

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret

Department of Letters and Foreign Languages

English Section



Assessing EFL Learners' Intercultural Communicative Skills: Case of First-Year Master Students at the University of Tiaret

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Master Degree in
Linguistics*

Submitted by

- Mrs Meriem Sihem BOURAHLA
- Miss Asma BENCHERIF

Supervised by:

Dr. Ahmed MEHDAOUI

Board of Examiners

Chairperson: Dr. Habib MADANI

Supervisor: Dr. Ahmed MEHDAOUI

Examiner: Mr. Nour el- ddine CHEBLI

Academic Year: 2018 - 2019

DEDICATIONS

*To our dearest mothers; Latifa, Mebarka and fathers; Abbas, Ahmed for their support and to
whom we are deeply indebted*

To our dear sisters and brothers who helped us a lot in keeping our spirits up

To all our relatives and friends

To my dear husband Abdelwahab for his support and understanding

And finally to you, dearest reader.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; and prayers and peace be upon Mohamed His servant and messenger.

First and foremost, we would like to thank Allah, for giving us the strength to overcome all the difficulties we faced when we did this study.

We would like to express special thanks to our supervisor Dr. A. MEHDAOUI for his endless help, guidance, encouragement, support, and devotion of his precious time for the fulfillment of this research work.

Deepest gratitude is also expressed to the members of the jury: Dr. H. MADANI, and Mr. N. CHEBLI who accepted to devote some of their valuable time to read, evaluate and comment on this work.

It gives us great pleasure to acknowledge our teacher Miss. Louisa BELAID for providing us with useful advices that helped in the realization of this modest work.

Enormous thanks to Mr. Y. KHARROUBI whose kind patience, help and encouragement are so much appreciated.

We are also extremely grateful to all the respectful teachers in the English Department at the University of Tiaret.

ABSTRACT

This Master thesis paper aims at assessing intercultural communicative skills in the Algerian department of English more precisely in Tiaret. It is meant to investigate the extent to which the EFL students know about the cultural aspects of the target culture, as well as to show the importance of incorporating Foreign Language (FL) culture into EFL learning. This dissertation stands on the assumption that inter-cultural teaching /learning is somehow marginalized in comparison to the other linguistic skills of the language. In the purpose of proving the validity of this hypothesis, a study composed of an intercultural test as the leading research instrument, for first year Master students is conducted; the test was to assess learner's background knowledge about the target culture as well as the degree to which their intercultural communicative competence has developed based on the model presented by Byram, which includes five competencies or savoirs. The obtained results revealed that university EFL students are not very competent to interact and communicate effectively in cross-cultural encounters due to their limited knowledge about the target culture, in addition to the weakness of the existence of culture in the Algerian universities. Based on these findings, several helpful suggestions and recommendations are proposed to EFL teachers and students to be intercultural mindful speakers.

Key-words: Intercultural Communicative Competence, Foreign Language, English Foreign Language Student.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

IC: Intercultural Communicative

C: Culture

DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

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**GENERAL
INTRODUCTION**

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the last decades, culture played an important role in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. In fact, the culture and language are tuned to be interrelated to the learning or teaching language process. Several researchers have found that they are inseparable. That is to say, Linguistic components; grammar rules, vocabulary and pronunciation are not enough for understanding how to use language appropriately. To this end, to overcome this, it has become important to teach learners the skills that help them to express and interpret meanings effectively in order to achieve successful cross-cultural communication.

In this particular vein, developing intercultural communicative competence (henceforth ICC) for EFL learners at all levels, especially within the Algerian context, supposed to be considered the major target. Thus, since the development of English learners' intercultural competence is regarded as the main teaching and learning goal, assessing their learners' intercultural communicative competence as a learning outcome is so fundamental in order to know the degree of their cultural knowledge.

Therefore, this research is conducted with two principle aims:

- To assess English learners' intercultural communication competence at the University of Ibn Khaldoun;
- To stress upon the importance of integrating culture in FL teaching with its major components that are required for ICC.

In this light, the problem issue of this research work could be structured in the form of the following questions:

- Do First year master EFL students at Tiaret University possess sufficient cultural knowledge that enable them to act suitably in cross-cultural situations?
- What cultural knowledge is needed most for their' ICC development?

In order to find reliable answers to these questions, we assume that since our students used to be exposed to cultural modules such as literature and civilization, they might possess some factual information related to the British/American culture. Yet due to the complexity of culture and thus the difficulty of teaching teach all its components, the First year master EFL students at Tiaret University do not possess all the cultural skills that enable them to interact effectively in cross-cultural encounters.

Due to the nature of the research and in the light of what has been hypothesized, a cultural knowledge intercultural test is used as a benchmark for assessing the participants' intercultural skills. The test is based on Byram's model of ICC.

For the work plan, this research is based on three main chapters: chapter one touches the most important elements associated with culture teaching and learning. In relation to chapter two, chapter two deals with the notion of intercultural education such as definition, models and assessment methods. Finally, chapter three is about the data collection method, analysis and discussion of the findings.

By way of conclusion, it is ought to possibly key-note that the findings of this research need additional researches on the assessment of intercultural competence.

Chapter One

Chapter one: Language and Culture Teaching and Learning

The Goal of Teaching/Learning Foreign Language

Definition of Culture

Culture in English Language Teaching

The Most Common Approaches in Teaching Culture

Materials for Teaching Culture

Strategies and Techniques for Teaching Culture

Chapter one: Language and Culture Teaching and Learning

1.1 Introduction

Assessing intercultural communicative competence begins with stepping by the notion of communicative competence, providing a clear definition to culture along with its objectives, techniques and strategies, which translates into concrete, specific goals and measurable student learning outcomes.

Therefore, the present chapter is devoted to explaining the integration of culture in the language curriculum. It tries to highlight the relationship between culture and foreign language teaching. Furthermore, it is devoted to giving an overview of the importance and the goals of teaching intercultural communicative competence in EFL classrooms. In addition to a variety of techniques and activities which allow teachers to bring particular cultural components into classrooms, and increase learners' motivation towards learning the target culture.

1.2 The Goal of Teaching/Learning Foreign Language

The goal of teaching and learning foreign languages has always been the ability to communicate appropriately. To this end, language researchers and pedagogies outline set of components that are required for communicative competence. Most of these components are associated with culture and are fundamental for intercultural competence. In this section, we describe these competencies and how they are linked to the acquisition of culture.

1.2.1 The Communicative Language Competence Goal

As it is known, the goal of teaching and learning a foreign language has always been to enable learners to communicate effectively. Communicative competence as an educational model comes into existence during the 1970s as a major aim for teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. Communicative competence has always been used to refer to the ability to converse with a native speaker of the target language in a real-life situation, with emphasis on communication of ideas rather than on correctness of language form. According

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to Canale and Swain (1981: 1) this teaching model is designed to *'lead to more useful and effective second language teaching and allow more valid and reliable measurement of second language communication skills'*.

Practically speaking, according to Canale and Swain (1981) language classroom should demonstrate three major components that are necessary for learners to be able to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations (Linguistic competence, Sociolinguistic competence and Discourse competence):

- a) **Linguistic competence:** Linguistic competence refers to the unconscious knowledge of grammar that allows the learner to use and understand language, in other words, it is knowing how to use grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. To clarify more, linguistic competence asks: What words do learners use? How do they put them into phrases and sentences? How do they pronounce?
- b) **Sociolinguistic competence:** Sociolinguistic competence is the understanding of the social context where communication takes place i.e. the ability to use and respond to language appropriately and suitably to the geographical location of the language, a particular language register (formal, informal, administrative, technical language) and attitude to the interlocutor. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (gratitude, authority, friendliness, respect) when I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?
- c) **Discourse competence:** Discourse competence is the ability to select and arrange sentences to achieve a cohesive and coherent message to understand and interpret these messages correctly; it requires the use of a clear structure and logical connection within written or oral discourse flow. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, messages, newspaper article?

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These components of communicative competence have fundamentally been seen vital in second and foreign language classes for that they recognize the culture of the language being taught and learnt.

In fundamental nature, since the components of communicative competence are by large associated explicitly or implicitly with culture, one needs to provide a definition to culture in order to reveal how the way culture is defined is fundamentally related to communicative competence as a goal to the teaching and learning foreign languages.

1.3 Definitions of Culture

There are various definitions of culture that have been given by researchers worldwide to serve their research interests. In this chapter; however, we present what is most relevant to our research.

To being with, Montgomery and Thomas (1994: 5) define culture as “*the whole way of life of people or group, in this context, culture includes all the social practices that bond a group of people together and distinguish them from others*”. This means culture is knowledge of a particular group of people including language, social behaviours, beliefs, religion, traditions... etc; it covers and touches all aspects of human life.

