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Enhancing EFL Learners' Sociolinguistic Competence through Culture Based Activities

The case of third-year students of English at Khenchela University

Thesis submitted in candidacy for the Degree of "Doctorat ès- Sciences"
in Language and Civilisation

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Dedication

This thesis and all my achievements are dedicated to
the memory of my **beloved Mother**, whose unexpected death prevented her
from witnessing the completion of this work, but whose love, encouragement,
and continuous support throughout all my previous academic endeavours have
continued to be a precious source of inspiration for me

It is you Mom,
Who is behind any success
I ever achieve!

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Abstract

This study investigates aspects of the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in an EFL setting to university students from an intercultural perspective. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the learners' ability to use appropriate target language in various social contexts. The study focuses on four main aspects of sociolinguistic competence: linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register variations, and expressions of folk wisdom. The investigation took place at the department of English- Khenchela University. Adopting a quasi- experimental -pre and post-test design-, the research is carried out in three main phases. In the pre-teaching phase, two questionnaires were conducted to explore the importance attributed to activities related to sociolinguistic competence and target language culture from both teachers and students' perspectives. Two main results were concluded: first, although teachers stressed the fact that learners' communicative competence should be complemented by an understanding of the target culture to enable them maintain communicative tasks with native speakers, the sociolinguistic component of communicative competence seems to be deemphasised particularly in one of its essential aspects which is stylistic variation. Second, students' revealed a lack of exposure to English language in its authentic context; yet, they confirmed their willingness to embrace the experience of intercultural learning.

During the teaching phase, sixty seven students of English in their third year were randomly assigned to participate in the study. Students had a pre-test to evaluate their sociolinguistic competence prior involving them in any kind of explicit instructions related to sociolinguistic competence. Learners in the experimental group (N= 32) were exposed to explicit instruction about English native speakers' culture, practicing role plays and exploring sociolinguistic variables affecting language use. However, learners in the control group (N=35) were taught using classroom discussions without any explicit focus on sociolinguistic competence. After the end of the teaching interventions, students in both groups had a post-test to evaluate their' sociolinguistic

competence. In addition to descriptive statistics, an independent-sample t-test was used for data analysis. The results indicated that students in the experimental group performed at a statistically significant level in terms of the four components.

Furthermore, in the third stage of the research, findings obtained from the experimental group interview demonstrated that most learners had a positive perception on this learning experience, and become more aware of the importance of stylistic variation and appropriate language use in contexts. Students also recognized that the programme was helpful in acquiring new expressions and beneficial for developing their communicative competence.

List of Abbreviations

CC: communicative competence

CG: control group

CEFRL: common European framework of reference for languages

CLT: communicative language teaching

DCT: discourse completion task

DV: dependent variable

EFL: English as a foreign language

EFW: expressions of folk wisdom

EG: experimental group

ELT: English language teaching

ESL: English as second language

FL: foreign language

ICC: intercultural communicative competence

IV: independent variable

L1: first language

L2: second language

LMD: licence, master, doctorat

LMSR: linguistic markers for social relations

NS: native speaker

NNS: non-native speaker

PC: politeness conventions

RV: register variations

SC: sociolinguistic competence

WDCT: written discourse completion test

Definition of Terms

Awareness: it is defined as learners' conscious understanding of what is being learned. Schmidt (1995, p. 30) distinguishes between two levels of awareness: mere noticing and understanding. First, a learner notices certain features in the input. Understanding then takes place when a learner recognizes "a general principle, rule, or pattern" in the perceived input.

Culture based activities: a set of classroom activities submitted by experts in the field of EFL teaching and intercultural communication. These activities are designed with the purpose of culture and sociolinguistic exploration. This study is mainly based on activities suggested by Fantini, A.E. (Ed.) (1997). *New Ways in Teaching Culture*. Alexandria, V A: TESOL.

Huber-Kriegler, M., Lázár, I. & Strange, J. (2003). *Mirrors and Windows – An Intercultural Communication Textbook*. ECML/Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Discourse Completion Tests (DCT): "Written questionnaires which include a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under study" (Kasper and Dahl, 1991).

Intercultural communication: "Intercultural competence is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action which enables one, either singly or together with others, to:

- understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself.
- respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people.
- establish positive and constructive relationships with such people
- understand oneself and one's own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural 'difference' (Barret et.al, 2013 p.7).

Likert scales: (named after its inventor), type of closed-ended questionnaire which consists of a characteristic statement and respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they 'agree' or 'disagree' with it by marking one of the responses ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. (Dorney, 2011).

Register: refers to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts. It is mainly concerned with differences in level of formality (Council of Europe, 2003).

Sociolinguistic competence: knowledge of the relationship between language and its non-linguistic context, knowing how to use and respond appropriately to different types of speech acts, such as requests, apologies, thanks and invitations, knowing which address forms should be used with different persons one speaks to and in different situations (Richards and Schmidt, 2003).

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Chapter I: Introduction

The aim of this introductory chapter is to provide a background of the study and an overview of the research methodology followed for undertaking the current investigation. The chapter begins with presenting an account of the problem under investigation, the research questions, the hypotheses as well as the objectives of this study. The significance and the need for the current research are also highlighted. A presentation of the methodology used in the study is defined; including research design, selection and description of the participants, and instruments used for data collection. The chapter ends with outlining the organisation of this thesis.

1. Background of the Study

One of the major aims of foreign language education today is to develop the learners' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations and contexts. In order to achieve this aim, learners' mere mastery of linguistic competence does not ensure successful communication. Consequently, recent language teaching methodologies have expanded to include two broad dimensions; first learners are supposed to develop their ability to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate way i.e., communicative competence (Council of Europe, 2001 p. 9). Second learners are prepared to function effectively and appropriately in the target culture i.e., intercultural communicative competence (Fantini, 1997). These two broad concepts represent major orientations in the process of language teaching, which is reflected in the continuous developments to language classes by integrating new methods and objectives for language education. These developments are the result of a change in the paradigm overlapping linguistic theory as a whole, and the shift in the overall aim of foreign language instruction.

From a historical perspective, the innovations brought by the notion of communicative competence along with the adoption of the communicative approach in the last quarter of the twentieth century have given more importance to the achievement of communicative abilities in the target language. Language teaching has shifted its focus from a grammatical perspective to a communicative perspective that emphasizes understanding and use of appropriate language in communicative contexts. Although there appears to be a general agreement among linguists and language educators that far more than grammatical knowledge is required for having communicative competence, there has been a continuous debate about its components in the different frameworks for classroom models (Canale and Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990; Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Celce-Murcia, et.al, 1995).

Canal and Swain (1980) adopted the term communicative competence to refer to the relationship between grammatical competence i.e. knowledge of linguistic rules and sociolinguistic competence i.e., knowledge of the rules of language use. They proposed a communicative competence model consisting of three components: grammatical competence which deals with knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and semantics of the language; sociolinguistic competence which addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately to in different sociolinguistic contexts, and finally strategic competence which concerns the knowledge of communication strategies that may be used to compensate for weakness in other areas, and to enhance communication effectiveness.

The model of communicative language ability was proposed by Bachman (1990), extended by Bachman and Palmer (1996). In this model, language competence comprises two components: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organisational competence further consists of grammatical competence dealing with the language code itself and rules for forming structured sentences, in addition to textual competence dealing with the

knowledge of using discourse in context. On the other hand, pragmatic competence comprises illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence, the former referring to knowledge of speech acts and functions, and the latter referring to the ability to use language appropriately in sociocultural contexts.

The models dealt with above and others have all demonstrated and agreed on the fact that linguistic competence (grammatical competence) alone does not guarantee successful communication. Learners need other types of competence namely discourse, strategic as well as sociolinguistic competence in order to be communicatively competent, and to communicate effectively and appropriately in the target language. Consequently, if the foreign language course aims to enable learners to reach a level of communicative competence, all the above components are of great importance.

Given that perspective, sociolinguistic competence is considered to be an essential component of communicative competence. It concerns mainly the ability to use the language appropriately in social contexts as previously stated; it extends well beyond linguistic forms to the social rules of language use (Hall, 2002). Savignon (2003) highlights that sociolinguistic competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction, it also includes knowledge of social conventions concerning language use such as turn taking, appropriateness of content, tone, and nonverbal language that might influence communication. The interpretation of such conventions depends on cultural knowledge, the thing that requires a general empathy and openness towards the target culture.

Bearing in mind that the cultural context plays a vital role in accurate expression and interpretation of meaning, and that rules of language use change from one culture to another, language learners; thus, need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to

address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with others. They should know that behaviour and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target community. They have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behaviour (Peterson and Coltran, 2003).

The sociolinguistic variables that affect the language use refer to the contextual factors such as the time when the utterance is said, the setting of the conversation (for instance, a conversation taking place during a court meeting is totally different from one taking place between friends in a coffee shop), and the participants involved (looking at such factor as social status, gender, and age of the participants). Violating these contextual factors leads a speaker to make an utterance that may be grammatically correct, but may not be appropriate to the given context. For example, is it appropriate for a student to give advice to the teacher (someone of a higher status?); is it appropriate to give the advice in a classroom setting? Such contextual factors compose a large part of the non-grammatical knowledge that a language learner must learn in order to become communicatively competent in the target language. In language learning classrooms, learners need to engage with the ways in which context affects what is communicated and how. (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler, 2003).

