreign language classroom like the misunderstanding, stereotyping or the cultural shock generally generated from the meeting of the C with the TC in this

respect Byram and Fleming (Ibid p. 3) stress the language teacher's role as an instructor and so a guide to help learner in their building of cultural awareness "language learners need to go beyond the acquisition of a linguistic system and the language need to find new ways to help them do so".

II.2 Culture and Communication

Integrating culture in communication is a target in itself in as far as teaching language in general and English language in particular is concerned. Considering that it should be one of the actual essential pedagogical goals, so it deserves to be dealt with apart and considerate a much more intention than to be a subpart of a section for its importance.

II.2.1 The Importance of Integrating Cultural Aspect in Communication

If the 60's signified a period of almost renaissance of culture integration, the 70's represent its golden period since it emerged in the height of a mere communicative context which favoured the "communication within the cultural context" as claimed by sociolinguistics. Therefore, the role of involving culture in FL curriculum grew and many educators as Canale and Swain (1980, p. 31, cited in Clouston, 1997, p. 3) assumed that "a more natural integration of language and culture takes place through a more communicative approach than through a more grammatically based approach". This communicative approach to language learning -as clearly indicated in the previous chapter- was primarily designed to meet the needs of the time from different perspectives economic, technical, technological, and academic and it stressed particular situations like in our case, studying the English language.

This relation between culture and communication in this communicative world was qualified by Kramsch (1994, p. 4) as the "local link". And the cultural component of communication came to be seen as pragmatic and semantic functions expressed through language.

In the 80's, research into incorporating culture in communication focused on the effects of body language, eye contact, and other overt behaviours and addressed such general topics as posture, movement and eye contact (Morain, 1986, cited in Clouston, 1997, p. 2).

By the 90's, there was a much more important emphasis on involving culture and in short

Culture in FL education today is clearly much more than great literature. As our understanding of language and communication has evolved, the importance of culture in FL education has increased. This reality is reflected in current methods of language teaching and learning (Ibid)

Furthermore, when it comes to the role of the cultural insights in communication, to communicate requires more than a transmission and exchange of pure information; it requires going behind words and sentence and not to be restricted to their direct or surface meaning so to achieve an effective discourse values. Thus culture is the best and only mediator that meets these conditions considering that, it has a vital role since according to Thanasouls (2001) it improves or even impedes communication. By providing a background and significance to items principally because "people do not communicate by expressing isolated notions or fulfilling isolated functions any more than they do by uttering isolated sentence patters" (Widdowson, 1978, p. 1). In another sense, it makes utterances meaningful. Moreover, before acquiring the abilities of producing and so communicating, it requires specific implications and further needs and understanding which requires in turn a link with culture, as claimed by Kramersch (1993, p. 205)

After all, communication requires understanding, and understanding requires stepping into the shoes of the foreigner and sifting his cultural baggage, while always putting [the target] culture in relation with one's own.

English among other languages obeys to the same charges, Pulverness (2002, p. 2) describes it “in teaching English for communication and neglecting culture, we may actually be giving learners access to an impoverished means of communication, effective for survival and routine transactions, but lacking much of the cultural resonance that makes it fully meaningful for native speakers”. Wu and Stephens (1991, p. 29, Taibi, 2002, p. 28) hold that most the students errors “stems from their lack of cross cultural awareness rather than weaknesses in knowledge of language”. Stagitch (1998) assumes that understanding cultural contexts is the most effective way to learn real meaning and to learn the four skills.

II.2.2 Communicative Competence and Cultural Competence

In order to be communicatively competent, the FL learner must be aware of the cultural aspect of the L2 community so as he/she can be able to handle communication within cultural contexts. Thus, the cultural insight of the L2 communities should be integrated and involved in teaching language for communicative purposes. That is why most of the sociolinguists, Canale and Swain and Bachman among them, stressed the importance of the cultural component in their models of communicative competence and assumed the necessity of being culturally competent in communicative situations. Canale and Swain (1980) put the cultural competence under the pragmatic aspect, which is the knowledge of language functions (greeting, thanking, apologizing, ordering, requesting...) speech acts, explicit and implicit meanings and conversational implicature...etc, we cannot neglect the role of the pragmatic competence in enhancing the cultural knowledge because they both complete each other, in another sense, one cannot be pragmatically competent without being acknowledged about the FL culture; that means that one cannot be able of producing and interpreting the different elements of pragmatics mentioned earlier without knowing the way of greeting or thanking or requesting/ordering in the FL speech community's culture. They write “the cultural component of communicative competence came to be seen as the pragmatic functions and notions expressed through language in ways of speaking and acting in communicative cultural contexts” (p. 86). According to this statement,

The FLLs ought to be conscious about the cultural background of the L2 speaking countries; this consciousness contributes in building their cultural knowledge and therefore

their communicative abilities. Cultural competence is the awareness of the cultural issues related to the L2 speech communities, for example, political issues, religious issues, as well as social issues like problems related to class, gender, and race. Kramersch (1993, p. 98) argues “...incorporating issues of race, class, and gender in an effort to sensitise students to the unique historical realities that have shaped the target culture”; knowledge of the social factors that regulate them and understanding what is considered to be right or wrong behaviour or attitude in those communities. Kramersch (1993, p. 43) assumes “Cultural competence is linked to the knowledge of moral values, notions of good and bad, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly in the foreign language speech communities”. In addition to the four language skills, most of the teachers see culture as a fifth skill. She clarifies “they [teachers] view cultural competence as a knowledge of foreign facts and a general acceptance of the foreign culture”. (ibid, p. 187), she adds “cultural acceptance is a matter of ethics and democratic attitude, and cultural knowledge can be administered in appropriately paced building blocks” (Ibid).

II.2.3 What Learners Need to Do in Order to Be Culturally Competent?

Although accepting the FL culture is quite a hard task for some learners on the grounds of its newness and incongruity, cultural knowledge could be gained from different resources through the use of the four skills. For example, the FLL can acquire this knowledge through benefiting from the different tools mentioned earlier inside the classroom. But acquiring culture should go beyond the classroom walls. When it comes to outside the classroom, FLL can seek on his own for opportunities by which he/she can to some extent make himself/herself aware of the FL world. watching foreign television for instance is very helpful in way that enhances the learners’ listening skill in one hand, and in the other hand makes him/her understand some issues of target language community that relate to economy, society, politics, religion, in addition to the benefit of knowing more about the linguistic codes through listening to native speakers accents and ways of talking and producing utterances such as recognition of some phonetic aspects like intonation, pronunciation of certain sounds, stress...etc. Kramersch (1993, p. 188) writes:

The benefit that is exploited by the use of real-life materials [watching foreign television] is that culture is a reality that is social, political, and ideological and that the advantage of understanding cultural codes stems from the ability of viewing the world from another perspective, and of grasping another lexical or grammatical code.