These particular points about culture are accurately summarized by Millet (2003) as follow:

- It is a set of accepted behaviour patterns, values, assumptions, and shared common experiences.
- Culture defines social structure, decision-making practices, and communication styles.
- Culture dictates behaviour, etiquette, and protocol.
- Culture is something we learn. It impacts everyone and influences how we act and respond.

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To clarify more, culture interprets the person's beliefs and values that affect his/her behaviour; it also impacts the way of living, speaking and acting. Moreover, culture indicates from which group people belong. To go deeper, someone from Algeria speaks and acts differently from another person from a European country. Therefore, it will be noticeable to know from which cultural background they belong to. This indicates that culture represents people identity. This means as Benedict (1943: 11) states, culture "*as an inherited property, which is not innate but can be passed from generation to generation by learning from previous generations*".

In short, culture is transmitted over generations and it does not exist since birth, that's to say, it is acquired from the environment and people living with.

1.3.1 Language and Culture

There are many researchers who support the idea of language and culture relationship. For instance, Liddicoat et al.,(2003: 12) believe that "*language and culture are so interrelated with each other that in each level of language there is a dependence on culture*". Along the same thought, Brown (2000: 177) argues that "*language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture*". Thus, it can be said that both language and culture have a communicative function because both of them hold meanings; while language carries semantic and pragmatic meanings for language users, culture carries the cultural meanings that are associated with its users' behaviours.

In term of foreign language teaching and learning, this means that language cannot be taught and learnt in isolation to the culture of its people. Since language and culture are one entity, the teaching of both should part in foreign language classes.

To sum up, learning a language means learning the culture of its people, and thus moreover learning a language should not only involves learning its grammar rules

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(morphology, syntax,... etc) and word arrangement, but also learning about the specific society's custom, behaviours, attitudes, and the like.

1.4 Culture in English Language Teaching

Many scholars assert that cultural knowledge is an integral part of foreign language teaching and that culture must be integrated into the foreign language curriculum. According to Byram (1989: 25) *“The denotations and connotations that exist in a language are among the things which create the culture and keep it together; therefore, it is necessary to teach culture along with its language”*. Also, Peck (1998: 1) supports the same idea *“without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete”*.

In foreign language teaching, teacher should not only let students know the basic knowledge of the language, the grammar, but also the culture knowledge. So students may develop a good thinking habit while they use the foreign language. According to Cakir (2006: 154) knowing and understanding a language does not only mean to acquire the knowledge of grammar and lexis, but also the features and characteristics of the culture on some level. Additionally, he claims that to communicate internationally requires communicating interculturally.

Furthermore, it is most important in the foreign language classes in general and in EFL universities in particular to raise learner's sensitivity about the crucial role that culture plays in enhancing effective language learning and teaching. Kramsch (1993) maintains that culture teaching should not be regarded as a fifth skill that will be attached and taught in addition to the four traditional skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Culture is already there; it is present in every language use because it is part of language.

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1.4.1 Objectives of Teaching Culture

The major aim of foreign language teaching is to develop student's communicative competence in different situations. Teaching culture should be a fundamental part of teaching a foreign language because one of its main aims is intercultural communication competence. (Byram, 1997: 42) states:

The goal of language teaching is no longer defined in terms of the acquisition of communicative competence in foreign language; instead, it is defined in terms of intercultural communicative competence.

Hence, in order to achieve well development and progress in all areas of language learning, it is necessary to incorporate culture as an essential component of language learning.

The main aim of teaching culture is to develop students' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various situations. Seelye (1993: 29) formulates what he calls a super goal for the teaching of culture “ *All students will develop cultural understanding, attitudes, and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialized in that culture*”. For this reason, learners must know the cultural backgrounds of the target society.

There is more than one goal for teaching culture. According to Tomalin and Stempleski (1993: 7) the goals of teaching culture are to help students to:

- Develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally conditioned behaviours.
- To become more aware of the conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture.

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- To increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.
- To develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture.
- To stimulate student's intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and encourage empathy to its people.

In order to reach the above goals in foreign language classes, culture should be presented in a systematic and organised way. Cultural studies should have a rightful place in foreign language teaching.

1.5 The Most Common Approaches in Teaching Culture

In thinking about how to teach culture in the language classroom, it is useful to consider how the ways in which culture is presented can be categorized. Throughout the history of language, teaching various approaches dominated the stage:

1.5.1 Mono-cultural Approach

This approach can be traced back to the 70s and it focuses only and mostly on the culture being learned in order to develop near native-like communication skills, the foreign-cultural-approach that appeared later as a mono-cultural approach, Byram and Fleming (1998:22) state that it "is not concerned with the learner's own culture as it does not make any comparison between the two cultures". Thus, it focuses only on the foreign culture without dealing with the learner's culture nor the differences and similarities between the two. The main goal of such approach is to enhance the learner's communicative and cultural competence. However, it has been criticized because it does not focus on the relationship between the two cultures.

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1.5.2 The Comparative Approach

An approach based on mediating between target and local culture (comparing the differences then perceiving similarities). This approach tends to be logical since learners cannot simply ignore their own culture and identity that makes them who they are as explain Byram and Morgan (1994: 43) “*learners cannot simply shake off their own culture and step into another, their culture is a part of themselves, and to deny any part of it, is to deny something within their own being*”.

1.5.3 Intercultural approach

This approach is emphasized on the idea that any culture is effectively learnt through comparison between the target culture and learner’s own one and developing their understanding of both. But, the main focus remains the target culture. The main scope of this approach is to raise learner’s intercultural communicative competences and make them act as mediators between the two cultures.

Furthermore, the learners will avoid stereotypes and negative views about the target culture and they will be able to communicate effectively with other people of a different culture by using the target language, However, Risager (1998) claims that this approach is inadequate since there are subcultures within even one country. Instead, the teachers are obliged to use other approaches.

1.5.4 Multicultural approach

This approach is based on the idea that various cultures may exist within a single culture. According to Cook (2003:11) “*multicultural approach is based on the belief that today’s modern societies are multicultural, and there are many different cultures and languages in one country*”. In this approach the student should know the various cultures of

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the target language; i.e. the teacher should include also the subcultures and should not be limited to a specific culture.

1.5.5 The Trans-Cultural Approach

Risager (1998) first proposes the trans-Cultural Approach. The basis of this approach is that cultures are interlacing as a consequence of the globalization process, the mass media spread, tourism and immigration. She considers that it is not necessary to relate a foreign language that is international to any particular culture. Nevertheless, this approach is inadequate, since English is taught as a foreign language and not as an international language, this approach latter has been criticized by Byram.

1.5.6 Thematic-Based Approach

Nostrand (1974) claims that culture can be best learnt when taught in thematic ways. This approach is based on teaching culture through themes, that is to say, presenting some cultural themes for learners such as religion, education, family, ethnicity, value, and the like. Taking the Algerian context, in three separate studies by Mehdaoui (2013, 2015, and 2017), it is found that the use of the thematic-based approach is probably one of the best approaches in not only integrating the target culture, but in discussing cross-cultural differences.

1.5.7 Problem-Solving Approach

This approach helps learners to take part in the learning process when they are assigned to do researches on their own to extend their understanding since there are plenty of cultural aspects that are not found in the classroom.

To sum up, it seems that intercultural, thematic and problem-solving approaches are more appropriate. Through teaching civilisation in a thematic way, learners can develop intercultural skills (Mehdaoui, 2013, 2015, 2017). For example, teachers should focus more on cultural themes in teaching the elements of intercultural competence, as it is proposed by

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Byram (1997) in his book, “Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Competence”. Additionally, students are encouraged to do some researches on their own, and they are better prepared for finding everyday problems for themselves. What is needed then is that it is important for teachers to provide their own materials to compensate for whatever they think is missing.

1.6 Materials for Teaching Culture

A lot of teaching techniques and strategies were provided by different theorists in the field of teaching a foreign language, on how to integrate culture into foreign language classes. They also have suggested different teaching materials so that the teaching techniques can be enforced.

1.6.1 How to Select Materials?

It is most important to choose carefully the appropriate materials for teaching culture. Brooks (1968:32) warns against culture-related materials that are not selected thoroughly. He claims, “What is selected for presentation must be authentic, typical, and important; otherwise false impressions may be created”.

In this vein, Artal, Carrion and Monros (1997) mention two important factors when selecting cultural material: first, materials that promote intercultural learning; and second, the culture that appears in the material.

In addition, Byram et al., (2002: 24) include that teachers should “ensure that learners understand its context and intention... which allow learners to explore and analyse them rather than learn the information in them”. So, teachers ought to consider these factors to teach culture efficiently to foreign language learners who do not communicate with native speakers and have no chance to discover these speakers’ thoughts, feelings, and interactions.