2. Statement of the Problem

In the light of the above ideas, it is quite clear that accounting for the social and cultural dimensions of language use is essential for successful communication. Hence, language educators; today, are continuously looking at new ways of implementing objectives and activities in the language teaching programmes to develop the learners' knowledge of these important aspects of communication. However, there is a general agreement among language educators that these aspects are hard to teach in a classroom setting, especially that they are

bound to the native speakers' norms, and that requires the direct contact with speakers and culture of the target language. Yet, this contact is not always possible particularly for learners who do not have easy access to native speakers in their real life.

As a matter of fact, the need for instruction on cultural and sociolinguistic aspects of the target language becomes more necessary and important in the foreign language classroom where pedagogical intervention is the only way by which most learners explore the target language and culture. Learning and teaching English in an EFL setting is more difficult and challenging compared to an ESL setting because EFL learners do not have opportunities to interact with native speakers as ESL learners do. Cortazzi(1999) attested that in foreign language classrooms, the target language tends to be viewed as an object of study instead of a means of socialisation and communication. Language class activities in EFL settings often focus on decontextualized language practice leading to learners' lack of exposure to the types of sociolinguistic and cultural input that facilitates the acquisition of this competence. Learners are; thus, supposed to learn and practice the rules and structures to master the language;however, there are no definite rules for appropriate language use since the cultural and social variables related to language use are conventional among its native speakers.

Recently, language research increasingly acknowledges the cultural and intercultural dimensions of language teaching, it is now broadly accepted among language educators that to be able to interact appropriately in a language, learners have to learn the rules of language use and the cultural context within which the language is spoken (Scollon, 1999). Intercultural learning can; therefore, be considered one of the central aims of second and foreign language education in the 21st century (seeKramsh, 1993; Fantini, 1997; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Hinkel,1999; Lazar, 2001). Unfortunately, despite the recognition of intercultural learning for successful communication, there is still a gap between academics and practitioners in the sense that foreign language teachers and teacher educators seem

hesitant to integrate these theories into pedagogical practice; only few empirical studies have implemented intercultural learning in classrooms (Lazar et al., 2007).

Taking into account all what has been discussed above, addressing the cultural and sociolinguistic aspects of the language in an EFL setting is a challenging task for both teachers and learners. While there is an obvious need for teachers to help their learners to achieve a high level in their sociolinguistic competence, there are not many sources available to help them approach this task, and to make things worse, opportunities to interact and having access to native speakers are not available too. This is the case for the Algerian EFL context where English is taught as a second foreign language, and of course the cultural and sociolinguistic norms of interaction in English are often different from the students' ones. Besides students have no ways for interactions with English native speakers either inside or outside the classroom except through media.

Being an EFL teacher for more than ten years, the researcher has noticed that students of English at Khenchela University show a deficiency in their communicative competence. Despite the fact that the course objective is to enable students to be competent English language users, after three years of graduation, the majority of learners at the department of English, even those whose language mastery can be considered intermediate to advanced, end up with a communicative performance that is rather substantially limited; they still find many difficulties employing English to freely express themselves appropriately in everyday situations or even classroom discussions. Most of the time, students resort to transfer the conversational norms of their native language i.e., Arabic or Berber, and in some cases, those of the first foreign language i.e., French into English which results into a poor English or even into communication failure. This situation reflects a context where the sociolinguistic component of communicative competence is deemphasized in teaching/ learning process;

little time and importance is devoted to activities oriented towards promoting students' stylistic variation in different communicative tasks.

Although the implementation of the LMD system has introduced new teaching modules in recent years; namely 'Culture of the Language and Literary Texts', not much has changed in the department of English at Khenchela University with regard to moving towards a more communicative and intercultural approaches. The changes implemented are rather of form than content. In many cases, changes in the content of the modules depend on the teachers' individual efforts and interests.

Taking the aforementioned gaps into consideration, the current study attempts to address the issue of enhancing learners' sociolinguistic competence at the university level from an intercultural perspective. The researcher draws on the assumption that culture can be used as an underlying framework for making sense of the rules of English language use. It is assumed that students may better understand the social conventions of English language use, if they receive instruction on the target societies' culture, emphasizing again the importance of promoting students' awareness about the importance of stylistic variations and their ability to understand and use of appropriate language to fulfil different communicative tasks.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions guide the current study:

1. How do EFL teachers at Khenchela University perceive the importance of teaching sociolinguistic competence and intercultural dimension of language learning?
2. How do EFL learners at Khenchela University perceive the learning of English and its culture, and to what extent are they exposed to English language in their daily life?

3. How effective is the implementation of in-class culture based activities as a source for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence?
4. To what extent does the classroom serve for sociolinguistic and intercultural exploration, and how do students view the experience of learning sociolinguistic competence using in-class culture based activities?

4. Hypotheses

As stated earlier, the current study is set to explore the potentials of integrating culture into a teaching programme that aims to enhance EFL university students' sociolinguistic competence. The study draws on an intercultural perspective where both the target culture and the students' culture are explored. The study is based on the assumption that culture can be used as an underlying framework for making sense of the rules of English language use. It is assumed that students may better understand the social conventions of English language use, if they receive instruction on the target societies' culture using an intercultural approach. For the sake of addressing aforementioned research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. The current ways used to deal with culture and sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes depend on the teachers' understandings, interests, and available resources.
2. EFL students who are more motivated to learn English, as well as to know about the target community culture, and who have greater amount of English language contact would be more likely to develop their sociolinguistic competence.
3. Implementing in-class culture based activities in EFL classes would provide access to the social and cultural dimensions of language use; thus, enhance the development of sociolinguistic competence.

4. Students who received instruction on the target societies' culture using an intercultural approach would show better communicative performance and intercultural understanding.

5. Objectives of the Study

The broad aim of this study is to explore the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in an EFL setting to university students from an intercultural perspective. The study has the following specific objectives:

1. To explore the teachers' views about the importance of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural teaching, and to get insight into the difficulties involved in presenting such abstract knowledge to their students.
2. To investigate the students' attitudes towards English language and members of the target language community, as well as to determine the amount of contact with English they are exposed to in their daily life.
3. To conduct a classroom research on the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes from an intercultural perspective. Specifically, the study aims to examine the effectiveness of the use of in-class culture based activities as a resource for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence.
4. To explore the students' views and perception of the usefulness of in class culture based activities in enhancing their sociolinguistic competence. More importantly, to account for the benefits that can flow from such a programme to enhance the students' intercultural communicative competence and language learning as a whole.

6. Significance of the Study

The focus of this study is researching the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes at the university level from an intercultural perspective. Algerian university students need to be supported and assisted to develop their communicative competence, more particularly, given the significant differences between the Algerian and English cultures in communication; sociolinguistic competence is one important component of communicative competence that ought to be attributed more importance and emphasis. This study has been motivated by the researcher's experience as an EFL teacher, as well as from the widely held belief of recent research in language education that it is of great importance to increase intercultural understanding in the world, and incorporating intercultural communicative competence in language education programmes should be one of the first steps in this process, and yet, one of the challenges of English language teaching is how to undertake this task (Lazar, 2003). Recognising that culture and sociolinguistic aspects of language are extremely difficult to teach, this study attempts to present an investigation into the potentials of intercultural learning as a possible way to enhance Algerian university students' sociolinguistic competence. It is worth noting again that despite the recognition of intercultural learning for successful communication, foreign language teacher and teacher educators seem hesitant to integrate these theories into pedagogical practice; only few empirical studies have implemented intercultural learning in classrooms (Lazar et al., 2007).

This study has implications for foreign-language education in the areas of teaching, assessment and syllabus design. The results of this study will further our understanding of the effectiveness of intercultural learning in EFL environments. It will also help to determine the impact of culture based activities on EFL learners' sociolinguistic development. Furthermore,

the findings of this study may help language educators understand how Algerian students perceive intercultural learning.

7. Research Design and Methodology

After that the research questions and objectives of the study are presented, the next step is the choice of suitable research design and methodological approaches to achieve the aforementioned objectives. This section explains the reasons for choosing the appropriate methodologies for this study.

7.1. Research Design

In its broad sense, the term research design refers to all the procedures selected by the researcher for studying a particular set of questions or hypotheses. However, it is specifically used to the researcher's choice of quantitative or qualitative methodology, and how, if at all, causal relationships between variables or phenomena are to be explored (Borg and Gall, 1989, p. 321). A research design; therefore, shows the interrelated steps which the researcher goes through in his plan to collect the needed data, as well as the procedures used for the analysis of these data that will serve to answer the research questions raised at the beginning. Concerning educational research, two major traditions have been adopted: one tradition emphasizes 'quantitative' measurement and analysis of data; the other emphasizes the 'qualitative' measurement and analysis.