As far as the FL literature is concerned, the FL learner should read literature books, poetry, novels, magazines, literary articles and so forth. The learner makes use of reading to be amused and at same time gain a cultural competence and also develop his/her reading skill. Reading historical literature for instance provides learners with the knowledge about the historical background of the FL countries and also about the significant events that occurred in the older centuries because history is one of the elements that shapes cultures and civilisations. Knowing about the historical background of the FL countries gives the learner an overview of the evolution, development and change of native speakers' attitudes, ways of living and behaviours. Such knowledge is extremely helpful in communicative cultural contexts Brooks (1968, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 4) indicated

literature works constitute vital cultural elements such as greetings, expletives, personal possessions, cosmetics, tobacco and smoking, verbal taboos, cafes, bars and restaurants, contrasts in town and country life, patterns of politeness, keeping warm and cool, medicine and doctors [...].

In addition to watching foreign television to get acknowledged about the different aspects of the foreign speech community, and reading literature to recognise the works of art and the historical events of the FC, the FLL must be realized of the social categorization of the foreign speech community (the social stratification) which is considered to be very important for the FL speech communities, Bonvillain (2003, p. 141) assumes "within foreign language speech communities, people are differentiated on the basis of many social factors, including gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, and occupation". According to her assumption, the learner must be able to differentiate between speech and

discourse styles (spoken or written) and distinguish between the social variations and the utilisation of specific linguistic codes in each social segmentation, she claims “social distinctions influence the production of speech” (Ibid), such social segmentation like social classes (upper, middle, and lower class), gender (male or female), and race (African American, Irish, Scottish...etc) has its own speech characteristics. Interpreting and imitating the native speakers’ way of talking and choosing the topic of discourse could improve learners’ speaking as well as writing skill.

Knowing these features that shape the culture of the FL community, the FLL would be able to perform well in communicative cultural situations in the classroom and outside the classroom. For instance, in the classroom situation when the teacher applies the workshop activities and asks students to express their opinions about an issue or a current problem that occurs in a foreign language country, like talking about minorities, environment, women’s rights...etc, the student will not find a difficulty in expressing his/her point of view concerning those subjects and convincing classmates and the teacher of his ideas. Furthermore, the learner should be aware of other cultures rather than his and the FL culture in order to avoid misunderstanding or breakdowns in communication that might occur when talking about other cultures.

Conclusion

The attempt in this chapter was to clarify and denote the different aspects of integrating cultural aspect in teaching/learning language in general and in communication in particular. We conclude that integrating culture is an important and effective way to facilitate the learning process and aimed to provide meanings and values to communication.

However, some learners can have some difficulties in accepting the target culture, which creates problems that may influence their learning process and therefore their communicative development. Using certain tools in integrating culture could be very helpful in enhancing learners' cultural knowledge, so the language teacher must encourage learners to profit from such tools in the classroom. Outside the classroom, the FLL should seek for opportunities to enhance his/her cultural competence as well as his/her four skills; such enhancement in the cultural aspect hopefully contributes in improving his/her communicative abilities.

Introduction

In order to identify the third year LMD students' problems in communication, mainly connected to the lack of the cultural knowledge, and to check their attitudes and perceptions of the subject under study, the students' questionnaire is designed to provide us with the needed data.

III.1. Description of students' questionnaire

An introducing paragraph precedes the 16 items. All items are spread out of the sections. Each one is aimed to provide us with a specific set of information but with a relative aim. The following is a brief description of each section:

Section one: Personal information (01→ 03)

It contains three items designed to obtain general information about the students' age, sex, the learning background as far as their secondary school studying background.

Section two: Students' general evaluation of their linguistic competence (04 →06)

This second section which consists of three questions is meant to provide us with students' general opinions and evaluations of their personal linguistic competence. The attempt behind addressing these questions in this section is to test if communicative competence will be mentioned or no so to confirm or reject our hypothesis concerning its importance without directing the participants' opinions.

Section three: About communicative and cultural competence (07→16)

This section is designed to provide with some information about the participants' level of competence in communication in addition to the problems they face when they communicate. Furthermore, this section contains questions about culture and the importance of integrating it in oral expression course.

III.2 The administration of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to 30 students of third year LMD during oral expression course with the presence of their teacher. When piloting the questionnaire, problems completely disappeared when we introduced it especially when we insisted on the fact that they are free in expressing their opinions and points of views, and all what will be said will remain anonymous. To avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation, we provided them only with the literal meaning of the items to not influence them.

III.3 Data analyses

Data will be treated in tables, and information will be presented and analysed according to the order of items in the questionnaire. All of the 30 students answered the questionnaire, so all of the 30 copies will be taken into consideration.

Section one: (01 → 03)

Item 01: Gender

	Number	Percentage
Male	05	16.66%
Female	25	83.33%
No answers	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n°1: Students' gender

It is clear from the above table that the leading majority is females with 25 (83.33%), which largely exceeds males' number representing 05 (16.66%) only.

Item 02: Age

	Number	Percentage
21	08	26.66%
22	12	40
23	04	13.33%
24	03	10%
25	01	03.33%
26	01	03.33%
27	01	03.33%
No answer	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n° 2: Students' age

According to table n°2, students' age varies between 21 to 27 years. This reflects a great interest to study the English language by different categories of people.

Item 03: Streaming

Steaming	Number	Percentage
Literary	11	36.66%
Scientific	18	60%
Technical	01	03.33%
Total	30	100%

Table n°3: Students' streaming

From the obtained results, it is clear that the majority of students representing 18 (60%) came from a scientific stream, and only 11 (36.66%) students studied in literary streams. This fact considerably affects students language proficiency, if we consider that English language time allocation in the literary streams is more important compared to the scientific one.

Section two: (04→ 06)

Item04: In your opinion, competence is

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
The knowledge of the linguistic system of the language	03	10%
The ability to use the linguistic system of the language	02	06.66%
The knowledge plus the ability to use the linguistic system of the language	25	83.33%
No answers	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n°4: Students' definition of competence

According to table n°4, 3(10%) out of 30 claim that competence is the knowledge of the linguistic system of the language, whereas 02 (06.66%) say that it is the ability to use the linguistic system. However, 25 (83%) of students agree on the point that competence is the knowledge plus the ability to use the linguistic system. This fact clarifies that students are aware of the meaning of competence that includes both knowledge and ability to use the rules of a language.

Item05: How do you evaluate your linguistic competence?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Very satisfying	00	00%
Satisfying	10	30%
Not satisfying	20	70%
No answer	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n°5: Students' personal evaluation of their linguistic competence

10 (30%) out of 30 claim that they are satisfied by their linguistic competence, unlike 20 (70%) who state that they are not satisfied; whereas no student seems very satisfied by his/her linguistic competence.