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1.6.2 Suggested Materials

1.6.2.1 Technology

The first suggested material is technology that has changed the nature of instruction and learning. Teachers are exploring digital technologies to make learning more effective and engage students actively. Furthermore, technology gives foreign language teachers various opportunities to create better and more effective instructional materials to teach not only the language structure, but also the target culture. According to Kramsch (2000), technology seems to fulfil teachers' needs. Teaching materials such as images, videos, films, internet and computers are widely used to support student learning in a classroom setting, and they have opened new views for language learning and teaching in particular.

Along the same thought, Herron et al., (1999) point out that the use of video whether a recorded tape or a film, is an effective technological device in teaching culture since it provides students with visual information that used to be hidden through the pages of texts.

1.6.2.2 Literature

Literature is the second suggested material as novels, poems and fairytales that provide students with opportunities to explore not only the historical background information, but also learn about values, morals and to construct their own judgment. Furthermore, using literature in teaching culture is beneficial; Kramsch (1993: 130) explains that:

More than any other text, it is said, the piece of literary prose or poetry appeals to the students' emotions, grabs their interest, remains in their memory and makes them partake in the memory of another speech community.

In this view, the idea of using literary texts can develop learners' proficiency levels, enhance their knowledge of the target language and its culture, and even raise their awareness

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towards cultural identities and a close interaction with other cultural products. For instance, Byram (1997) believes that teaching culture through literature provides many opportunities to develop intercultural competence.

1.6.2.3 Civilisation

As noted earlier, the programme of civilisation at the EFL department is a foundation course whose main purpose is to enlarge EFL learners' knowledge of both language and culture skills. When taught, thematically, as noted by Mehdaoui, it has the potential to help English learners perform an independent reading of the foreign culture. Furthermore teaching such module aims to enhance students' language proficiency, to provide them with an overview about the history of the people whose language taught, and to help them understand the culture of the people who gave birth to the target language

Correspondingly, teachers should profit from teaching materials as much as possible in order to change the usual way of teaching and to gain much time. They have also to be conscious of the various teaching techniques and strategies that can go hand in hand with the appropriate teaching materials.

1.7 Strategies and Techniques for Teaching Culture

1.7.1 Techniques

There is a great variety of techniques and activities developed for integrating culture into language teaching, these are some of them:

- a) **Quizzes:** they are a very helpful technique to check learners understanding of what has been taught and also for acquiring new information. Students work in pairs or groups. Finding the right answer is not so much important because students become more interested in predicting correct answers. Cullen (2000: 7) stresses that "it is not

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important whether students get the right answer or not but, by predicting, they will become more interested in finding it out”.

- b) **Action logs:** they are a kind of notebooks in which learners write some information concerning what they have achieved and learnt. Students become so interested in the target culture, and they may write several pages of comments a week.
- c) **Research:** it is considered as a powerful tool since it stimulates learner’s interest. The teacher asks students to search the Internet or a library in order to find information concerning any given topics of the target culture they like, such as food, customs, traditions, etc. Once in the classroom, the learners present their works and give explanations about what they have found to their classmates and answer their questions. This activity can lead to an interest in the target culture among students.
- d) **Cultural islands:** the EFL teacher should bring the target culture into his language classroom by creating an authentic environment. He may use posters, flashcards, maps, and pictures to enrich his learner’s “mental image”; this will encourage them to learn more about the foreign culture.
- e) **Culture capsule:** is first suggested by Taylor and Sorensen (1961: 6), this technique is very successful for culture teaching. It is a short description of a given cultural aspect of the target culture, for instance, weddings, festivals, family, food or any other cultural component. It should be followed by a comparison between the learners’ native culture and the target one to discover the similarities and the differences between the two cultures.
- f) **Inviting Foreigners:** it is an activity in which people from other cultures or recently returned expatriates are invited into the class to talk about their culture or their experience. This activity is useful in helping learners experience real-life intercultural

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interactions (Argyle, 1982), and it is possible for the teacher to encourage students to interact with foreigners and recall their experiences

Besides this variety of techniques, the teacher may use other strategies such as:

1.7.2 Strategies

a) Role play: it is a very good technique to be used in the classroom. According to Kramsch (1993), cultural awareness can be reached through role-playing. It engages the learners in real life communication and reduces their fears because students, including the less competent, would be working in groups and will have the chance to choose the role that feels comfortable with.

Simply, role-plays can encourage students to practice their speaking skill and develop their communication skills. The learners may tackle different situations like “at the restaurant”, “at the hotel”, “checking at the airport”, etc

b) Culture assimilators: are good techniques for giving students understanding about cultural information. Culture assimilators consist of short (usually written) descriptions of an incident or situation where interaction takes place between at least one person from the target culture and persons from other cultures. The description is followed by four possible choices about the meaning of the behaviour, action, or words of the participants in the interaction. Students are asked to select one of the four possibilities they feel is correct. Thus students are given feedback on why one explanation is right and the others wrong in a certain cultural context.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented most of the aspects related to the teaching of culture. Including, definitions, the main approaches, techniques and strategies as well materials that could also be used by teachers for better integration of culture. Fundamentally, this chapter aimed at revealing that incorporating culture in foreign language teaching is of crucial significance for successful communication in the target language.

In the following chapter, we shall expand the topics to explore some other related areas about intercultural communication. This will be the notion of intercultural teaching and learning.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Intercultural Teaching and Learning

Defining Intercultural Competence

The Importance of Developing ICC in the English classroom

Models of teaching and Assessing Intercultural Competence

Assessment Methods and Tools

What to assess?

2.1. Introduction

As discussed in the foregoing chapter, the relationship between language and culture has long been a subject matter in the history of foreign language teaching and learning. Foreign language learning seems aimless if the students do not possess enough knowledge about the way of life of the people who speak the target language. Therefore, besides acquiring the linguistic ability, the learners should also develop their cultural knowledge as well.

At the heart of this chapter, we will deal with the most fundamental concepts relating to intercultural communication. It first begins with the definition of intercultural competence followed by an explanation to the goal of intercultural competence as a model of teaching and learning foreign languages. Then the different intercultural teaching and assessing models are explained in relation to their relevant concepts such as communicative competence, intercultural communicative competence and its models.

2.2 Defining Intercultural Competence

One can notice that when two people of different cultural backgrounds come into contact; their cultures come into contact as well. This means that their communication takes an intercultural form. Therefore, put it simply, intercultural communication can be regarded as *“interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event”* (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, 2007: 10). However, it should be noted that intercultural communication does not involve simply a language skill, but it also involves all the non-verbal language such as body language, attitude, eye contact, and the like, which is a crucial component of communication. Galloway (1993: 27) states that *“nonverbal behaviour comes naturally to an individual based on true emotions, and feelings; it is less likely to be deceptive as verbal communication can be”*. Some researchers argue that the non-verbal language sometimes outweighs the verbal one.

When it comes to teaching and learning, educators refer to the ability to communicate successfully in a cross-cultural encounter as ‘intercultural competence’. This competence is generally defined as the ability to communicate and behave in appropriate ways with those who are culturally different. According to Bennett (2009: 7), “*Intercultural competence has often been recognized as a capability, which supports effective and appropriate interaction among people in different cultural contexts*”. Similarly, Deardorff (2006: 247-248) defines intercultural competence as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes”. What is most generally agreed amongst researchers is that people can acquire intercultural competence most efficiently through their own immersion in various cultures.

Therefore, many scholars believe that possessing enough knowledge about the target culture is of crucial importance in the process of foreign language learning and teaching. Byram (1989) asserts that cultural awareness is necessary in language teaching for the reason that it leads to language proficiency. He adds that culture should be included in any language curriculum because language reveals the speaker’s values and their views towards the world. Furthermore, another primary aspect of culture teaching is to develop learner’s abilities to communicate effectively in the different situations they may come across. Learning the second language culture helps in developing the learners’ intercultural communication competence, enriches and reinforces their ability to understand the world, and cultivates the cultural awareness. According to Kramsch (1993) “*to learn a foreign language is not merely to learn how to communicate, but also to discover how much leeway the target language allows learners to manipulate grammatical rules, sounds, meanings, and to reflect upon, or even flout, socially accepted norms at work both in their own or the target culture*”. Hence, linguistic competence alone is not enough for FL learners to be competent in that language.

They need to be aware of, for example, the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests and agree or disagree with someone. They have to communicate effectively.