The quantitative approach is used to describe what can be counted or measured, and can therefore be considered as objective (Wallace, 2001, p. 38). Further, three purposes of this approach are: to describe; compare; and attribute causality. Each of these purposes is achieved through the distribution of numerical values to pre-defined variables, which are then subjected to statistical analysis (Dornyei, 2011)

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative approach is used to describe data which are not amenable to being counted or measured in an objective way, and are therefore 'subjective' (Wallace, 2001, p.38). Nunan (1992) points out that most devoted to this style of inquiry emphasize naturalistic and uncontrolled participant observation and in-depth interviews that allow the researcher to understand human behaviour from the actors' own frame of reference. Overall, quantitative and qualitative approaches are two different paradigms, each having its philosophical foundations, characteristics, and techniques that make it suitable for the exploration of given questions rather than others. Nonetheless, there is no real opposition or contradiction between the two approaches; quantitative data can throw light on qualitative insights and vice-versa (Wallace, 2001). Accordingly, in many cases a combination of the two approaches is used which led to an emerging third approach labelled mixed-method research. According to Dornyei (2011), mixed methods research is sort of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project. He further argues that in classroom research mixing methods is indispensable, and that mixed methods research can have many advantages; it adds richness and validity to the research findings going well beyond simple sequential arrangements (i.e. a research phase is followed by a second phase representing the other approach).

As far as the current study is concerned, the researcher opted for incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection, recognizing that in-depth study of classroom learning is better achieved through combining both methods; the data gathered can then be integrated with one another and produce a more complete analysis. This mixed-methods approach would help also to investigate the problem from as many perspectives as possible. Yet, the study gives more emphasis on quantitative than qualitative data, believing that quantitative data gives more objectivity.

7.2. ResearchMethodology

The choice of the appropriate research methodology is fundamentally determined by the researcher's objectives and the kind of data he is interested in. As already mentioned, the present study draws on a quantitative and qualitative approaches in a classroom-based environment, with more emphasis on quantitative than qualitative methods. Besides, regarding the fact that the researcher is interested first in exploring the current situation in relation to the teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes, and then implementing the new teaching programme; therefore, the use of descriptive as well the experimental methods is necessary to undertake the study. Consequently the study was carried out into two main stages:

Stage One. The use of the descriptive method in this stage can be justified in terms of its objectives. The researcher's aim in this stage is to investigate the teachers' views about the importance of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural teaching, and to get insight into the difficulties involved in presenting such knowledge to their students. On the other hand, students' attitudes towards English language and members of the target language community, in addition to the amount of contact with English the students' are exposed to in their daily life is also investigated. This stage is important before being able to incorporate the new teaching method into the researcher's own teaching. This process shaped and informed the development of a teaching programme which would allow the researcher to test the effectiveness of culture based activities in enhancing the students' sociolinguistic competence.

Stage Two. After exploring the current situation, the next stage is mainly devoted to conduct a classroom research on the teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes from an intercultural perspective. In this stage, the researcher aimed also to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested teaching programme on the overall language learning from the students' own perspective. As indicated earlier, the broad aim of the present study is to explore the extent to which in-class culture based activities can contribute to EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence development, and how these activities may further assist students' intercultural communicative competence development as a whole. Therefore an experimental method is necessary to achieve this aim.

In the field of language teaching and learning research, seeking an appropriate research method for testing the research question might lead to consideration of true or quasi-experimental methods. The Experimental Method is ideally suited to establish causal relationships; it is the most powerful research design for identifying causal relationships. If administration of a given treatment results in a different outcome than another treatment, it can be concluded that this treatment is the cause of this observed effect (Nunan, 1992).

Experiments carried out by educational researchers are concerned with testing the effect of a new educational materials and practices on students' learning. Thus, the results of educational experiments may have an impact on the adoption of new curriculum materials, and teaching methods in schools. According to Borg and Gall (1989), most experiments in education involve the manipulation of a single treatment variable followed by observing the effects of this manipulation on one or more dependent variable. The variable to be manipulated is referred to as the experimental treatment or the independent variable. They also employ a comparison group that does not receive the experimental treatment referred to as control group. The variable can be measured before administering the experimental

treatment by pre-test and measured to determine the effects of the experimental treatment by a post-test.

However, to apply the true experiment in the language teaching and learning context is not that easy. It involves a complex causal chain overlapping many conditions as experiments are designed to provide answers to precise questions under strict circumstances. The researcher cannot control all the variables as in a laboratory approach. Likewise, it is very difficult to establish stable characteristics regarding the ever-changing and unstable circumstances that can be met in language learning classes. Another constraint to apply the true experimental method is the sampling issue. Dornyei (2011, p.117) confirms the fact that unfortunately, in educational contexts true experimental designs with random group assignments are very rarely feasible and therefore the common method applied uses intact class groups. This design is obviously a less-than-perfect compromise and has been called accordingly the 'quasi-experimental design'. He further suggests that researchers often have to resort to a 'quasi-experimental design' since it is not always possible for them to rearrange students into different groups or classes.

In the light of the definitions reviewed above, and being aware of the difficulties involved in investigating human being subject, this study adopted a quasi-experimental design: pre-test → treatment → post-test. Consequently, the current investigation is a classroom-based action research since the researcher is the teacher and has taught and investigated her own students. Action research is suitable for this study as the researcher is attempting to introduce 'culture-based activities' (IV) in her teaching practice as a means of enhancing students' 'sociolinguistic competence' (DV), and improving their communicative competence. Burns (2010) argues that the combination of a teacher-researcher is a useful way to develop an action-research approach, since the successful teacher is continually seeking to explore his own teaching context. Hence, the teacher-researcher may be in the best position to make

effective learning opportunities for his students through appropriate interventions and to reflect on his own performance as well.

To achieve this aim, after consulting the relevant literature review and defining the target population, the following steps, illustrated in figure (1) were carried out:

1. Two groups were randomly assigned to either experimental or control groups
2. Both groups have taken a pre-test in the form of a Discourse Completion test to determine their level of sociolinguistic competence.
3. The experimental group is introduced to the new teaching programme that consists of the set of culture based activities while the control group followed ordinary class discussions.
4. At the end of the instruction period, both groups have been assessed in terms of their sociolinguistic competence using a discourse completion test as a post test.
5. Students of the experimental group have undertaken an interview.