Item06: Do you think that the linguistic competence is enough for the learner to master the foreign language?

Possibilities	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Number	03	26	01	30
Percentage	10%	86.66%	3.33	100%

Table n°6: Students' perception of the importance of the linguistic competence

26 (86.66%) of students assume that linguistic competence is not enough for the learner to master the foreign language, unlike 03 students (10%) who assume the opposite.

-Students' justification

The 26 (86%) students who said that the linguistic competence is not enough to master the language justified their answers claiming that students need other abilities and competences to master the language. Others assumed that linguistic competence goes hand in hand with performance, so the student needs performance to master the foreign language. The largest number of the 26 (86.66%) students explained that the learner needs communicative competence to master the language because for them the learner must use that linguistic knowledge in communicative situations. For those who said that linguistic competence is enough for the learner to master the language explained that anyone who can master the linguistic aspect is able to master the foreign language .

Section three: (07→ 16)

Item07: Do you think that communication is neglected in the classroom?

Possibilities	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Number	22	08	00	30
Percentage	73.33%	26.66%	00%	100%

Table n°7: Students' opinion about being communication neglected in the classroom

22 students (73.33%) think that communication is neglected in the classroom, whereas 08 (26.66) think the opposite.

-Students' justification

Students who claimed that communication is neglected explained their choice by saying that it is the teachers' fault because teachers' major concern is to finish the lesson for the short time of the session, they talk all the time without giving the opportunity to students to speak, consequently, the students become receptive rather than productive. The absence of motivation is another reason for being communication neglected in the classroom. For those who claimed the opposite, they justified their answer by saying that teachers do their best to achieve the goal of the course which is giving the opportunity to students to communicate.

Item08: During performing communicative tasks, do your teachers focus on

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Correcting grammar mistakes	18	60%
Meaning of the communication	07	23.33%
Both of them	05	16.66%
No answer	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n°8: The major focus of teachers while performing communicative tasks

From the table, we can see that 18 (60%) students say that their teachers focus on correcting grammar mistakes, whereas only 07 (23.33%) of students see that their teachers focus on the meaning of communication. 05 (16.66%) of students state that their teachers focus on both correcting grammar mistakes and meaning of communication.

Item09: How do you evaluate your competence in communication during performing communicative tasks?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Very satisfying	01	03.33%
Satisfying	10	33.33%
Poorly satisfying	18	60%
Not satisfying	00	00
No answer	01	03.33%
Total	30	100%

Table n°9: Students' personal evaluation of their competence in communication

18 students (60%) out of 30 consider their communicative competence as poorly satisfying, followed by 10 students (33.33%), who seem satisfied with their level of communicative competence. Whereas only 01 student (03.33%) out of 30 who thinks that his/her competence is very satisfying.

-If poorly satisfying or not satisfying, it is because:

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Psychological problems	06	20%
Fear of the teacher's judgment	04	13.33%
Lack of self confidence	05	16.66%
Lack of vocabulary	01	03.33%
Lack of exposure to authentic materials	14	46.66%
No answers	00	00%
Total	30	100%

Table n°10: Students' reasons of their poor competence in communication

According to the results presented in table n°10, variant reasons lay behind their poor competence in communication. 06 students (20%) state that their poor ability is due to the psychological problems that are related to shyness, fear of the audience, faltering or hesitating etc. 04 students (13.33%) state that they have fear of the teacher's judgments. 05 students (16.66%) say that they have a lack of self-confidence while performing communicative tasks. Whereas one student (03.33%) claims that his/her inability is due to the lack of vocabulary and the vast majority 14 students (46.66%) state that they are not competent enough because of the lack of exposure to authentic materials which is the first and fundamental tool to improve their competence.

Item10: Which of the following is your favourite communicative task?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Performing role plays, storytelling etc.	08	26.66%
Talking with native speakers through internet outside the class	10	33.33%
Doing a survey or research paper and discussing it with classmates	02	06.66%
Interacting with the teacher and classmates about personal topics	08	26.66%
No answer	02	06.66%
Total	30	100%

Table n°11: Students' favourite communicative task

From the results presented in table n°11, we can see that students are very interested in doing communicative tasks; the main reason might be in the enjoyable atmosphere that these activities create in the class in one hand, and in the other hand they encourage students to engage more in the classroom. The favourite activity for 10 students (33.33%) is talking with native speakers through internet outside the class; this might be easier and more natural way to acquire and develop a communicative competence. Whereas 08 students (26.66%) state that they like to perform role plays, storytelling, games etc. because they are funnier and amusing. Doing a survey or a research paper and discussing it with classmates is the favourite task only for 02 students (06.66%). 08 students (26.66%) out of 30 claim that the best activity for them is to interact with the teacher and classmates about personal topics, since they share opinions and attitudes towards topics of mutual or even opposite interest. 02 students 06.66% did not provide their answer, the reason might be their carelessness about activities that require participation in the class.

Item 11: In your opinion, culture of the foreign language is not integrated enough in the classroom.

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	83.33%
No	04	13.33%
No answers	01	03.33%
Total	30	100%

Table n°12: Students' opinion about the integration of culture in the classroom

From the table n°12 the vast majority of students (83.33%) state that culture of the FL is not integrated enough in the classroom, 04 students (13.33%) state that culture is integrated in the classroom

-Students' justification

Students' opinions were clearly and reasonably justified. Many of them explain their answers of being culture not integrated by confessing that culture is indeed integrated in the classroom but not enough to make them aware about the native speaker's attitudes and ways of thinking which they need for facilitating their understanding to the FL speech community and therefore FL learning. Others justified the lack of integrating culture in the classroom is because the emphasis made by teachers on the grammatical aspect is more than on the cultural one. Few students say that their teachers themselves are not cultured enough, in other words; students wonder if their teachers can integrate the culture which they do not know much about. Students who stated that culture is integrated in the classroom explained their point of view by saying that learning a language is learning its culture, thus culture is integrated in the classroom unconsciously.

Item 12: Do you think that integrating culture in the classroom is important?

Possibilities	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	28	93.33%
No	01	03.33%
No answers	01	03.33%
Total	30	100%

Table n°13: Students' opinion about the importance of integrating culture

28 students (93.33%) out of 30 think that integrating culture is important in the classroom, whereas only one student (03.33%) thinks the opposite.

Students' justification

According to students who say that integrating culture in the classroom is important, culture facilitates learning process. They also claim that integrating culture is important because it plays a role in motivating them and adds element of enjoyment to the

classroom. For others, learning about culture in the classroom has a long term benefits for learners to become more effective teachers in the future. Student who claims that integrating culture is not important for him/her justifies his/her answer by saying that he/she is not interested in the FL culture, because his/her goal in learning English is to be better in the grammatical aspect.