2.2.1 The Intercultural Communicative Competence Goal

Despite the usefulness of the popularity of the communicative competence model, it has been criticized for various reasons:

The first reason for Byram (1997) is that it is impossible for learners to have all the competence associated with this model. The second one is that this model stresses on the knowledge of the target culture while ignoring the local one, which is necessary for intercultural communication. Therefore, Byram (1997: 23) stresses that “*the learners ... have to develop linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence, but in order to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural communicative situations; learners need to develop intercultural competence too*”. This competence is summarized as follow:



Figure 2.1: Adapted from Byram (1997)’s model of Intercultural Communicative competence (1997:71)

In the light of globalization associated with the intensive contact of people and the spread of mass media, this model has been seen as promising as it celebrates the integration of culture along language while focusing on both the native and the target culture. Intercultural communicative competence is meant to prepare learners to act appropriately and successfully in real life situations in a foreign language without problems of misunderstanding and conflict.

According to Fantini and Tirmizi (2006), everyone develops a kind of communicative competence (CC) in their native language which enables them to communicate with the people sharing the same culture without having significant misunderstandings'. Similarly, Byram et al., (2002) view that intercultural communicative competence “*expects people to be able to communicate with others from different cultural backgrounds and this requires them both to keep their individual self and have multiple identities at the same time*”.

In nutshell, nowadays the need of intercultural communication has increased greatly as communication between people of various cultures has become the norm. In other words, intercultural communicative competence as a teaching model has become an educational and social reality in order to help in bridging the gap between people of different cultural background.

2.3 The Importance of Developing ICC in the English classroom

The use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) has rapidly increased in the globalized world, developing intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become a focus in English language teaching, and need to be incorporated in the language curriculum. According to Kwakernaak, Hoeflaak, Vries, Fasoglio et al., (2008: 10) “*developing ICC in students is now perceived as an important part of foreign language teaching*” in addition to Byram et al., (2002: 11) who notes “*In foreign language teaching, the communicative competence considers this by stressing on that foreign language learners need not only to acquire*

linguistic competence but also the knowledge of the appropriate use of the language". That is to say in the EFL teaching, great attention should be paid to teach culture of the target language so As learners learn to use a new language, they learn to communicate with other individuals from a new culture. Educators can play an important role in facilitating the development of intercultural communicative competence in language classrooms. Byram, Nichols, and Stevens (2001) outlined four guidelines for developing intercultural competence in the language classroom:

- (1) Learners should develop awareness of cultural similarities and differences by making comparisons between their own and others' cultures.
- (2) They need to develop skills to analyze and interpret unfamiliar social and cultural information.
- (3) Learners should be encouraged to collect data from beyond the classroom to promote their own intercultural communicative competence development.
- (4) They should be exposed to literature that promotes an understanding of "otherness" on both cognitive and affective levels.

Broadly speaking, teachers, educators and researchers have expressed the belief that the primary aim of second and foreign language acquisition is to enable learners to communicate with people coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a multicultural world. That is to say, while teaching linguistic skills, second and foreign language instructors should also integrate a variety of cultural elements in their language lessons. Young and Sachdev (2011:81) claim that "*all instructors recognized the value of developing intercultural communicative competence in learners for more effective language learning*".

It is generally believed that if students lack socio-cultural knowledge and skills needed for success in communicating in cross-cultural contexts, they can hardly use a language

accurately and lead them to have low confidence, fear of speaking English, and frequent intercultural communication failures. According to Berardo, Deardoff et al (2012), “*a lack of ICC may cause culture shock*”. Culture shock is caused by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs (words, gestures, facial expressions, customs, and symbols).

2.4 Models of teaching and Assessing Intercultural Competence

Foreign language pedagogies include various skills, adopting an intercultural attitude are thought to be more effective than approaches that only focus on linguistic objects (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation). After presenting a general definition of intercultural competence, three models of intercultural competence will be explained and evaluated according to their use in chronological order in order to show how the concept evolved through the years.

2.4.1 Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003: 442) argue that “*greater intercultural sensitivity is associated with greater potential for exercising intercultural competence*”. Bennett’s Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity DMIS is a six-stage intercultural acquisition process that leads to a successful cultural awareness phase (1986; 1993; 2004). Bennett regards these six stages important for increasing learners’ intercultural experiences. Bennett differentiates among denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration

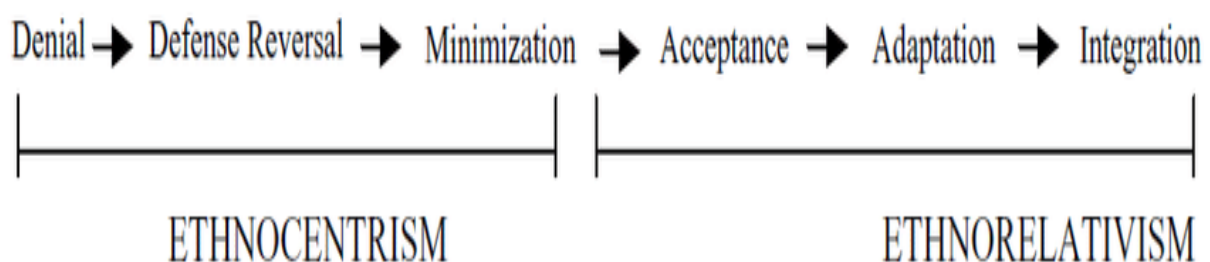


Figure 2.2: Bennett (1986; 1993; 2004)’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Starting from the egocentric stage, learners gradually become aware of differences with the other. The first three stages (denial, defence, and minimization) are part of the ethnocentric phase, in which one's own culture is central to understand reality. This means having an understanding of the own culture comes first. The last three stages (acceptance, adaptation, and integration) are part of the ethno relative phase, in which one's own culture is understood in relation to other cultures. This means that at this stage learners are able to observe differences and accept differences.

Bennett views that an increase of cultural experiences facilitates the development from one stage to another. Thus, the DMIS is not a descriptive model of changes in attitudes and behaviour. Rather, it is a model of changes in worldview structure, where the observable behaviour and self-reported attitudes at each stage are indicative of the state of the underline worldview.

Bennett's model underlines that intercultural competence is a continuous process with several stages and needs time to progress. Therefore, it is fundamental to determine which phase teachers and students have reached before lessons are designed.

2.4.2 Kramsch's Concept of the Third Space in Intercultural Competence

Kramsch's (1993) notion of 'third place' has influenced the intercultural teaching/learning approach which is still relevant today. Kramsch (1993) asserts the importance of linking culture teaching to other academic disciplines such as social sciences, ethnography, and sociolinguistics. She insists that to understand a foreign culture, comparison need to be made with one's own culture and that reflection is crucial in this process.

Kramsch (1993) claims that when foreign language learners interact with native speakers, they create third culture which is neither their native culture C1 nor the target culture C2. This precisely what kramsch advocates; she believes that intercultural education should enable learners to take both an insider's view on C1 and C2.

With Kramsch's concept of the third space, teachers get the opportunity to understand intercultural competence from their student's perspective and are made aware of the difficult position students may face in learning about another culture. For foreign language classroom, Kramsch presents the model of 'Third Place' that is based on the multicultural world that learners live in and tries to prepare them for this world by using their knowledge skills and attitudes for new experiences.

2.4.3 Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Byram's (1997) Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence is the most widely used model in the domain of language learning and teaching. It is the model that most definitions of intercultural competence are based upon today.

According to Byram (1997), when persons from different languages or countries interact socially, they bring to the situation their knowledge about their own country and that of others. Part of the success of such an interaction will depend on knowledge and attitude, and the skills of discovery and interaction. In this model, Byram (1997: 34) introduces five competences (savoirs) that are necessary to develop intercultural competence:

a) Assessing Attitude "Savoir Être" which refers to attitudes and values in showing curiosity and openness, readiness about other cultures and belief about one's own. Note here that the attitudes do not necessarily need to be positive attitudes. Therefore, Byram sums up the attitudes with the ability to step back from one's own worldview and cultural identity.

b) Assessing knowledge "Savoir" which refers to the knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.

c) **Assessing Skills of Interpreting and Relating** “*Savoir comprendre*” connected to the skills of interpreting and relating, that is to say, the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own.

d) **Assessing Skills of Discovery and Interaction** “*Savoir apprendre/faire*” related to the skills of discovery and interaction or the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

e) **Assessing Critical Culture Awareness/Political Education** “*Savoir s’engager*” related to the skills in relation to cultural awareness, which means having the ability to evaluate practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries. These intercultural competence components are summarized as follow:

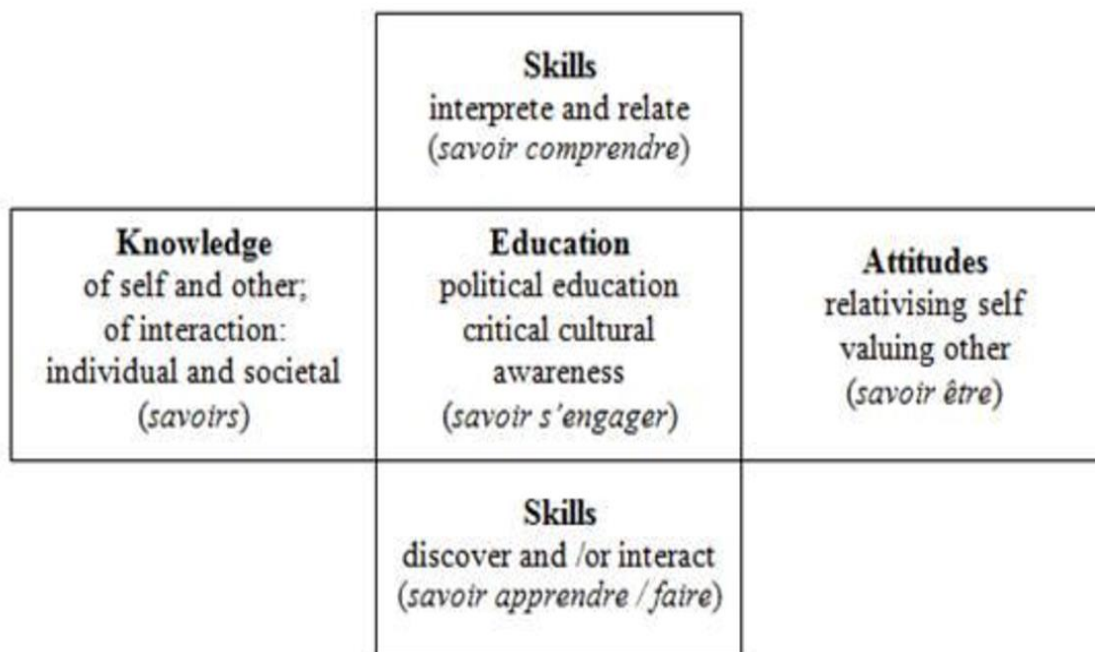


Figure 2.3: Adapted from Byram’ Model for Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997)

As can be seen, intercultural competence has an effective domain (attitude), a cognitive domain (knowledge) and a skills domain. Furthermore, in this model, Byram additionally

combines intercultural competence with communicative competence, and thus calls for a model of intercultural communicative competence in language teaching (see figure 2.4 below):

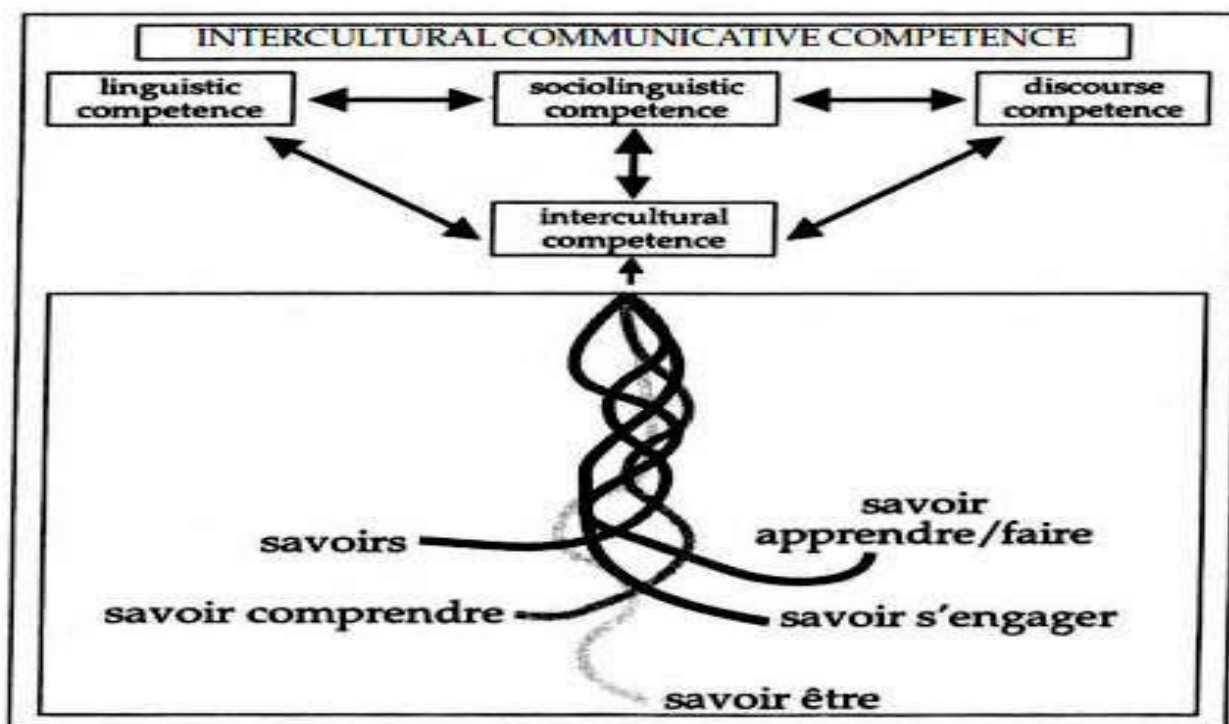


Figure 2.4: Adapted from Byram's Model of ICC (1997: 73)

The model shows that Byram defines intercultural communicative competence as the collections of linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence.

Aware of the difficulty of realizing all these intercultural components in the foreign language classroom, Byram adds that this knowledge is not supposed to be acquired in the classroom only, but it is crucial to be also acquired through experience and reflection, without the intervention of teachers and educational institutions. This includes traveling, social media, and learners' personal efforts.

According to Byram (1997), foreign language teachers are only required to guide their learners through the process of acquiring competences in attitudes, knowledge, and skills, and

then it is left for students to start by questioning their preconceived ideas before entering into a process of discovery about ‘the other’ with the intent of becoming more willing to seek out and engage with otherness in order to ultimately experience relationships of reciprocity.

2.5 Assessment Methods and Tools

Assessment is to examine the quality and the value of something and make decision or judgment about it. The assessment has the following aims (cited in Mehdaoui: 221):

- To check the effectiveness of method being used;
- To check and evaluate the students’ knowledge;
- To offer students an opportunity to review, experience, and apply what they had learned;

From the onset, it is worth mentioning that the assessment of ICC is a domain that is endemic with controversy. Part of the reason is that the content being assessed does not match the appropriate measurement tools. In this section, some brief descriptions of approaches can be incorporated into an assessment plan.

To begin with, in selecting intercultural assessment tools, some key questions should be asked to aid in selecting the most appropriate tool(s):

What are the goals and objectives to be assessed? What should the tool measure? What are the limitations and cultural biases of the tool? Is the tool valid (accurate) and reliable (consistent)? How will the data be used to provide feedback to students on their own intercultural competence development?

- a) Portfolio:** One of the ICC assessment tool is the use of portfolios to collect direct evidence of learners’ learning. According to Deardorff (2011), artifacts placed in the portfolios by students include reflection papers, term papers, photos, and other documentation of student learning.

- b) **Critical Reflection:** Deardorff (2011) regards that reflection is vital in developing learners' intercultural competence. In its simplest way, according to Deardorff (2009), teachers can only push their learners to go beyond descriptive reflection by simply asking a set of what questions: What? So what? Now what? Or simply ask students, "As a result of this learning, what will you do now?" Such reflection can be a rich source of data for research on students' intercultural competence development within the curricular context and, when combined with other data sources and methods, help inform creation of a more rigorous assessment plan.
- c) **Indirect evidence:** According to Deardorff (2011), indirect evidence of student learning around intercultural competence is collected primarily through surveys or inventories from the learner-perspective. There are more than one hundred such instruments currently available, some with more evidence of reliability and validity than others (Fantini 2009). In employing these instruments, it is absolutely critical that users understand exactly what the instrument measures and how this aligns with the stated learning outcome. It is also very important that the use of any of these indirect measures be coupled with direct measures of student learning, as discussed earlier.

Other indirect evidence related to students' perceptions of intercultural learning and intercultural competence development can be collected through interviews and focus groups

2.6 What to assess?

In the book of '*Guidelines for the Assessment of Intercultural Communicative Competence*', Lussier et al., (2007) introduce three ICC dimensions to assess: knowledge/saviors, Know-how/savoir-faire, and Being/savoir être. These three components of ICC involve cognitive, affection and behavioural skills, and each component has a special way of assessment.

2.6.1 Assessing the Intercultural Knowledge/Savoirs

As its name indicates, the assessment of savoir is limited to knowledge related to some factual information (visible culture). This can be simply done through a series of in-class direct questions related to some factual information (historical events, figures, etc). The teacher can give students multiple-choice questions to test the degree of their students' understanding to the cultural facts (Mehdaoui: 2017).