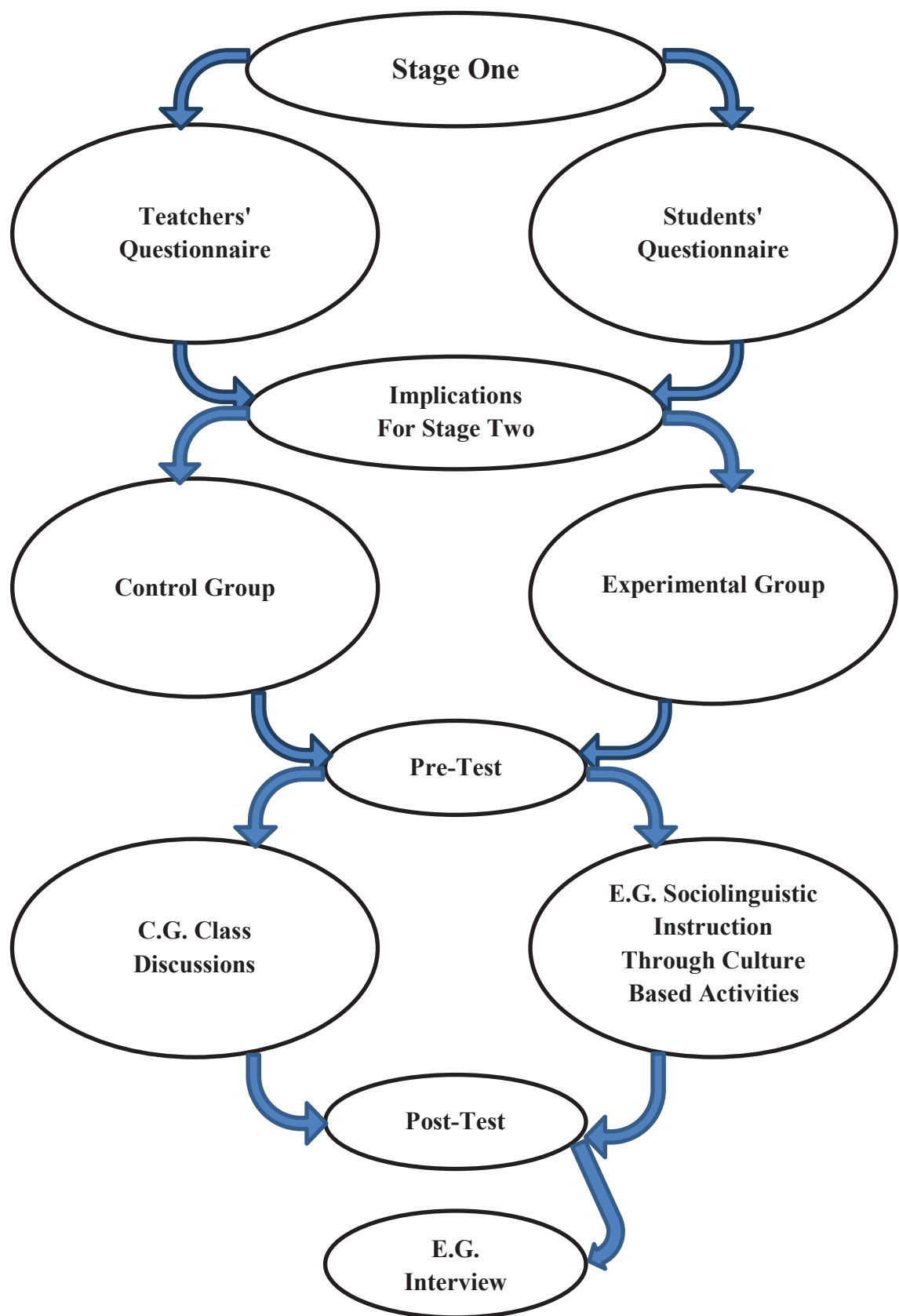


Figure1. Research Procedure

7.3. The Population Investigated and Sampling Technique

7.3.1. Defining the Population

Being able to use the language appropriately in different social contexts requires a good level of linguistic proficiency in addition to a certain cultural background on the target language society. For that reason third year students seem to be the most likely population to meet the requirements of the study. Third year students are supposed to have had a certain practice in the use of English language that allows them to go beyond the initial stages of learning English compared to first and second year classes. Besides, third year classes have already dealt with cultural topics during their graduation in the previous years.

7.3.2. Sampling Technique

In educational research, researchers do not collect data from all the individuals who represent the population; they generally select a sample of subjects from that population for study. The procedure of sampling is important in the sense that it determines the extent to which the findings of the study can be applied to the whole population.

Concerning the present study, and after that the target population is defined, the next step is to decide about the sample. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to investigate the whole population of students in whom the researcher is interested; therefore, it is necessary to limit the investigation to a small sample. However, it is problematic to decide about the selection of the sample of students who are supposed to be representative of the population to which the research findings can be generalized. Borg and Gall (1989) assume that the method of selecting a sample is critical to the whole research process, they argued:

if research findings are not generalizable to some degree beyond the sample used in the study, then the research cannot provide us with new knowledge, cannot

advance education as a science, and it is largely a waste of time. The sample should be selected by some process that permits us to assume the sample is representative of the population from which it has been drawn(P.115)

The target population of the study is third year students of English at Khenchela University enrolled for the academic year 2014/2015; their total number is approximately 143 students. These students are grouped by the administration into 4 groups, which makes the average number of 30 to 40 students per group.

To select the representative sample, the researcher opted for a random sampling technique. Initially, the whole population was taken for the administration of the questionnaire, which makes a total number of 143 students representing 100% of the population.

However, a second sampling is necessary for the experiment's design. It is quite obvious that it is impossible to deal with the whole population; therefore, the researcher chose randomly two groups (N=35) and (N=32) students in each group to participate in the study. The students were allocated into experimental group (N=32) and control group (N=35) by random assignment. The main purpose for using a random sampling technique here is that it gives research data that can be generalized to a larger population; it also helps to ensure that the sample is representative (Borg and Gall, 1989).

It should be noted that the present study is also concerned with EFL teachers working at the department of English at Khenchela University during the academic year of 2014/2015 whose total number is 32 teachers.

7.4. Data Collection Instruments

As outlined earlier, the approach taken in this classroom-based research is both quantitative and qualitative in nature; the concern is to present a comprehensive picture as possible of the teaching/ learning process, which means that a variety of sources for data are required.

Regarding the fact that the study in the first stage (the pre-teaching phase) is mainly descriptive in its approach, the descriptive method is used for the purpose of providing an overall picture of the current situation of the department of English at Khenchela University from both teachers' and students' views. In this stage of research, the researcher investigates EFL teaching and learning within its real-life context without any control over the context; and seeks to understand the process through teachers' and students' views and perceptions.

The data gathering tools used in this stage are:

7.4.1. Teachers' Questionnaire. The teachers questionnaire is designed assuming that it is necessary to explore their perspective since the teachers' views and speech have a significant role in the process of language learning since much of the students' knowledge, and competence in the target language rely heavily on what they receive in the classroom, it is necessary to explore their perspectives. An investigation into the teachers' understanding of culture and sociolinguistic teaching, as well as the difficulties and challenges they encounter in their classes can be very informative, and provide guidance with regard to how to introduce culture in EFL classes efficiently.

7.4.2. Students' Questionnaire. The students' questionnaire is meant to obtain background information about the population investigated; it is also used to investigate the students' attitudes towards the target language and culture, in addition to accounting for the students' amount of English language use and exposure both inside and outside the classroom.

7.4.3. Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaires

Validity is concerned with the degree a variable measures what it is supposed to measure, or can be used successfully for the purposes for which it is intended. Content validity concerns whether the items adequately represent a performance domain or construct of specific interest (Richards and Schmidt, 2003). Because the questionnaires used in the current study were constructed based on the findings of and implications from a considerable body of literature and several preliminary studies, content validity is ensured theoretically to a certain extent. Put another way, it is unlikely that the questionnaires consisted of items which were totally irrelevant to the theoretical constructs under investigation.

On the other hand, reliability is the consistency of measurement. It should be noted, however, that to ensure reliability thoroughly, the questionnaires used in the present study were piloted on a selected group of participants to determine the appropriateness of the questionnaire items. There was a need to modify the questions that were not applicable to respondents. Based on the comments of students and suggestions of the teachers, a number of modifications have been incorporated into the final version of the questionnaires. Some modifications have been made regarding the wording of some items, the addition and deletion to avoid repetition of ideas, in addition to the length and instructions of the questionnaire.

The second stage of study is mainly experimental in its approach and employs features of quantitative and qualitative research methods. This stage concerns the experimental treatment that is to investigate the effect of the independent variable i.e., the new teaching program that consists of culture based activities on the dependent variable i.e., the students' sociolinguistic competence development measured by the students' performance in the discourse completion test. After the treatment, it is also important to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested teaching program on the overall language learning from the students' own perspective. Therefore, the data gathering tools used in this stage are:

7.4.4. *The Pre-test/Post Test.* The discourse completion test is used in the present study to evaluate the students' performance in both pre-test and post-test because it is one useful technique to make students activate their sociolinguistic and pragmatic knowledge, and refine their production of speech acts by presenting them to situations where active, productive use is necessary (Judd, 1999).

7.4.5. *Post Study Interview (Post-teaching Phase).* The aim of the post study interview is to explore the students' views on the usefulness of the suggested teaching program in enhancing their sociolinguistic competence and language learning as a whole. Students' perception of this leaning experience is useful for collecting feedback from the learners' themselves regarding the insights they gained from in-class instruction. Students might also discuss any confusion that they had experienced; the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching method, or any suggestions for future developments.

8. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into two balanced mainparts introduced by a general introduction and closed by a general conclusion:

The introductory chapter provides a background and an overview of the research methodology followed to undertake the investigation. It identifies the problem under investigation, the research questions, the hypotheses as well as the objectives of this study. The significance and the need for the current research in addition to an account of the methodology used in the study are presented.

Part one, which consists of three chapters, provides a review of the relevant literature to the three main concepts associated with this study: communicative competence, sociolinguistic competence and intercultural communication. The first chapter is meant to explore the concept of communicative competence as one of the key terms in the most recent developments concerning foreign language teaching literature. The second chapter focuses on the teaching of sociolinguistic competence in EFL settings. And the last chapter in the first part is devoted to provide a broad understanding of intercultural learning.

Part two which consists also of three chapters represents the field work of this investigation: Chapter four accounts for the pre-experiment data collection and analysis; this stage aims to explore both teachers' and students' current practices and views about the issue under investigation, it also draws implications from the analysis of data for the development of the teaching programme in research stage two. While the fifth chapter presents the design of the empirical study and data collection procedure, the sixth and last chapter in the second part reports the quantitative as well as the qualitative findings regarding the effects of intercultural activities on the students' sociolinguistic competence.

Finally, the general conclusion provides a summary of the findings and a discussion of the limitations and future directions of the study. The implications of the empirical research findings for the field of EFL in Algeria are also highlighted. Based on theoretical background and empirical research findings, a set of suggestions on how to practice a sociolinguistic perspective in a language classroom are provided.

Part One: Literature Review

Chapter II: The Theory of Communicative Competence and its Implications in English Language Teaching Frameworks

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The Theory of Communicative Competence and its Implications to English Language Teaching Frameworks

Introduction

This chapter is meant to explore the different theories of communicative competence that have been proposed as one of the key notions in the recent developments concerning foreign language teaching literature. Within this framework, a brief historical overview about the origins of this concept and its definition is provided, followed by an account of the related notions to this concept. Besides, a detailed description of the components of CC in different teaching models is addressed. In addition, this chapter presents an overview of the existing literature related to the implications of the theory of CC to classroom instructions. Finally, the chapter highlights the flaws of this methodology leading to new perspectives in language education that goes beyond the communicative competence model.