Item 13: How often does your teacher use tools to integrate culture in the classroom?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Always	02	06.66% %
Sometimes	04	13.33%
Rarely	20	60.66%
Total	30	100%

Table n°14: Students' opinion about the frequency of using tools to integrate culture

From the table n°14, we can see that 02 students (20%) see that their teacher always uses tools to integrate culture, 04 students (13.33%) think that their teacher sometimes uses tools to integrate culture, whereas 22 students (73.33%) see that their teacher rarely uses tools to integrate culture in the classroom.

Item 14: Do you think that benefiting from tools that present FL culture in the classroom is enough for you to be culturally competent?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	33.33%
No	18	60%
No answer	02	06.66%
Total	30	100%

Table n°15: Students' perception about the sufficiency of tools used in the classroom to integrate culture

According to table n°15, 10 students (33.33%) think that the amount of the cultural aspect presented in the classroom is enough for them to be culturally competent. Whereas 18 students (60%) assume that taking use of cultural knowledge in the classroom is not enough to make them culturally competent.

Item 15: What do you do to acquire cultural knowledge?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Benefit from tools presented in class	10	33.33%
Watch FL TV (films, documentary, videos...etc)	05	16.66%
Read about FL literature and works of art.	02	06.66%
Chat directly with native speakers through internet	13	56.66%
Total	30	100%

Table n°16: Students' sources of acquiring cultural knowledge

From results presented in table n°16, we can see that 13 students (56.66%) prefer to get their cultural knowledge through interacting with native speakers in the net, since it is considered as a fast and easy way for them to recognize native speakers' attitudes and their social interaction rules. 10 students (33.33%) learn about the FL culture through the tools presented in the class. 05 students (16.66%) admitted that they watch FL TV like films, documentaries, videos etc. to acquire cultural knowledge. Whereas few students prefer to learn about FL culture through its literature and works of art.

Item 16: Do you think that the poor knowledge about the FL speech community's cultural rules and social norms is the reason of learners' poor communicative abilities?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	83.33%
No	04	13.33%
No answer	01	03.33%
Total	30	100%

Table n°17: Students' opinion about the reason of learners' poor communicative abilities

25 students (83.33%) say that the poor knowledge of the FL speech community's cultural rules and social norms is the reason of learners' poor communicative abilities. 04 students (13.33%) say that the poor knowledge of the FL speech communities cultural rules and social norms is not the reason of their poor communicative abilities.

-Students' justification

According to the students who say that the reason of the learners' poor communicative abilities is their poor knowledge about the speech community's social and cultural norms, culture plays a key role in making students communicate appropriately in cultural contexts. Others justify their answers claiming that the knowledge of FL social and cultural norms facilitates communication because it reinforces students' confidence, provides them with comfort and flexibility when communicating in real life situations. Students who say that the reason of learners' poor communicative abilities is not the lack of knowledge of social and cultural norms of the FL speech community, they justify their answers claiming that knowledge of the different aspects of native speakers' culture cannot make learners communicatively competent, rather the student needs to have other abilities such as grammatical, linguistic and pragmatic ones in order to reach an acceptable level of competence. For other students, the knowledge of FL culture is not a primary necessity to master communication.

III.4 Findings

Before revealing the results of the analysis of the questionnaire by sections, certain unsuspected points and that come to sustain the current research and may add an additional support to the work should be mentioned.

-Only 25 out of 30 students expressed themselves in English which represents 83.33% from the whole population, 2 students (06.66%) wrote in Arabic while 3 students (10%) wrote in French. This fact reflects a linguistic competence if we consider that we are dealing with third year in the department of English and answers expected to provide with are simple sentences expressing their personal perceptions.

Section one: this section revealed that we are dealing with heterogeneous classes either in terms of gender or age. The leading majority is formed by females; this reveals a pure feminist learning. There is another criterion but with a great relevance in our work which concerns students' diversity of background learning that reflects a mixed English language abilities.

Section two: This section is designed to introduce section three and collect certain general information without influencing students' opinions. Third year students are aware of what competence means and they admit that they are not satisfied with their linguistic competence and point out that the student must have more than the linguistic competence to master the foreign language.

Section three: In this section; students clearly declare that their competence in communication is between average and poor, the reason lies in that communication in the classroom is not given much importance on the grounds that teachers focus on teaching grammar and vocabulary rather than communication. They also claim that their weakness in communication stems from problems related to the lack of exposure to authentic use of language and restrained to the psychological status while performing communicative tasks such as lack of self confidence which discourages them to engage in communication. From the obtained data in the questionnaire, we noticed that students like to engage in communicative activities through performing tasks with classmates, or through the net with native speakers. This reveals that students support the idea of making oral expression sessions a time of communication and interaction so as they improve their competence in communication. As students relate their deficiencies in performing communicative tasks to

the amount of communicative activities addressed to them in the classroom, they also relate it to the amount of exposure to FL culture; they declare that their teachers rarely use tools to integrate culture although it is important in improving their competence in communication. This shows a clear discrimination of the role of incorporating cultural insights in the classroom. According to the students' answers, they are curious about the FL culture; this is shown in their interest about native speakers' attitudes, behaviours, and interaction norms which push them to seek for opportunities to get more familiar with FL culture through other tools outside the class, this closeness and familiarity with L2 social and cultural aspect results in developing their performance in communication. Students' agreements on the idea that culture incorporation improves their communicative abilities reveal that students are aware that culture is an important element of being competent in communication although some of them disagreed and claimed that culture is not as important as other elements of communicative competence such as the linguistic and pragmatic elements.

Conclusion

Because the questionnaire was primarily designed to investigate the subject under study, which is the role of integrating cultural insights in EFL classroom as a basic requirement to improve students' competence in communication, the students' answers revealed that the general level of their communicative competence is insufficient. Students' responses also revealed that integrating the socio cultural aspect of the FL in the third year LMD classrooms, at the department of English at Batna University, is not taken in consideration to improve their competence in communication.

The analysis of the students' questionnaire allowed us to highlight certain points that are of a great relevance to our subject. Firstly, students' level of linguistic competence is not in the expected level, and consequently their communicative competence will be deficient. Secondly, on the psychological side, students are confronted with a situation where they are less confident and doubt of their own competences resulting in shyness and discomfort, which reflects on their performance, their flexibility to express themselves, and their participation in communicative activities. Thirdly, third year LMD students' limited knowledge about the socio-cultural aspect ultimately alters their involvement, their participation and therefore their effectiveness in a communicative classroom.

Introduction

In order to obtain teachers' opinion about the subject under study, we used a questionnaire designed for oral expression teachers. It includes common issues already used in the students' one.

IV.1 Administration of the questionnaire

The questionnaire has been directly administered to 15 teachers of oral expression module for the academic year 2012/1013.