2.6.2. Assessing the intercultural know-how/savoir faire

According to Lussier et al., (2007), assessing students' savoir faire requires teachers should design tasks to be performed by students. In other words, students should be engaged in classroom discussion and debates. To do so, homework project is adequate in this case. Students can work individually or in groups. In the classroom, the teacher can ask some critical questions related to the topic being investigated.

2.6.3 Assessing the intercultural being/savoir être

According to Byram et al., (2002: 29), assessing savoir être means to test the learners' ability '*to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange*', this can be evaluated through tasks, writing essays for instance, that help students to solve critical incidents and justify their opinions. For example, students can be assigned to write a critical essay of 250 words about any cultural behaviour, in which they should reflect, in convincing arguments, on the areas that may surprise or confuse them while referring examples from their own culture (Mehdaoui: 2017).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the explanation of some basic concepts relevant to culture. After giving an overview of culture and its strong relationship with language, this chapter moved to discuss some most aspects of intercultural communicative competence. This included definitions of intercultural communication, intercultural competence, and the most famous and used models of intercultural competence.

For more understanding, the next chapter attempts to contextualize the theoretical insights (chapter 1 and 2), and the situational one (discussed in this chapter) so far collected to serve the present research paper.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Data Analysis

Re-statement of the Research Aim

The Sample of Participants

The Research Instrument

The Results of the Assessment of ICC Test

Interpretation and Discussion of the Main Findings

Recommendations

Conclusion

3.1. Introduction

Moving beyond the theoretical aspects related to language, culture, and intercultural communication, this chapter concerns the practical aspects of the current research. It provides a detailed description of the research methodology adopted to come up with the results which answer the research questions of this study. It also identifies and describes the research design of data collection, the sample, the procedure, and the data collection method used.

3.2. Restatement of the Research Aim

Concerning the importance of ICC assessment in the field of foreign language education, the present research has the following for major aims:

- To find out whether the Algerian EFL university students have the required skills needed for successful intercultural interaction.
- To assess the extent to which they are able to communicate effectively and purposefully with those who are culturally different from them, and achieve their instrumental and social goals when in different cross-cultural situations.
- More importantly, to draw the attention to the importance of culture integration

3.3. The Research Instruments

As mentioned in chapter two, the test has often been one of the most reliable tools in the field of assessment. Recognizing its utility in assessment, a cultural knowledge test was favored in order to check first-year master learner's intercultural skills.

The cultural knowledge test included 19 main questions divided into five (5) main sections based on Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence (savoirs).

Section 1: Knowledge/savoir (6 questions)

Section 2: Attitudes/Savoir être (6 questions)

Section 3: Skills of Discovery and Interacting/Savoir apprendre/faire (4questions)

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Section 4: Skills of Interpreting and Relating/Savoir comprendre (2questions)

Section 5: Critical cultural awareness or political education/ avoir s"engager (1question).

As stated previously, the choice falls for this ICC model because it is the most used model for assessment and because it explains precisely what learners need to know for successful cross-cultural interaction.

3.4. Sampling:

The participants of this study were 20 first EFL year master students, linguistic specialty at Tiaret University. This sample was chosen for two main reasons: They have been studying English at the department for 4 years and therefore, unlike the undergraduate students, they were expected to have cultural awareness. The second reason was that, among many fields, the specialty of linguistics in the field that covers the study of both language and culture as it provides students key-concepts related to culture.

3.5. The Results of the Assessment of ICC Test

3.5.1. The Knowledge (Savoir) Skills Results

1. The United Kingdom consists of:

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) England, Scotland, Wales.	12	60%
b) Great Britain and Northern Ireland.	01	5%
c) England and Scotland.	03	15%
d) Great Britain and the Irish Republic.	04	20%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.1: The Constitution of the United Kingdom

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In the first question, the respondents were asked about the constitution of the United Kingdom. The highest rate of respondents representing (60%) they chose the first choice as a correct answer, while (20%) claimed that it consists of Great Britain and the Irish Republic, followed by (15%) of the respondents who chose the item “c”, whereas only (5%) chose Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2. What do you know about the following festivals?

The respondents were asked about British festivals. only (25%) of students gave a brief answers, among them (15%) responded by ‘religious day’ in Easter Monday and ‘athletic day’ in Boxing Day moreover in Guy Fawkes Day they claimed that ‘special day’ is the appropriate answer, while (10%) provided us with wrong answers . The majority (75%) of the students declared that they do not have any idea about these festivals.

3. Match each variety of language to each origin

This question aimed to know students’ knowledge about language origins. Seventeen (17) students have answered correctly because of the share of the same roots in each term, while three (3) students had no idea about these items.

4. National days in Britain are not celebrated to the same extent as national days in other countries like America or Algeria, in which each region in Britain has its own national days.

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Yes	09	45%
b) No	11	55%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.2: The celebration of the national days in Britain

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As it is shown in the table above, (45%) of the students declared that National days in Britain are not celebrated to the same extent as national days in other countries like America or Algeria, in which each region in Britain has its own national days. By contrast (55%) of them responded by 'No'.

5. Match each festival day to its origin:

The big disaster in this question, only one (1) student answered only two (2) items correctly while the other nineteen (19) students had no idea about the origins of the British festivals.

6. Minorities' religious festivals such as Eid ul-Fitr (Muslim), Diwali (Hindu) and Hanukkah (Jewish) are officially recognised in the UK, and they are taught to children at school?

Items	Respondents	pourcentage
a) True	11	55%
b) False	09	45%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.3: Students opinions about the recognition of the religious festivals in UK

Following the table above most of the respondents (55%) revealed that the religious festivals are widely recognized in the UK and children learn about these at school, while (45%) of them thought the opposite.

3.5.1.1 Interpreting Knowledge (Savoir) Results

From the results of section one "Assessing Knowledge", it can be noticed that the majority of English learners do not have enough knowledge/savoir of British culture that enables them to act appropriately and effectively in cross-cultural communication, for instance the majority of them (60%) thought that the United Kingdom consists of England, Scotland, and Wales, thus they do not even know the visible culture about England and,

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whereas few of them around (20%) provided correct answers for some questions. It is very clear that the learners have limited knowledge about the target culture.

3.5.2 Attitudes (Savoir être) Results

1. How do you consider the British/American culture compared to your culture?

This open-ended question aimed at knowing unexpected answers the students may provide. The students were asked to compare between the British/American culture and their culture. Out of the twenty (20) students, seventeen (17) students provided answers. A great number of them stated that both cultures are extremely different. Thus, some students included some variable aspects as traditions, religion and the open-mindedness. For instance, one of the students stated: *“Algeria is a Muslim country so religious influence the culture it is a conservative country while British / American is open to other cultures”*.

2. The British people are racist?

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a)True	12	60%
b)False	8	40%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.4: Student’s opinions about the British people

As shown above, (60%) of the respondents indicated that the British people are racist, whereas (40%) of them said that they are not.

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3. How do you think the British/American people view the Algerian Culture?

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Inferior	09	45%
b) Superior	00	00%
c) Equal	03	15%
d) I do not know	08	40%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.5: Student's opinions about British people's view towards the Algerian culture.

From the results above (45%) claimed that the British/ American people view the Algerian culture inferior, moreover (40%) said that they don't know the appropriate answer, whereas (15%) claimed that they view the Algerian culture equal to the British one, while no one (00%) of the respondents think that the Algerian culture is superior to the British or American culture.

4. What is your opinion about the British people who wear the skirt?

In connection with students' attitudes towards British culture, the respondents were asked about their opinions about British people who wear the skirt. The majority accept the culture difference and expressed their respect towards the British traditions even one student stated that they look pretty and they should be proud of wearing such clothes, by contrast, only three(3) students thought that is funny, especially for men.

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5. *When you do not look in the eye of a British talking to you, they may think you are:*

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Not interested in what they are saying!	06	30%
b) Listening and interested!	07	35%
c) Rude and impolite	02	10%
d) Polite and Being respectful	05	25%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.6: Student's responses about dealings with British people .

Students' responses to this question vary to include (35%) of them who said that when you don't look in the eye of a British while talking to you they may think you are listening and interested, however (30%) of them declared that they think you are not interested in what they are saying, in contrast (25%) of the respondents asserted that they think you are polite and being respectful, moreover only (10%) said that they think you are rude and impolite. Therefore we can recognize that EFL learners correspondingly have not been able to answer correctly, for the reason that they don't have enough knowledge about the attitudes of British people.