1. Theories of Communicative Competence

1.1. Origins and Developments of Communicative Competence

The notion of ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ usually present two important distinctions in discussions related to language teaching and testing. Chomsky (1965) introduced the term competence to refer to knowledge of grammar and other aspects of the language while performance refers to actual use. This view has been criticised by Hymes in the early 1970’s who introduced the concept of ‘communicative competence’ as an alternative to Chomsky’s view, within a context characterised by an increasing influence of sociolinguistics on the language teaching literature, and a growing realisation that language cannot be separated from the context in which it is used. The works of the American linguist Dell Hymes (1968, 1971) stressed the importance of the shift of focus from abstract and ideal notion of native speaker competence towards a focus on actual contextualised performance.

Hymes' juxtaposition of the word 'communicative' with competence stood in sharp contrast at what Chomsky used to refer to a native speaker's implicit and ideal knowledge of the grammatical rules governing her/his language (Chomsky, 1957, 1965 cited in Lillis, 2006). Hymes begins his juxtaposition for his new theory by criticizing a famous quotation from Chomsky about linguistic theory:

linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker hearer, 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 characteristics) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (Chomsky, 1965 p.3, quoted in Hymes 1987 p.6).

According to Chomsky, the subject matter of language study is the abstract knowledge that native speakers have, and that enables them to create new and grammatically correct sentences. Chomsky makes a distinction between two aspects of language, namely 'competence' vs. 'performance'. By competence he means that underlying knowledge which enables a user of a language to produce and understand an infinite set of sentences out of a finite set of rules. By performance, he refers to the use of this underlying knowledge to communicate.

Given that perspective, Hymes (1972) regarded this view of language as too limited and restrictive in the sense that it could not account for the knowledge and skills that individuals must have to understand and produce utterances appropriate to the particular cultural context in which they occur. He argued that in order to communicate effectively, speaker had to know not only what is grammatically correct/ incorrect, but what is communicatively appropriate in any given context. According to Hymes(1972), the theory of communicative

competence is a broader notion that emphasized the idea of appropriateness or acceptability as a crucial criterion in the production of grammatical sentences since any speech community is heterogeneous, there is a context for every grammatically correct sentence in use, he refers to that in this statement,

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when, to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about, with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others (Hymes, 1972, p.277 quoted in Lillis, 2006).

Hymes presented communicative competence as a more comprehensive term to account for both knowledge and ability of individuals to understand and produce language in ways that are structurally well formed, socially and contextually appropriate, and culturally feasible in their social communities (Hall, 2002 p.105).

It is worth noting here that Chomsky's and Hymes' discussions of both competence and communicative competence were associated with native speakers' linguistic and communicative abilities; they were mainly concerned with first language acquisition which might represent a challenging task as far as their implications in foreign language teaching are concerned.

Many definitions of the term CC are available in FLT literature; most of them focus mainly on what it involves in terms of aspects of language knowledge. According to Lillis (2006), Hymes (1968/1971) used communicative competence to reflect the following aspects on knowledge and use of language:

- The ability to use a language well involves knowing (either explicitly or implicitly) how to use language appropriately in any given context.
- The ability to speak and understand language is not based solely on grammatical knowledge.
- What counts as appropriate in language varies according to context and may involve a range of modes for example; speaking, writing, singing, whistling, and drumming.
- Learning what counts as appropriate language occurs through a process of socialisation into a particular ways of using language through participation in particular communities.

Following the same perspective, Canale and Swain (1980) adopted the term communicative competence to refer to the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence, or the knowledge of the rules of grammar, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the rule of use. However, they stressed the fact that communicative competence should be distinguished from communicative performance, which is the realisation of these competences and their interaction in the actual production and comprehension of utterances (under general psychological constraints that are unique to performance).

As far as foreign language teaching is concerned, these four aspects of language knowledge represent the core of what communicative competence involves, and have been the basis for further developments and discussions. Not far from this line of thinking, Littlewood (1981, p.6) offers four main skills that should be taken into consideration when dealing with communicative competence in foreign language teaching classes, these skills are:

- The learner must attain as high a degree as possible of linguistic competence. That is, he must develop skill in manipulating the linguistic system to the point where he can use it spontaneously and flexibly in order to express his intended message.
- The learner must distinguish between the forms which he has mastered as part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative functions that they perform. In other words, items mastered as part of a *linguistic system* must also be understood as part of *communicative system*.
- The learner must develop skills and strategies for using language to communicate meaning as effectively as possible in concrete situations. He must learn to use feedback to judge his success, and if necessary, remedy failure by using different language.
- The learner must become aware of the social meaning of language forms. For many learners, this may not entail the ability to vary their own speech to suit different social circumstances, but rather the ability to use generally acceptable forms and avoid potentially offensive ones.

1.3. The Communicative Competence Model

As previously mentioned, Hymes (1972) offered CC as a comprehensive term that refers to the individuals' language abilities that include both knowledge and use; he argued that both what is known (competence), and what is actually done (performance) must be taken into account. This can be achieved by accounting for different dimensions of competence, and he put these dimensions in the form of the following four questions:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is possible
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is done, actually performed (Hymes, 1987)

In other terms, according to Hymes' view, a person who acquires CC acquires both knowledge and ability for language use regarding the following aspects:

1. Possibility: refers to the ability to produce grammatical sentences, which needs knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of the language.
2. Feasibility: in terms of the means of implementation available, it concerns mainly psycholinguistic factors such as memory limitations. Knowledge of the rules of speaking are also important here, for example, knowing how to begin and end a conversation.
3. Appropriateness: concerns the relation to the context in which communication is taking place. The participants in a situation try to act and speak in an appropriate way, according to the cultural and social norms of their speech community.
4. Performance: refers to the occurrence of linguistic structures or other forms of communication, and how common they occur.

Muriel Saville _Troike (1996) who is fundamentally in line with Hymes' notion of communicative competence considers the issue from the viewpoint of second or foreign language contexts. She distinctly divides a central construct of communicative competence into three types of knowledge: linguistic, interactional, and cultural.

1.3.1. Linguistic Knowledge. Corresponds to what Chomsky formulated as competence, with one difference: the inclusion of linguistic features that may transmit social messages as well as referential meanings, in linguistic description. Based on her own experience with a Japanese learner of English who used the phrase on her term paper "and all that clap" to mean "etc.", Saville-Troike argues that recognizing linguistic variations that carry certain social meanings sometimes poses serious problems even for advanced students of English. Therefore, knowledge of the full range of the linguistic code, including those features that transmit social information, needs to be viewed as part of one's communicative competence.

1.3.2. Interactional Skills. Refer to the knowledge and expectation of social norms and conventions. Native speakers of English know how to execute their talk appropriately in a given communicative setting, such as how to do turn-taking naturally when talking to a friend or how to ask someone of a higher status to do something for them. These interactional skills are difficult for students to learn because in many cases they are not taught explicitly in the classroom. In addition to the pronunciation of words, grammatical construction of sentences, and the use of vocabulary that learners should know, according to Saville-Troike, the interaction patterns are an essential part of communicative competence they need to acquire.

1.3.3. Cultural Knowledge. Especially the social structure of the speech community and the values and attitudes attached to language use, is the third component for Saville-Troike's communicative competence. For example, a native speaker of English can identify ways of speaking that are appropriate for men and women, for children and adults, and for the educated and uneducated. For English learners, however, it may not be so easy, and if they are not able to recognize how a group of people "speaks well" in a conversational exchange, and hence fail to act accordingly, they might make themselves a target of ridicule or simply offend their interlocutor.

As we can see, these three areas of knowledge that Saville-Troike proposes as basic constituents of one's communicative competence are all related to Hymes' appropriateness in communicative events in which interlocutors conduct communicative tasks.

1.4. Ethnography of Communication

In order to explore how language is used in context, Hymes argued for an ethnographic approach to the study of communication or ways of speaking. This involves researchers setting out to systematically observe the activities of any given community, through immersing themselves in such activities and collecting a range of data, such as recordings, field notes, and documentation. In order to make a description of how language is used in different contexts, Hymes developed a set of units to map out the relevant contextual aspects to language use. These units can be considered as objects of analysis; he also introduced a tool for ethnographic analysis of speech event which he called SPEAKING model (Lillis, 2006). Below are explanations of these units, followed by elaboration of SPEAKING model:

1.4.1. *Speech Community.* Refers to the shared knowledge concerning language use, this shared knowledge distinguishes one speech community from another. The acquisition of communicative competence takes place within speech communities through interaction with members of the speech community. Speech communities are constituted by a shared variety of language, in addition to the shared sets of norms and conventions about how those varieties can and should be used. Differences between people from different speech communities may cause tensions even if they share the same language variety; for example, in school classroom where participants share a common language, but may not be member of the same speech community.

1.4.2. *Communicative Situation.* Refers to the specific setting in which communication takes place; a wedding, a university lecture, a religious sermon, or an auction are all examples of communicative situations. During a religious sermon, for instance, the audience must remain silent.

1.4.3. *Speech Events.* Refer to the exchange of speech in a communicative situation. It has a beginning and an end. It has a topic and participants using a variety of language. Examples of speech events are greetings, interviews, buying and selling goods, ordering food at a restaurant. Speech events are governed by norms and rules of the speech community, which may differ among communities. In one communicative situation, more than one speech event may take place.