IV.2 Description of teachers' questionnaire

The questionnaire contains 19 items organized in three sections.

Three of the questionnaire items are common in both: the students' questionnaire as well as the teachers' one in order to compare both viewpoints concerning certain facts that need to be evaluated and dealt with from both scopes :the one of students and the other of teachers. The following is a brief description of each section:

Section one: (01→ 03)

It contains three items designed to obtain general information about oral expression teachers' level in terms of educational level, their experience in teaching the module of oral expression.

Section two: (04 → 13)

This section contains ten items, and the focus is made on teachers' opinion about their students' level of communicative competence and their evaluation of their own teaching method. Teachers' are given an open space to provide with explanation, justification or suggestion. The last item of this section is an introduction to the next section that is related to the cultural aspect.

Section three: (14 → 19)

This section is designed to provide us with teachers' opinions about their students' level of cultural competence, their opinions of the importance of the cultural knowledge in improving learners' communicative abilities, and their tools to integrate cultural insights. The last item is an open ended question in which we asked for teachers' suggestions to improve learners' communicative competence.

IV.3 Data analysis

Data gathered will be treated in tables, and information will be presented and analysed according to the order of items in the questionnaire. Only 10 teachers answered the questionnaire, so the number of copies that will be taken into account are 10 copies.

Section one: (01→ 03)

Item 01: Your educational level

	Number	Percentage
BA (licence)	03	30%
PG student	00	00%
MA	07	70%
Doctorate	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table n°01: Teachers' educational level

According to the table n°01, 03 teachers have BA level, whereas 07 teachers have MA level. None of them is a PG student or have a doctorate level.

Item 02: Have you ever been in an English speaking country?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	02	20%
No	08	80%
Total	10	100%

Table n°02: Number of teachers that have been in an English speaking country

Only two teachers have been in an English speaking country before, whereas eight teachers have not been in an English speaking country.

-If yes, where?

One of the two teachers went to UK, while the other went to both UK and US.

Item 03: How many years have you taught oral expression?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Less than 5 years	03	30%
5 to 10 years	03	30%
More than 10 years	02	20%
No answer	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°03: Teachers' period of teaching oral expression module

Three teachers have been teaching oral expression module for less than 5 years, three teachers have been teaching oral expression module from 5 to 10 years, whereas two teachers have been teaching oral expression module for more than 10 years.

Section two: (04→ 13)

Item 04: As far as third year students are concerned, how do you evaluate their level of competence in communication?

	Number	Percentage
Good	00	00%
Acceptable	04	40%
Still poor	06	60%
Total	10	100%

Table n°04: Teachers' evaluation of students' communicative competence

According to the table n°04, six teachers evaluate their students' competence of communication as still poor; four teachers estimate it as acceptable. Whereas no teacher claims that the level of students is good.

Item 05: In case it is not the expected level, do you think the reason is from:

Suggestions	Number	Percentage
The student himself	02	20%
The method used	02	20%
Both	04	40%
Other	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°05: The reason of the unexpected level of students

Two teachers claim that the reason of the unexpected level of students stems from the student himself. Two teachers admit that the method used is the reason of being the students in the unexpected level; however, two teachers state both reasons. Two teachers state other reasons for being students not in the expected level.

- Teachers' other reasons:

One of the teachers claims that students are still not interested in oral faculties, besides a lack of materials and media precisely. The other teacher state that the reason of the low level of students is from the teacher, s/he added that teachers are not competent i.e. neither qualified nor experienced.

Item 06: In your opinion, communication is not given much importance in the classroom

	Number	Percentage
Agree	07	70%
Disagree	03	30%
Total	10	100%

Table n°06: Communication importance in the classroom

Seven teachers agree that communication is not given much importance in the classroom, whereas three teachers disagree that communication is not given much importance in the classroom.

Item 07: As far as third year students are concerned, what do you think should be the overall goal of teaching communicative competence?

Suggestions	Number	Percentage
To allow students practice the oral language (be able to speak “correctly” in the target language)	01	10%
To make students communicate at least meaning	03	30%
To make students able to use the target language in different real life situations	06	06%
Others	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table n°07: Teachers’ perception of the overall goal of the CLT approach

One teacher assumes that the overall goal of teaching communicative competence is to allow students practice the oral language (be able to speak correctly in the target language). Three teachers think that the overall goal of teaching communicative competence is to make students communicate at least meaning. Whereas six teachers state that making students able to use the target language in different real life situations should be the general goal of teaching communicative competence.

Item08: What approach or method do you think is the most appropriate to attain this goal?

Suggestions	Number	Percentage
The audio-lingual method	01	10%
The communicative approach	08	80%
Others	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table n°08: The most suitable method to improve the communicative competence

One teacher believes that the most suitable method to make students able to use the target language in different real life situations is the audio-lingual method. Eight teachers believe that the communicative approach is the most appropriate to achieve this goal. However, one teacher suggested a method which is considered as the most suitable one to achieve the overall goal, which is a combination of both communicative and audio-lingual methods.

-Teachers' justification

The chosen method	Teachers' justification	Number	percentage
The audio-lingual method	Exposing learners to audio-lingual media will improve their pronunciation and their communicative capacities.	01	10%
The communicative approach	-In the CA, students are part of the task unlike the AL method students are considered as parrots.	01	10%
	-The CA gives students the opportunity to use the TL in real life situations.	01	10%
	-The CA is based on providing the student with communicative activities meant to improve learners' accuracy and fluency.	01	10%
	-The CA allows students to acquire some interesting information about literature in a light and entertaining way, the latter is, of course, communication.	01	10%
Others	-a combination of the two methods allows students to master communication as well as grammar rules including phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax...etc	02	20%
No answer		03	30%
Total		10	100%

Table n°09: Teachers justification of the chosen methods

Item 09: What activities do you usually use?

Activities	Number	Percentage
-Give them the opportunity to express themselves	02	20%
-Games -Role plays -Debates	01	10%
-Variety of activities to fit the different learning styles of learners	01	10%
-Pair work -Learning by teaching	01	10%
-Pair work, interviews	01	10%
-Small group activities -Different subjects discussion	01	10%
-Problem-solving activities -Informing gap -Free discussion -Listening tasks	01	10%
No answer	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°10: Teachers' used activities

According to the table n°10, teachers use a variety of activities in which their main focus is to make students engage in real life communication and to make them active and productive in communication process.

Item 10: Do you qualify your teaching method as offering opportunities to students to develop their competence in communication?

	Yes	No	Total
Number	09	01	10
Percentage	90%	10%	100%

Table n°11: Teachers' evaluation of their own teaching method

Nine teachers think that their teaching method is effective at reaching its desired objectives. While one teacher believes that his teaching method does not offer opportunities for students to develop their communicative abilities.