6. *Would you wear a Scottish kilt (skirt) if you happen to visit Scotland because you were asked to participate in a national cultural festival there?*

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Yes	07	35%
b) No	13	65%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.7: Student's point of view about wearing Scottish kilt

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As it is demonstrated above, the item most often chosen was (B), “NO” with a total percentage of (65%), which means the majority of the students do not accept to wear a skirt because it is not part of their culture, However, the other (35%) of students have chosen “yes” and show their willingness to wear a Scottish skirt.

3.5.2.1 Interpreting Attitudes (Savoir être) Results

This section dealt with interacting and mediating between home and target culture and dealing with student’s attitudes toward British culture, from these results we can notice that the learners are not aware of the cultural differences between their culture and a British one. For example, in the fifth (5) question, (35%) of students thought that avoiding eye –contact when talking to British means that they are listening and interested, furthermore, (25%)of them thought that they are polite and respectful. That means students have no idea about the non-verbal culture which is most important in cross-cultural situations.

3.5.3 Skills of Discovery and Interaction (Savoir apprendre/faire) Results

1. If you want to break the ice making a small talk with a British whom you do not know well.

Which topic would you choose? Select only one.

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Family	02	10%
b) Weather	04	20%
c) Politics	05	25%
d) Sports	04	20%
e) Money	02	10%
f) Religion	03	15%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.8: Student’s responses about the chosen topics to make conversation with unknown British people.

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In this question, respondents were asked to select one topic to make a small conversation with a British whom they don't know him very well. (25%) of them chose the third choice "politics", while (20%) thought that talking about the weather is a suitable choice. The topic (d) "sports" was chosen by (20%) of the participants and (f) "religion" with (15%). Yet only (10%) of them chose the topic of family and also (10%) chose the item "e".

2. How do British people usually greet one another?

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Hug?	03	15%
b) Kiss?	01	05%
c) Shake hands?	16	80%
Total	20	100%

Table 3.9: The greeting of British people

The table above show that (80%) students said that British people shake hands when they greet one another, however (15%) of them who declared that they hug, on the other hand, the least proportion of percentage was found in "kissing each other" which has been marked by (1%) of the respondents. We can deduce that the majority of the students know the British greeting probably from social media.

3. The correct way to introduce yourself in any British social setting where conversation with strangers is permitted, such as a party is to:

Items	Respondents	Pourcentage
a) Introduce yourself	10	50%
b) Not to introduce yourself at all	03	15%
c) Find a way of initiating a conversation	07	35%

Table 3.10: Student's opinions about the correct way to introduce yourself in British meetings.

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In this question, the respondents were asked about the adequate way of introducing themselves in British social settings. Half of the respondents (50%) chose “introduce yourself” as the correct way to introduce themselves in any conversation with strangers, whereas (35%) of them prefer to “find a way of initiating a conversation”, while the rest of the respondents (15%) chose the item “b”.

4. You invited a British/American friend. He/she started to eat with hands like any Algerian, but you discovered that he/she had not washed his/her hands. How would you tell him/her?

great number of students (seventeen 17) preferred to ask directly and gently the British/American guest to wash his/ her hands while seven (7) of them chose the indirect way in order not to embarrass him/her as *'I will talk to him in a respectful way .I react that I forget to wash my hand and I ask him if he washed his hands ...'*. However, three (3) of them related the topic with religion, for instance, *'In our religion, we start first by washing hand, then say the name of Allah and after eating washing hands again'*.

3.5.3.1 Interpreting the Skills of Discovery and Interaction (Savoir apprendre/faire)

The questions above sought to know the ability of students to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills in real communication and interaction. The results show that the correct answers are slightly higher than the previous sections; i.e. the students have an average level of knowledge about British people's practices as in “greetings and breaking ice making small talk with British”. Contrary to the behaviour concerning table manners, students chose the direct instruction which is not the appropriate way for a British/American friend .

3.5.4 Skills of interpreting and Relating (Savoir comprendre) Results

1. *You are friend with someone on Facebook, and latter you discover that he/she is a racist towards other cultures. How would you treat him/her?*

A great number of respondents demonstrated their open-mindedness by not reacting in a racist way but they sought to convince him/her not to be racist toward other cultures while one student preferred to block him/her immediately, moreover, the very few students supported this idea *'I would avoid talking to her/him'*

2. *A foreign colleague behaved inappropriately towards you. How would you react back? And Why? Please choose only one answer?*

Students were asked to give their opinions about the inappropriate behave of a foreign colleague. Some students went to violence directly instead of fixing things as *'I probably would engage in a physical fight with him'*, therefore, some of them preferred to talk and act in a tolerant way in order to solve the issue peacefully, amongst them ; two students (2) related the topic with “the Islamic religion”, for example, a student claimed *'I will try to treat him better any ways in order to resent a good positive image about me, my religion and my culture'*. While the majority answered by acting as nothing happen, that's to say ignore him/her.

3.5.4.1 Interpreting Skills of interpreting and Relating (Savoir comprendre) Results

It seems clear through this section that some students can be tolerant and respectful in intercultural meetings with someone who misbehave, likewise they provide some explanations about their reactions toward racist acts, otherwise few students react negatively. Thus the students here have shown clear signs of intercultural skills

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3.5.5 Critical cultural awareness/political education (Savoir s'engager) Results

1. *In a conference about interfaith dialog (dialog between religions) a guest said "Muslims are actually not tolerant" Comment on this statement.*

Only two (2) students declared that they are free to say whatever they want, therefore, some students advised the guest to read the Holy Coran to be cultivated more about behaviours of Muslims. While the rest of them disagree with the statement **"Muslims are actually not tolerant"** and tried to provide evidences in order to convince the opposite as *'I will try to convince him that he should search and read about Islam as a religion and not only rely his speech on Muslims behaviour and attitudes because Muslims are imperfect after all'*

3.5.5.1 Interpreting Critical cultural awareness/political education (Savoir s'engager) Results

From this part, we noticed that the majority of respondents were aware of their culture, in which they defended their religion; furthermore, they provided some explanations concerning the behaviours of Muslims. Consequently, they have shown an ability to evaluate and criticize by not accepting wrong statements about their religion.

3.6 Interpretation and Discussion of the Main Findings

It has been hypothesized that because our students tend to be exposed to some cultural modules such as literature and civilization, they might possess some factual information related to the British/American culture.

This information are related to history, geography, historical figures, and etc. for instance, this means that after a three year of study of British/American civilization and literature, it is supposed not to be difficult to know, for instance, the major areas of Britain or the United States of America nor difficult to be familiar with some historical figures who shaped the development of these societies.

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However, surprisingly, as it can be noticed from the result of knowledge assessment (knowledge/savoir) the majority of the respondents (60%) were unable to know the constituent of the UK, referring it to England, Scotland, and Wales. This indicates that they lack cultural knowledge of the visible culture that if not taught at classroom, it should be at least part of the English learners' curiosity.

It has also been hypothesized that due to the complexity of culture and thus the difficulty of teaching teach all its components, the First-year master EFL students at Tiaret University do not possess all the cultural skills that enable them to interact effectively in cross-cultural encounters.

This is what was revealed through the findings. As can be seen hereinabove, the answers of most of the participants revealed that learners are not aware of the cultural differences between the British and their own nor showed skills of discovery and interaction (in savoir apprendre/faire).

For example, when they were asked “you invited a British/American friend. He/she started to eat with hands like any Algerian, but you discovered that he/she had not washed his/her hands. How would you tell him/her? The majority of the respondents (17 respondents) responded that they would ask the guest to wash his/her hands indirect way.

This may cause embarrassment that leads the guest to give up eating. This is one of the behaviors that may cause a communication barrier between both as the Algerian may think that the British/American is dirty while the latter may consider the Algerian impolite.

In the last ICC component (Critical cultural awareness/political education (Savoir s'engager) “In a conference about interfaith dialog (dialog between religions) a guest said “Muslims are actually not tolerant” Comment on this statement”, the participants showed

awareness about such criticism and thus they were aware that the best solution was not to act violently, but trying to convince them the otherwise in a civilized way.

3.7. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

a) To Teachers:

First and above all, in the light of the globalization requirement, as Byram (1997) affirms, teachers should not be stay neutral in teaching the foreign language; they have to make sure to include cultural in their classes.

This means that they should not see themselves as simply instructors, but, as Kramsch (2004) states, as experts who don not only know something about language, but also how to use teach effectively with its entire socio-cultural context. This means that teachers should see themselves as:

- Methodologists of the language they teach
- Always be updated to the most effective teaching methods;
- devote sufficient time to integrate culture
- using modern teaching resources such as audio and visual aids, computers, and internet.

b) To the Learner:

Like their teachers, students have to play their role if they want to equip themselves with the target culture.