1.4.4. *Speech Act.* Refers to the action done or implied in using words within a speech event. For example, a question like do you have a cigarette? is usually a request for a cigarette. Interlocutors in any speech event may request, apologize, praise, complain, or compliment. They may use verbal or non-verbal channels of communication, in some speech events, silence can also have meaning.

In order to analyse the core components of speech events in different communities, Hymes developed a model for ethnographic analysis. He grouped these components together in an acronym representing the initial letters of each key word, and he called it SPEAKING. Taking into account the fact speaking a language involves more than mere knowledge of its vocabulary and grammar, but also the context in which it is used. Referring to table (1, p.38), the model of SPEAKING is a framework to look at any naturally occurring speech to discover the rules for speaking in addition to the main elements that govern the context, the cultural impacts and factors that shape a particular speech event. All these elements have to be considered when accounting for any communicative activity either in terms of knowledge or actual performance. The model of speaking comprises the following elements:

S-settings and scenes	Setting refers to time, place, and physical circumstances. Scene refers to the psychological or cultural definitions of the event: for example what ‘counts’ as a formal event varies from community to community.
P-participants	Who is involved, as either speaker/ listener, audience?
E-ends	Ends can be defined in terms of goals and outcomes. Goals refer to what is expected to be achieved in any event: outcomes refer to what is actually achieved. Goals and outcomes exist at both community and individual participant level: for example, the conventional goal of a wedding ceremony may be marriage; however, individuals within that event may have other goals.
A-acts	Speech events involve a number and range of speech acts, particular types of utterances such as requests, commands, and greetings.
K-keys	The tone, manner, and spirit in which acts are done, for example, serious or playful. Specific keys may be signalled through verbal or/and non-verbal means.
I-instrumentalities	The particular language/language varieties used and the mode of communication (spoken, written).
N-norms	Norms of interaction refer to rules of speaking, who can say what, when, and how. Norms of interpretation refer to the conventions surrounding how any speech may be interpreted.
G-genres	Categories or types of language use, such as the sermon, the interview, or the editorial. May be the same as ‘speech event’ but may be a part of a speech event. For example, the sermon is a genre and may at the same time be a speech event (when performed conventionally in a church); a sermon may be a genre, however, that is invoked in another speech event, for example, at a party for humorous effect

Table 1. SPEAKING – Acronym invented by Dell Hymes (1972b) to specify relevant features of a speech event

2. Alternative Views of Communicative Competence

Concerning the field of language education, what CC entails and includes is not easy to determine. Being such a ‘broad term’ covering skills and knowledge that can be observed in communicative situations, several authors have created their own terminology for the different components, and have put forward their understanding of the term as far as second and foreign language is concerned. Below is a review of the most influential and significant classroom models:

2.1. *Canale and Swain Model (1980), Canale (1983)*

The notion of CC was explored by Canale and Swain (1980), and later refined by Canale (1983) in their famous article “on communicative competence in relation to language teaching”. The authors proposed a reference model that appears to be a useful way to characterize CC as far as second and foreign language teaching is concerned. They formulated a theoretical framework that in the modified version of Canale (1983) consisted of four major components of CC:

2.1.1. Grammatical Competence. Refers to the mastery of the language system itself. It includes knowledge of phonological, lexical, grammatical, and spelling rules that help learners to be able to produce, and interpret literal meaning and grammatical sentences.

2.1.2. Sociolinguistic Competence. This competence addresses the appropriateness issue; i.e., how utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts. In Canale (1983) model, this competence is concerned with the appropriateness of language use in particular social situations to convey specific communicative functions. Thus, it takes into account the contextual

factors such as participants, setting, and purpose of interaction. According to Canale (1983) “appropriateness of utterances refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form.” P.7

- Appropriateness of meaning deals with the appropriate use of communicative functions (e.g. speech acts of complaining, requesting, commanding, etc.) in the given situation of communication.
- Appropriateness of form concerns the extent to which a given meaning is represented in a verbal or non-verbal form that is proper in a given sociolinguistic context. It deals with the choice of proper forms for the realization of particular communicative functions.

2.2.3. Discourse Competence. It is the ability to combine language structures into different types of a unified spoken or written text in different genres (Canale, 1983, p.9). Genre refers to the type of text (e.g., scientific, argumentative, poetry, etc.). Unity in a text is achieved through cohesion and coherence.

- Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within an utterance that holds it together and gives it meaning.
- Coherence is to maintain unity throughout the whole communicative task.

2.2.4. Strategic Competence. It deals with the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome the difficulties when communication breakdowns occur (Canale, 1983).

The above description of this model makes it clear that it is a useful one in specifying the kinds of knowledge and skills necessary for foreign language learners to be taught, and serves as a basis for developing a communicative syllabus.

2.2. *Bachman and Palmer Model of Communicative Language Ability (1990), (1996)*

Canale and Swain's (1980) reinterpretation of Hyme's concept of CC was considered to be one of the most improved and effective versions in addressing communicative oriented teaching. However, there have been new models with further reinterpretations and developments. The models of Communicative Language Ability was proposed to by Bachman (1990), extended by Bachman and Palmer (1996). This model, as indicated in figure (2), presents a more detailed description of the construct of communicative competence, and proposes a new terminology in accounting for the different components of communicative language ability.

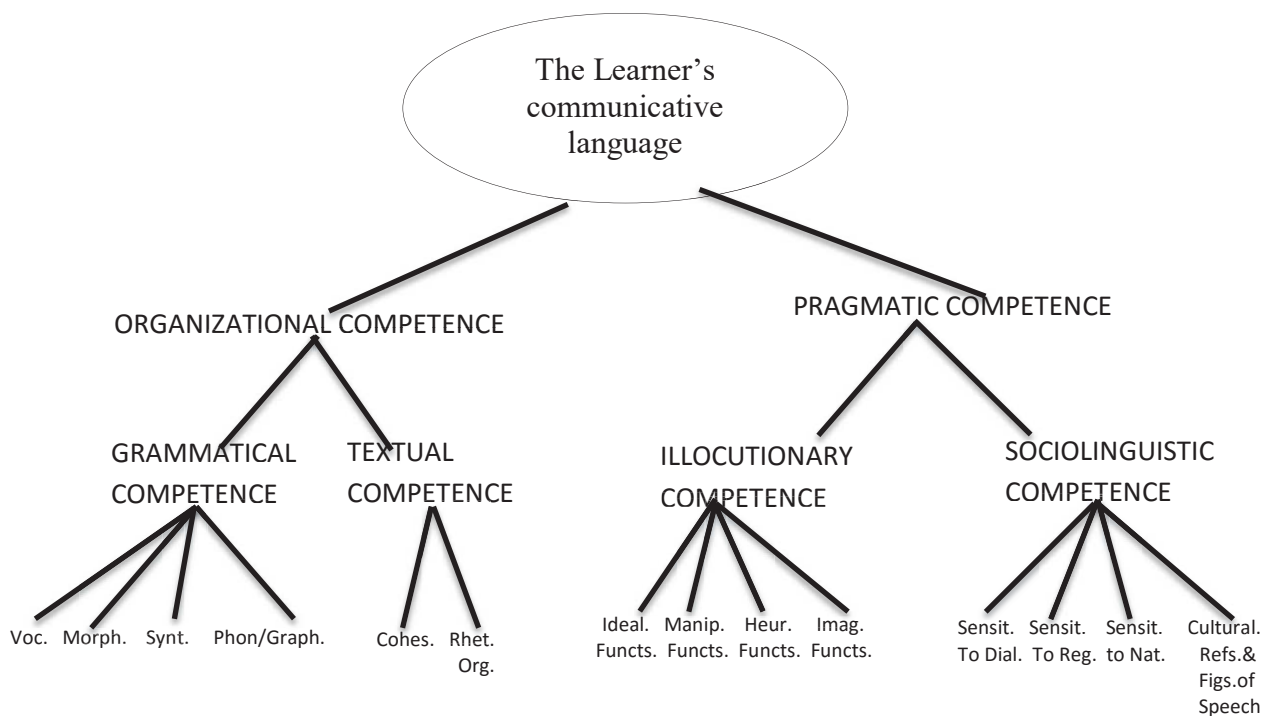


Figure 2. Components of Language Competence

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996) language Competence or knowledge involves two main competencies:

2.2.1. Organizational Competence. It refers to the knowledge involved in the production and interpretation of grammatical sentences, as well as ordering them to form written or oral texts. This entails two sub competencies namely grammatical and textual.

- **Grammatical Competence:** includes those competencies involved in language usage. These consist of knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and syntax/graphology that govern the choice of words to express meaning, their forms, and their physical realizations, either as sounds or as written symbols.
- **Textual Competence:** covers knowledge of cohesion; i.e., ways of making semantic relationships among sentences in written or oral texts, and knowledge of coherence; i.e., conventions for initiating, maintaining, and closing a written or oral text. Thereby paralleling Canale and Swain's (1983) grammatical and discourse competence accordingly.