Teachers' response	Teachers' explanation	Number	percentage
Yes	-Since the main objective of the CA is communication, I focus on activities that motivate students to interact and improve their communication capacities.	02	20%
	-Exposure to authentic use of language is the way to improve students' competence of communication.	02	20%
	-Making the student the fundamental element in the classroom is the effective way to achieve the CA goals.	01	10%
	-Making students engage in real cultural and social contexts enrich their knowledge about the use of the TL in such contexts and therefore enhance their communicative competence.	02	20%
	-Communicative competence includes the knowledge of the pragmatic use of language, so as to obtain this objective; I tend to use materials which represent the socio-cultural dimension in the classroom.	01	10%
No	-The method that we use does not actually reach the wanted results because of the lack of materials that are meant to enhance students communicative and language skills, students still lack the knowledge of the real use of the TL in socio-cultural situations.	02	20%

Table n°12: Teachers' explanation about their method

Item 11: A student is considered as having achieved the expected level of communicative competence when

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
He talks with a grammatically correct language	01	10%
He has the appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts	02	20%
He is creative and imaginative in using the language	02	20%
All of these	05	50%
Total	10	100%

Table n°13: Teachers' definition of communicative competence

One teacher supposes that a student is communicatively competent when he talks with a grammatically correct language. Two teachers claim that students are communicatively competent when they have the appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts. Two teachers state that a student is competent in communication when he is creative and imaginative in using the language. Whereas five teachers assume that they consider the student as being competent when s/he has all of these characteristics.

-Teachers' justification

Teachers' choice	Teachers' justification	Number	percentage
He talks with a grammatically correct language	Speaking correct sentences is an important condition of being competent in communication	01	10%
He has the appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts	The knowledge of pragmatics is an element of CC	01	10%
He is creative and imaginative in using the language	The students must use the TL as it is used by the native speakers.	01	10%
All of these	The students' communicative competence is achieved if they master both rules of accuracy and appropriateness	03	30%
No answer		04	40%
Total		10	100%

Table n°14: Teachers' justification

Item 12: Do you think that the correct use of formal systems of syntax and semantics does itself ensure the effectiveness of communication?

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Number	00	10	10
Percentage	00%	100%	100%

Table n°15: Teachers' responses about the sufficiency of the grammatical knowledge for having a communicative competence

All of the ten teachers claim that the correct use of formal systems of syntax and semantics itself does not ensure the effectiveness of communication

Item 13: If no, what do you think students need to have in order to be communicatively competent?

Teachers' suggestions	Number	Percentage
Some students have grammatical knowledge but they fail in expressing themselves, they need to have a socio-cultural knowledge	03	30%
The knowledge of grammar rules is not enough, students need to have the ability to use language appropriately	02	20%
In order to be effective in communication, students must know about the TL interaction rules	01	10%
The students must master the accuracy and appropriateness rules.	01	10%
No answer	03	30%
Total	10	100%

Table n°16: Teachers suggestions

Section three: (14→ 19)

Item 14: As far as third year students are concerned, in your opinion, cultural competence is:

Suggestions	Number	Percentage
The knowledge of the FL speech community's attitudes and behaviours	01	10%
The knowledge and use of the FL speakers' socio-cultural rules in communicative contexts	07	70%
Being able to handle communication with native speakers in cultural contexts	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°17: Teachers' definition of cultural competence

One teacher claims that cultural competence means the knowledge of the FL speech community's attitudes and behaviours. Seven teachers define cultural competence as the knowledge and use of the FL speakers' socio-cultural rules in communicative contexts. Whereas two teachers state that cultural competence is being able to handle communication with native speakers in cultural contexts.

Item15: As far as third year students are concerned, how do evaluate their cultural competence?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Good	00	00%
Acceptable	02	20%
Still poor	08	80%
Total	10	100%

Table n°18: Teachers' evaluation of students' cultural competence

No teacher evaluates students' cultural competence as being good. Whereas two teachers state that students' level of cultural competence is acceptable. Eight teachers admit that third year students' cultural competence is still poor.

-Teachers' justifications

Teachers' response	Teachers' justification	number	Percentage
Acceptable	-Third year students are exposed to a variety of FL contexts in addition to the net and the courses that third year curriculum are offering	01	10%
Still poor	-They do not read	02	20%
	-Because of the differences between the students' culture and the foreign one.	01	10%
	-Because the students are not interested of the FL culture	01	10%
no answer	No justification	05	
Total		10	100%

Table n°19: Teachers' justifications

Item 16: Do you think that communication can be developed independently of its cultural context?

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Number	03	07	10
Percentage	30%	70%	100%

Table n°20: Teachers' responses about the importance of culture in communication

Three teachers state that communication can be developed independently of its cultural context. Whereas seven teachers claim that communication cannot be developed independently of its cultural context.

-If no, in your opinion, to what extent cultural competence is important for being communicatively competent?

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Important	02	20%
Very important	08	80%
Not important	00	00%
Not important at all	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table n°21: The extent of the importance of cultural competence

-Teachers' justification

Teachers claim that communicative competence is the knowledge rules of politeness and pragmatics, the latter are included in cultural competence. They also state that some items, expressions and situations cannot be detached from their cultural context and setting.

Item 17: What are the tools and materials that you usually use to introduce the FL culture?

Tools and materials	Number	Percentage
-Denotative and connotative meanings -Lexical fields -History and literature	01	10%
-Still working on myself in what concerns FL culture, the teacher has to master it at first	01	10%
-Authentic materials -authentic texts	03	20%
-Literary texts -Tapes -Songs	01	10%
-Audio visual aids -Pictures	01	10%
-films, movies -documentaries -songs	01	10%
No answer	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°22: Tools and materials that teachers' use to introduce FL culture

Item 18: Do you think that exposing students to the FL culture improves their cultural competence and therefore their communicative competence?

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Number	10	00	10
Percentage	100%	00%	100%

Table n°23: Exposure to FL culture improves communicative and cultural competence

All of the ten teachers think that exposing students to the FL culture improves their cultural competence and therefore their communicative competence.

-Explain your choice

Teachers explanation	Number	Percentage
Students will feel familiar with the TC, consequently they will feel comfortable when communicating in a cultural context	02	20%
If students are in contact with native speakers' culture and behaviour, they will know more about the TL and acquire their cultural and social norms and use it later on in communicative situations	01	10%
The more students are exposed to FL culture, the more they enhance their cultural and communicative competence	04	40%
Integrating culture in the classroom via authentic materials and tools affects students in the long term, in the sense that students will have a communicative competence through long stages of learning the FL.	01	10%
No answer	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table n°24: Teachers' explanation

Item 19: What do you suggest to improve learners' competence in communication?