- First and above all, from the first contact, students should be aware of the fact that they cannot be fully competent in the foreign language without understanding the culture of its people,

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- As Byram (1997), not all the cultural knowledge can be taught in the classroom. Therefore, students should benefit from the availability of the authentic sources,
- They should exploit them to understand extend their knowledge about the other's culture.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the data collection and results, which confirmed our second hypothesis that culture is difficult to be translated into the syllabus and therefore our English learners do not possess all the ICC skills. Yet the first hypothesis did not go with our assumption that our English learners possess the cultural skills (savoir), which is supposed to be part of the subject of civilization. The reason of this latter is not detected. A further research is needed for exploring the reason.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Many researchers agree that the incorporation of intercultural communicative course has been obviously proven to be necessary for EFL learners to develop their intercultural skills in order to be intercultural speakers who are able to interact successfully in cross-cultural communication, therefore teaching culture should be an integral component of the Algerian English language classrooms equally to the other linguistic and grammatical courses that dominates the EFL classrooms.

Since students used to be exposed to cultural modules such as literature and civilization, they might possess some factual information related to the British/American culture, additionally, teaching culture should provide the EFL learners with the opportunity to act and be as members of the target culture, as well as they have to be aware of how people think and behave in daily life, in order not to face problems when they travel to any English speaking country.

This research work aims at assessing intercultural communicative competence and its development among Tiaret EFL university for Master One students at the English Department, as well as the degree to which their intercultural communicative competence has grown based on the model presented by Byram (1997) which comprises five competencies / savoir: knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction, attitudes and critical cultural awareness.

This research work is divided into three main chapters. In the first chapter, the researcher discussed the most important aspects related to culture. This included the definition of culture and its relationship with language; it also gave an overview of the importance and the main goals of teaching intercultural communicative competence. The second chapter was dealt with the most concepts related to intercultural competence in which it gave an explanation to the

goals of intercultural competence; it tried to shed the light on the different models of teaching and assessing intercultural competence. The last chapter dealt with the discussion and interpretation of the main results in addition to some suggestions and recommendations.

The present research work tried to answer two main research questions; the first one investigated whether students of Ibn Khaldoun University particularly English master degree are aware of the importance of possessing an intercultural communication competence. The hypothesis related to this question stated that Algerian EFL university students do not have sufficient knowledge to be interculturally competent. If not, what cultural knowledge is needed most for their' ICC development? The researcher hypothesized that students used to be exposed to cultural modules such as literature and civilization; they might possess some factual information related to the British/American culture.

The obtained results have shown that the hypotheses were confirmed. Thus it has revealed that The First year Master EFL students at Tiaret University have a lack of cultural background which is necessary to be intercultural mindful speakers and act appropriately in cross-cultural communication and they are not aware of the cultural differences between the British and their own nor showed skills of discovery and interaction (in savoir apprendre/faire). For this, the researcher proposed some suggestions that may contribute to the improvement of EFL learner's intercultural competence.

This study has got some limitations basically in terms of the sample population as its results cannot be generalized. Second, some students refused to fill the Intercultural Test. Lastly, because of the Algerian protests of 2019, all the departments were closed by students who were supporting the Smile Revolution "Hirak", thus we have faced a lot of obstacles that didn't allow us to accomplish our work. Despite these limitations, the present study will pave

the way for further researches about the importance of teaching culture, as well as developing learner's intercultural competence in general.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX

STUDENT's Intercultural Test

The Intercultural Communicative Competence Test

I) Assessing Knowledge (Savoir):

1. The United Kingdom consists of:

- a) England, Scotland, Wales.
- b) Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- c) England and Scotland.
- d) Great Britain and the Irish Republic.

2. What do you know about the following festivals?

- a) Easter Monday:
- b) Boxing Day:
- c) Guy Fawkes' Day:

3. Match each variety of language to each origin

- a) Wales: _____ Gaelic
- c) Scotland: _____ Welsh
- d) Northern Ireland: _____ Ulster Scots

4. National days in Britain are not celebrated to the same extent as national days in other countries like America or Algeria, in which each region in Britain has its own national days.

- a) True
- b) False

5. Match each festival day to its origin:

- a) St. David's Day _____ Wales
- b) St. Patrick's Day _____ N, Ireland
- c) St. George's Day _____ England
- d) St. Andrew's Day _____ Scotland

6. Minorities' religious festivals such as Eid ul-Fitr (Muslim), Diwali (Hindu) and Hanukkah (Jewish) are officially recognised in the UK, and they are taught to children at school?

- a) True
- b) False

II) Assessing Attitudes (Savoir être):

1. How do you consider the British/American culture compared to your culture?

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.....

.....

2. The British people are racist

- a) True
- b) False

3. How do you think the British/American people view the Algerian Culture ?

- a) Inferior
- b) Superior
- c) Equal
- d) I do not know

4. What is your opinion about the British people who wear the skirt?

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

- 5. When you do not look in the eye of a British talking to you, they may think you are:**
- a) Not interested in what they are saying!
 - b) Listening and interested!
 - c) Rude and impolite
 - d) Polite and Being respectful

- 6. Would you wear a Scottish kilt (skirt) if you happen to visit Scotland because you were asked to participate in a national cultural festival there?**
- a) Yes
 - b) No

III) Assessing Skills of Discovery and Interaction (Savoir apprendre/faire):

- 1. If you want to break the ice making a small talk with a British whom you do not know well. Which topic would you choose? Select only one.**
- a) Family
 - b) Weather
 - c) Politics
 - d) Sports
 - e) Money
 - f) Religion

- 2. How do British people usually greet one another?**
- a) Hug?
 - b) Kiss?
 - c) Shake hands?

- 3. The correct way to introduce yourself in any British social setting where conversation with strangers is permitted, such as a party is to:**
- a) Introduce yourself
 - b) Not to introduce yourself at all
 - c) Find a way of initiating a conversation

- 4. You invited a British/American friend. He/she started to eat with hands like any Algerian, but you discovered that he/she had not washed his/her hands. How would you tell him/her?**

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IV) Assessing Skills of Interpreting and Relating (Savoir comprendre):

- 1. You are friend with someone on Facebook, and latter you discover that he/she is a racist towards other cultures. How would you treat him/her?**

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- 2. A foreign colleague behaved inappropriately towards you. How would you react back? And why?**

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V) Assessing Critical Cultural Awareness/Political Education (Savoir s'engager):

- 1. In a conference about interfaith dialog (dialog between religions) a guest said “Muslims are actually not tolerant” Comment on this statement.**

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ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة تقييم كفاءة التواصل بين الثقافات و تنمية الوعي الثقافي لمتعلمي اللغة الانجليزية. يؤكد البحث أن تعلم اللغة الأجنبية يبدو بلا هدف إذا كان الطلاب لا يمتلكون معرفة كافية عن طريقة حياة الأشخاص الذين يتحدثون هذه اللغة لذلك إلى جانب اكتساب القدرة اللغوية ، ينبغي للمتعلمين أيضاً تطوير معارفهم الثقافية. أظهرت نتائج البحث أن المتعلمين ليس لديهم معرفة كافية بالثقافة البريطانية، لسبب أن الطلاب والمدرسين الجزائريين لا يهتمون بالمعرفة الثقافية بالتساوي مع الدورات اللغوية والفونولوجية التي تهيمن على الفصل الدراسي في اللغة بناءً على النتائج ، يُقترح دمج الثقافة المستهدفة في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية ، ويجب أن يدرك الطلاب أنهم لا يستطيعون أن يكونوا مؤهلين تمامًا في اللغة الأجنبية دون فهم ثقافة شعبها، علاوة على ذلك ، لرفع التفتح الذهني لتقبل الثقافات الأخرى ليكون متحدث اللغة الانجليزية واعي و له القدرة على التحدث مع أشخاص لديهم ثقافات مختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المهارات تُبين الثقافات، كفاءة التواصل بين الثقافات، اللغة الإنجليزية الأجنبية

Summary

This study deals with assessing learner's intercultural communicative competence and to develop EFL learners' cultural awareness. The research asserts that foreign language learning seems aimless if the students do not possess enough knowledge about the way of life of the people who speak the target language. Therefore, besides acquiring the linguistic ability, the learners should also develop their cultural knowledge as well. The findings of the research have shown that the learners do not have enough knowledge about the British culture, for the reason that the Algerian students and teachers do not take attention to the cultural knowledge equally with the linguistic and phonological courses that dominate the language classroom. On the basis of the findings, it is suggested that the target culture should be integrated in English Foreign Language classrooms, and students should be aware that they cannot be fully competent in the foreign language without understanding the culture of its people, furthermore to raise open-mindedness in the EFL environment to accept the Target Culture in order to be mindful intercultural speakers.

Key-words: Intercultural skills, Intercultural communicative competence, English Foreign Language