2.2.2. Pragmatic Competence. This competence is concerned with the relationship between the language users and the context of communication. In this sense, it deals with the relationship between utterances, and the acts performed through these utterances on the one hand, and as features of the context that promote appropriate language use on the other. This competence is further broken into functional competence and sociolinguistic competence.

- **Functional Competence (Illocutionary Competence):** refers to knowledge of how to interpret relationships between utterances or sentences and text and intentions of language users. The utterance “could you tell me how to get to the post office?” for example, most likely functions as a request for directions rather than request for “yes” or “no” answer. The most appropriate responses are likely to be either a set of directions, or if the speaker does not know how to get to the post office, a statement to this effect. A response such as “yes I could,” while accurate in terms of the literal meaning, is inappropriate, since it misinterprets the function of the question as a request for information. Functional competence includes knowledge of four categories of language functions: ideational, manipulative, heuristic, and imaginative.
 - ***Knowledge of Ideational Function:*** enables language users to express or interpret meaning in terms of their experience of the real world. These functions include the use of language to inform, to express, or exchange information about ideas, knowledge, or feeling. Descriptions, classification, explanations, and expressions of sorrow or anger are examples of utterances that perform ideational function.
 - ***Knowledge of Manipulative Function:*** this enables language users to use language to affect the world around them, this includes *instrumental functions* which are performed to make instructions such as requests, suggestions, and warnings; *regulatory functions* which are used to control what people do such as making rules, regulations and laws; and *interpersonal functions* which are used to maintain, and change interpersonal relationships such as greetings and leave taking, compliments, insults, and apologies.

- ***Knowledge of Heuristic Functions:*** enables to use language to extend knowledge of the world such as using language for teaching and learning, for problem solving, and for the retention of information.
- ***Knowledge of Imaginative Functions:*** enables language users to use language to create an imagery world or extend the world around them for humorous or aesthetic purposes; examples include jokes, and the use of figurative language and poetry.
- **Sociolinguistic Competence:** refers to knowledge of how to use language functions appropriately in a given context. Bachman and Palmer (2010, p. 47) discuss four abilities pertaining to sociolinguistic competence:
 - ***Knowledge of Dialects/Varieties:*** includes the characteristics of social and regional varieties of language.
 - ***Knowledge of Register:*** includes the characteristics of different levels of formality in language use.
 - ***Knowledge of Natural or Idiomatic Expressions:*** natural expressions include those expressions that are not only structurally accurate but also expressed in the same way as would the members of a specific speech community. For example, the utterance “the street was very full of cars,” and “I will be one to go,” are grammatically correct, and understandable. However, people in North America would be more likely to say, “the traffic was really bad,” and “I’ll go.” Idiomatic expressions are phrases or utterances in a language that generally do not mean exactly what the words themselves mean. Knowledge of this component of sociolinguistic competence enables language users to distinguish between language use that sounds native-like and that which sounds like it has been translated from another language.

- ***Knowledge of Cultural References and Figures of Speech:*** Knowledge of cultural reference includes extended meanings given by a specific culture to particular events, places, institutions, or people. For example, the utterances “we shall overcome,” “don’t ask, don’t tell,” and “yes, we can!” carry meaning beyond the specific individuals who first popularized them and the particular political contexts in which they were used. Knowledge of figure of speech includes figurative language such as metaphors (e.g., “his words were syrup”), similes (e.g., “her reply was like a cold blast of arctic air”), and hyperboles (e.g., “our team’s victory tonight is the greatest moment in the annals of baseball”).

2.2.3. *Strategic competence.* It is conceived in this model as a set of metacognitive components which enable language users to involve in goal setting, appraising of communicative resources, and planning. Goal setting includes identifying a set of possible tasks, choosing one or more of them, and deciding whether or not to attempt to complete them. Appraising is a means by which language use context is related to other areas of communicative language ability. Planning involves deciding how to make use of language knowledge and other components involved in the process of language use to complete the chosen task successfully.

Bachman and Palmer’s (1996) model has been rather influential on studies concerned with the development and use of pragmatic competence in language education, as it identifies pragmatic competence as one of the main components of communicative competence. Hence, it raises again the view that communicative competence cannot be achieved by improving learners’ grammatical competence, but also concerns the development of other areas of

competence such as the textual and pragmatic ones. However, like Canale and Swain's (1980) and Canale (1983) framework, this model does not seem to specify the existing relationship among its components and sub components.

2.3. *Celce-Murcia et, al. Model 1995*



Figure 3. Model of Communicative Competence (Celce –Murcia et al., 1995)

Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurell (1995) elaborated a more comprehensive model by making finer distinctions in the different areas of competence and by proposing new terminology. Their model, as indicated in figure (3), consists of five interrelated areas of competence namely discourse, linguistic, actional or rhetorical, sociocultural and strategic competence. This framework is characterized by highlighting the interrelationship between its five components. Contrary to the previous proposed models, in this model the authors put 'discourse competence' as the core of communicative ability. It includes not only knowledge of and ability to use linguistic resources to create cohesion and coherence in both oral and

written texts, but it includes also knowledge and ability to use conversational conventions for taking turns and providing 'listener feedback' cues such as 'umm' and 'uh'(Hall 2002 :107).

Discourse competence in this model is linked to three competences namely:

2.3.1. Linguistic Competence. It concerns knowledge of the basic elements of the linguistic system that are used to interpret and produce grammatically correct utterances and texts. It also includes knowledge of and ability to use syntax , in addition to morphology , phonology, vocabulary and orthography .

2.3.2. Actional Competence. Knowledge of how to use language to perform certain functions, such as making a promise, giving orders, complaining and so on . It also involves knowledge of how to combine individual acts into larger sets of actions to create an appropriate communicative activity such as making a purchase ,setting up on appointment etc. Celce –Murcia et al., use the parallel term ' rhetorical competence ' when discussing written texts to refer to the knowledge of the speech acts conventionally associated with particular written genres.

2.3.3. Sociocultural Competence. Comprises the non-linguistic contextual knowledge that communicators rely on to understand and contribute to a given communicative activity.

2.3.4. Strategic Competence. Includes the ability to resolve communicative difficulties and enhance communicative effectiveness.

2.4. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), 2001

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) represents one of the valuable documents published by the Council of Europe, and designed to provide a common basis for the description of objectives, content and methods in the teaching of modern languages. This document is a key reference and an important tool for all who are directly involved in language teaching especially that it provides a comprehensive vision of the competences necessary for communication. More importantly, this document gives a detailed description in terms of the elements entailed in the sociolinguistic competence. The model includes two major competences: general and communicative. The general competence comprises declarative knowledge, skills and know-how, existential competence, and ability to learn. On the other hand communicative competence as illustrated in figure (4) entails linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

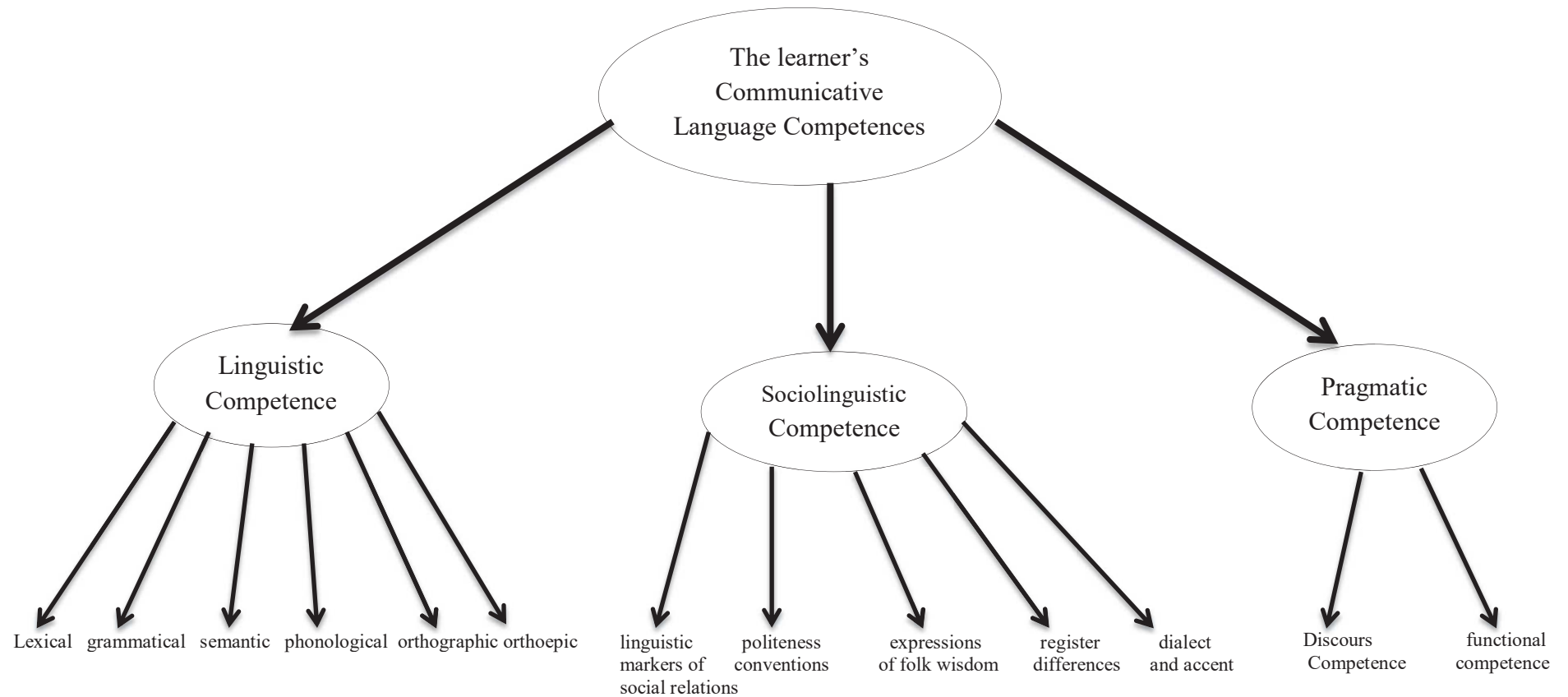


Figure 4. Components of the learners' Communicative Language Competences (CEFR, 2001)