Teachers' suggestions	Number	Percentage
Students must be exposed to authentic language use	01	10%
Teachers should use communicative activities as a basic element to improve learners' communicative abilities.	01	10%
Teachers should expose learners to the FL culture so as they acquire the native speakers' use of language	01	10%
Learners should engage in real life communicative situations.	01	10%
Learners should seek for communicative opportunities outside the class	01	10%
Oral expression teachers should focus on classroom interaction and communication, and motivate students to be active in the class	01	10%
Teachers should encourage students to get rid of shyness and frustration, to improve their classroom interaction	01	10%

Teachers should apply the CLT approach with regard to its purposes, which puts teaching communication one of its first priorities rather than teaching structural rules.	01	10%
Teachers should bear in mind that teaching a FL is not about teaching the linguistic code, but rather is about teaching how to use the linguistic codes appropriately in social contexts.	01	10%
Communicative competence includes several competences like linguistic, pragmatic, discourse, and cultural competence, the teacher has to master all of these competences himself to teach them to his students.	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table n°25: Teachers suggestions improve learners' competence in communication

Findings:

By designing the teachers' questionnaire the aim was to bring a professional perception of the question under study, and more importantly to obtain solutions they may provide with to help both teachers' improve their teaching method and learners improve their communicative abilities.

The questionnaire helped to recognize that although it is the communicative approach which is used in teaching oral expression, but the competence developed is far from being communicative. This is shown through the teachers' dissatisfaction with their students' level, which they attribute partly to the lack of communicative opportunities and the lack of exposure to authentic language practice. According to the teachers' answers, the more students are explicitly exposed to the cultural aspect of the FL, the more they take these aspects into consideration when communicating, and the better their level of communicative competence becomes. The questionnaire also revealed that although teachers are aware that the CLT approach focuses on integrating cultural insights, but they neglect this point on the grounds of the lack of teaching materials and the absence of an effective teaching method, which affects negatively on the development of students' communicative capacities.

Conclusion:

All in all, this research sought to explore the importance of integrating culture with regard to communicative competence, and it proved that the integration of some cultural insights in teaching oral expression is an indispensable measure to develop the communicative aspect of students' competence in the target language.

General Conclusion

The attempt along this research study was to isolate the factor of integrating culture as one of many factors influencing third year LMD learners' communicative competence at Batna University. The aim was to analyse its role in the learning process and in developing learners' communicative aspect. Through literature reading, it has long been stressed that there is a high connection between the communicative ability to be developed and the incorporation of culture. What implies that cultural insights have to be involved so to adequately master the communicative aspect of the language. Ideally, it is a logical, necessary step mainly if considering the variant cultural and social meanings that should be known for the English language learner. However, once effectively applied in the foreign language classroom, learners' communicative competence will be reinforced. It is clear that the general third year EFL students' performance reflects a type of competence which we cannot qualify as communicative. If this mirrors something, then it is the out of date non-communicative teaching techniques used in oral expression classes because the new trend in language teaching is the contextual language learning and the new techniques are socio-cultural procedures that allow students to practice the target language in natural contexts. A fact widely confirmed thanks to the obtained results from both teachers' and students' questionnaires. Furthermore, at the beginning of this research, we hypothesized that the poor knowledge of the socio-cultural aspect of the FL affects students' communicative competence. Again thanks to the questionnaire results, it has been proved that more students are explicitly exposed to the cultural aspect of the FL, the more they take these aspects into consideration, and the better their level of communicative competence becomes. Being not the only element stemming behind students' poor communicative competence, this research's study results cannot be over generalised since students possessing an adequate communicative competence, mentioned other factors that should be considered like pragmatic, discursive, strategic and linguistic factors. Thus, the cultural element cannot be seen but only as one of the many factors affecting learners' communicative competence. If teaching a foreign language is not an easy task to perform, teachers have to bear in mind that integrating its respective culture is far difficult and they have to work on their own cultural competence in order to enrich their learners'.

General recommendations

Teaching and learning a foreign language is a highly complex task that should consider both parties, the teachers' and the learners' requirements, needs and wants to reach their expectations and objectives. Through our literature reading and the obtained results from both students' and teachers' questionnaires, here are some recommendations designed to attract teachers' attention on the importance of integrating culture in improving EFL learners' communicative competence.

-Communicative competence entails the mastery of the grammatical aspect and the cultural one because there are forms in language which cannot be isolated from its cultural context in which they should be learnt. Knowing just grammar, syntax and structure is not enough; they must be related to other appropriateness rules based on the cultural aspect of language.

-By assuming that communicative language teaching insists on the necessity of integrating cultural insights, oral expression teachers should use tools and materials to introduce the FL culture and engage learners in real authentic use of language such as authentic materials, pictures, books, stories etc.

-Teachers should make their students feel familiar towards the FL culture by talking about native speakers' attitudes and ways of thinking.

-In addition to the integration of culture to improve learners' communicative competence, communicative and pre-communicative activities that include socio-cultural insights make students develop their communicative competence as well as their linguistic realization. Moreover, teachers should know that the more communicative activities they address to students, the better their competence of communication becomes.

-Teachers should not focus on learners' grammatical mistakes when communicating; that makes students afraid of expressing themselves; however, they must focus on the meaning of communication.

-Communication and interaction should be the prior goal and objective of oral expression course despite any other considerations, like to get to the end of the syllabus.

-Teachers should encourage their students to engage in classroom interaction by helping them to get rid of their shyness and frustration, as well as motivate them to discuss different social and cultural aspects of the target language speech community.

-Learners must seek for communication opportunities and benefit from interacting with native speakers in the net by learning about their rules of interaction.

-The short period of time devoted to learn English language at the University level (three to five years) is not enough for the EFL learners to master all the aspects of language, including both linguistic and communicative aspects.

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Appendix n°1

Students' questionnaire

Dear students;

This is a research work aiming at identifying the role of integrating cultural insights in improving EFL learners' communicative competence at the department of English at Batna University. Please, have the kindness to provide us with the necessary answers to the following questionnaire either by ticking the appropriate boxes or by making full statements whenever necessary.

N.B We rely on your collaboration as far as your honesty.

Section one: Personal Information

1-Sex

-Male

-Female

2-Age.....

3-your stream in the secondary school

-Literary

-Scientific

-Technical

Section two: About Competence

4- In your opinion, competence is

-The knowledge of the linguistic system of the language

-The ability to use the linguistic system of the language

-The knowledge and the ability to use the linguistic system of the language

5-How do you evaluate your linguistic competence

-Very satisfying

-Satisfying

-Not satisfying

6- Do you think that the linguistic competence is enough for the learner to master the foreign language?

-Yes

-No

-Justify your answer.....

.....

Section three: About Communicative Competence and Cultural competence

7-Do you think that communication is neglected in the classroom?

Yes

No

Justify your answer.....

.....

8-During performing communicative tasks, do your teacher focus on

-Correcting grammar mistakes

-Meaning of the Communication

-Both of them

9-How do you consider your competence in communication while performing communicative tasks?

-Very satisfying

-Satisfying

-Poorly satisfying

-Not satisfying

-If poorly satisfying or not satisfying, it is because of :

-Psychological problems (fear of the audience, shyness...)

-Fear of the teacher's judgment

-Lack of self confidence

-lack of vocabulary

-Lack of exposure to authentic materials

-Other reasons.....

10-Which of the following is your favourite communicative task?

- Performing role plays, storytelling, dialogues, games...etc
- Talking with native speakers through means of online communication
- Doing a survey or a research paper and discussing it with classmates
- Interacting with classmates and teacher about personal topics
- Other tasks.....
.....

11-In your opinion, foreign language culture is not integrated enough in the classroom

- Yes
- No

Why?.....
.....

12-Do you think that integrating culture in the classroom is important?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....
.....

13-Does your teacher use tools to integrate FL culture in the classroom?

- Yes
- No

14-Do you think that benefiting from tools that present FL culture in the classroom is enough for the FL learner to be culturally competent?

- Yes
- No

15-What do you do to acquire cultural knowledge?

- Benefit from the tools used in the classroom
- Watch foreign language TV (films, documentary, videos...etc)
- Read literary books and works of art of English language
- Chat directly with the native speakers through means of online communication
- Other ways.....
.....

16- Do you think that the poor knowledge about the FL speech community's cultural rules and social norms is the reason of learners' poor communicative abilities?

Yes

No

Explain how.....

.....

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix n°2

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teachers

This is a questionnaire designed for the purpose of providing data for a research aiming at identifying the role of integrating cultural insights in FL classrooms of third year LMD English students at Batna University as a basic element to improve their abilities in communication.

Please have the kindness to provide as with the necessary answers to the following questions either by ticking the appropriate boxes or by making full statements.

Section one: Personal Information

1. Your educational level

-BA (licence)

-PG student

-MA

-Doctorate

2. Have you ever been in an English speaking country?

-Yes

-No

-If yes, where?

.....

3. How many years have you taught oral expression?

-Less than five years

-5 to 10 years

-More than ten years

Section two: About Students' Communicative Competence

4. As far as third year students are concerned, how do you evaluate their level of competence in communication?

-Good

-acceptable

-Still poor

5. In case it is not the expected level, do you think the reason is from:

- The student himself
- The method used
- Other, specify

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

6. In your opinion, communication is not given much importance in the classroom

- Agree
- Disagree

7. As far as third year students are concerned, what do you think should be the overall goal of teaching communicative competence

- To allow students practice the oral language (be able to speak “correctly” in the target language)
- To make students communicate at least meaning
- To make students able to use the target language in different real life situations
- Other (specify)

.....
.....

8. What approach or method do you think is the most appropriate to attain this goal?

- The audio lingual method
- The communicative approach
- Others (specify)

.....
.....

-Justify your choice

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

9. What activities do you usually use?

a-

b-

c-

d-

10. Do you qualify your teaching method as offering opportunities to students to develop their competence in communication?

-Yes

-No

Explain.....
.....
.....
.....

11. A student is considered as having achieved the expected level of communicative competence when

-He talks with a grammatically correct language

-He has the appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts

-He is creative and imaginative in using the language

-All of these

Justify.....
.....
.....

12. Do you think that the correct use of formal systems of syntax and semantics does itself ensure the effectiveness of communication?

-Yes

-No

13. If no, what do you think students need to have in order to be communicatively competent?

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

Section three: About Cultural Competence

14. As far as third year students are concerned, in your opinion, cultural competence is

- The knowledge of the FL speech community's attitudes and behaviours
- The knowledge and use of the FL speakers' socio-cultural rules in communicative contexts
- Being able to handle communication with native speakers in cultural contexts

15. As far as third year students are concerned, how do evaluate their cultural competence

- Good
- Acceptable
- Still poor

Justify.....

.....

16. Do you think that communication can be developed independently of its cultural context?

- Yes
- No

-If no, in your opinion, to what extent cultural competence is important for being communicatively competent

- Important
- Very important
- Not important
- Not important at all

Justify.....

.....

17. What are the tools and materials that you usually use to introduce the FL culture?

- a-
- b-
- c-
- d-

18. Do you think that exposing students to the FL culture improves their cultural competence and therefore their communicative competence?

- Yes
- No

-Explain your choice

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

19. What do you suggest to improve learners' competence in communication?

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Thank you for your cooperation

المخلص

في ظل العولمة و التطور الذي يشهده العالم اليوم، أصبحت اللغة الانجليزية مطلبا و ضرورة من ضروريات العصر، انعكست جليا في الاهتمام المتزايد في تحصيلها و الإلمام بقواعدها. و انطلاقا من مبدأ تلازم أي لغة بالوسط الطبيعي لها أي ثقافة شعبها، فانه من المهم لطالب اللغة الانجليزية أن يدرسها بكل جوانبها وأهمها الثقافي و التواصلية الحل في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بمعهد اللغات الأجنبية بجامعة باتنة، أين يدمج الجانب الثقافي في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية و ذلك لإثراء الحصيلة الثقافية للطالب مما يحسن مهاراته في التواصل في المواقف التواصلية. من هذا المنطلق، و من خلال دراسة وضعيته، فان هدف هذا البحث هو الوقوف عند أهمية و دور إدماج البعد الثقافي للغة الأجنبية خلال تدريسها من اجل تحصيل و تحسين مهارة الطالب في التواصل.

DEDICATION

To my family

For you Mum, Dad

I dedicate it also to

My sisters especially Samia,

My brother Yazid and his wife

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, praise be to Allah, the Lord of the World, for helping me to accomplish this work.

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Abstract

The present study aims at identifying the effect of integrating cultural insights on third year LMD students' communicative competence at the department of English at Batna University. The attempt was to highlight the nature of the relation existing between integrating cultural insights and the EFL learners' communicative competence along a descriptive study. Questionnaires' use on the population of both students, enrolled for the academic year 2012-2013, and teachers of oral expression module, revealed not only the tie aspect of this relation, but furthermore, evoked its significant impact on students' communicative as well as cultural competence. On the basis of literature reading and field work results, some recommendations have been drawn on order to attract both teachers' and students' attention on the role integrating culture performs at the level of improving competence in communication which is later on reflected by their achievements in communicative context.

List of Abbreviations

C1: First culture

C2: Second Culture

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FC : Foreign Culture

FL: Foreign Language

FLL: Foreign Language Learners

L2: Second Language

SL: Second Language

TC: Target Culture

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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