In sum, although there seems to be a general agreement on what a native speaker's communicative competence implies, the term has been refined and extended constantly when dealing with second and foreign language teaching and the types of competences needed for language learners to achieve communicative competence. It is worth noting that there is also little consensus over how the different components are distinct from each other, and how they interact with each other or their relative importance in successful communication. Byram (1997) sees the components of communicative competence as different aspects of the same concept. We can focus on one particular component of the model, but it can never be completely understood in isolation, 'at any one point, one aspect will be central but others and their relationship to that aspect will also be in view.'p.10

3. Implications of Communicative Competence Models to ELT Frameworks

3.1. The Communicative Approach

The above discussed theoretical frameworks pertaining to the concept of communicative competence have provided guidelines in terms of which more effective communicative approaches to English Language teaching methodologies and assessment should be organised and developed. Generally speaking, one essential distinction in ELT methodologies should be drawn between "Grammar Based" and "communicative based" methodologies. According to Canale and Swain (1980), a grammatical approach is organised on basis of linguistic forms (i.e. phonological forms, morphological forms, syntactic patterns, lexical items) and emphasises how these forms are combined to make grammatical sentences. This, in fact, contrasts with the communicative approach which is organised on the basis of communicative functions (e.g. apologising, describing, inviting, promising) that a given learner or a group of learners needs to know and emphasises how particular grammatical forms are used to express these functions appropriately.

It is worth noting that within a grammar-based framework, students may know the rules of grammar, but may not be able to use the language to communicate. Such observations made it clear that it is necessary to distinguish between knowing various grammatical rules and being able to use the rules effectively and appropriately when communicating (Nunan, 1989). Being able to communicate a language requires more than linguistic competence; it requires also the ability to perform certain functions in social context. These observations led to a shift of paradigm in the field of language teaching in the late 1970's and early 1980's from a linguistic structure-centred approach to a communicative based approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Accordingly, in a communicative based approach, language is viewed as communication and the goal of teaching a language is to develop learners' communicative competence (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). According to Richards and Schmidt (2003), communicative language teaching (CLT) aims at developing procedures for the teaching of four skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication, and which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all language classroom activities. The fact that the central theoretical concept in CLT is communicative competence makes its proponents advocate going beyond teaching grammatical rules of the target language, and propose using the target language in meaningful ways to develop learners' communicative competence.

Since its emergence as essentially a British innovation, CLT has expanded in scope and now is widely utilized as one of the most prominent language teaching methodologies around the world. However, despite its apparent popularity, many teachers remain somewhat confused about what exactly CLT is. Therefore, it is relevant at this point to define and figure out some important characteristics and principles of CLT in light of the existing literature.

Making communicative competence as its major goal, CLT is based on the assumption that the foreign language is acquired by using it in authentic situations through negotiation of meaning and exchange of genuine information.

According to Richards (2006, p.22), CLT today has undergone some important innovations; he highlights ten core assumptions that underlie the current communicative teaching methodology:

1. Language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.
2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange.
3. Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging.
4. Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities.
5. Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection.
6. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.

7. Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.
8. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.
9. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning.
10. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing.

3.2. Implications of Communicative Approach to Classroom Instruction

Having outlined the main principles underlying communicative based approach frameworks, it is highly important to shed light on the main implications of this latter on ELT classes in terms of the three main areas of syllabus design, teachers' and learners' roles and types of teaching learning activities.

Concerning syllabus design, Canale and Swain (1980) maintain that the primary objective of a communicative language-oriented programme must be to provide the learner with the information, practice, and much experience needed to meet their communicative needs in the target language. This can be approached by dealing with two main aspects: first learner should be taught primarily about the language i.e. taught about grammatical categories, communicative functions, appropriateness conditions, rules of discourse, and registers. Second learners should also be taught about the target culture through social studies programme in order to provide them with the sociocultural knowledge that is necessary in drawing inferences about the social meanings or values of utterances.

In terms of roles attributed to teachers and learners in a communicative based approach, it is assumed that CLT is a learner centred approach; learners' communicative needs provide the basis for the teaching programme. This new view implied different roles in the language classroom for teachers and learners than from those found in previous structural language classrooms. According to Richards (2003), learners had to be active participants in classroom activities which are based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning. Students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher as a model. They are expected to take on greater degree of responsibility for their own learning. On the other hand, the role of the teacher is of facilitator and guide, not an all knowing provider of knowledge. Through pair work and group work CLT promotes the collaborative and cooperative learning. Within a communicative classroom, instead of the authoritative role of the teacher, he is considered as a communicator, a need analyst, an organizer of resources, a facilitator of activities rather than being a model for correct speech and writing. To sum up, adopting a communicative approach to language teaching requires both teachers and learners to play complimentary roles to establish a learning atmosphere characterised by mutual understanding and cooperation.

As far as activities are concerned, it is argued that activities should be prepared and selected according to how well they engage learners in meaningful and authentic language use rather than merely mechanical practice of language practice. These activities must enable learners to participate in meaningful communicative interaction with competent speakers and be able to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic situations (Canale and Swain, 1980). According to Harmer (2003), for activities to be communicative they should provide learners with a desire and a purpose to communicate. They should focus learners' attention

on the content and information transfer and not on the form. Besides, they should make possible learners free choice of what to say and how to say it among a variety of language structures. On the other hand, the teacher will not intervene to stop the activity; and the material he or she relies on will not dictate what specific language forms students use either. There are various classifications of activities that are typically found in a communicative language classroom among which are role -plays and simulation activities, in which students are assigned roles, they may simulate a television program or a scene at an airport (Harmer, 2001).

Overall, communicative activities typically involve students in genuine communicative tasks. Authenticity of the language and material is also stressed since activities in CLT require learners to involve in real communication, the language classroom is intended to be as a preparation for survival in the real world. The link between classroom activities and the real world is central for a successful methodology of work, which can be achieved by introducing learners to the different linguistic forms as well as the functions conveyed by these forms as maintained by Larsen-Freeman (2000),

The goal is to enable students to communicate in the target language. To do this, students need knowledge of the linguistic forms, meanings, and functions. The need to know that many different forms can be used to perform a function and also that a single form can often serve a variety of functions. They must be able to choose from among these the most appropriate form, given the social context and the roles of the interlocutors. They must also be able to manage the process of negotiating meaning with their interlocutors p.128

3.3. Beyond the Communicative Competence Model

The concept of communicative competence as first introduced by Hymes (1972) and later refined and expanded by applied linguists and researchers (Canale and Swain, 1980; Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Celce-Murcia et, al., 1995; CEFRL, 2001) directed language theory towards a view of language as social behaviour and favoured the sociolinguistic aspect of language and its importance in language teaching syllabi. This view of language as communication led to a more focus on training students in communicative skills from the very beginning of the foreign language programme and to a greater emphasis on communication within the cultural context and situations where the foreign language could be used.

Although early research addressed the possibility of including some aspects of culture in the foreign language curriculum as confirmed by Canale and Swain (1980, p.31), “ a more natural integration of language and claimed culture takes place through a more communicative approach than through a more grammatically based approach” Yet, the proponents of the communicative approach were called into question by many applied linguists representing current perspective in language teaching. Recent discussions have underscored the strong links between language and culture and their relevance under the communicative approach (Byram, 1989; Kramsh 1993).

The link between culture and language in communicative framework was qualified by Kramersch (1996) as 'local link'. The cultural component of language teaching came to be seen as the pragmatic and semantic functions expressed through language in everyday ways of speaking and acting.

Consequently, communicative competence frameworks have recently been criticized by a number of researchers because it models itself on the native speaker and takes his communicative competence as the ultimate goal of foreign language learning. Harmer (2007, p. 70) maintains that CLT has come under attack for being prejudiced in favour of native-speaker teachers by demanding relatively uncontrolled range of language use on the part of the student, and thus expecting the teacher to be able to respond to any and every language problem which may come up. This is problematic for a number of reasons; firstly there is a difficulty of defining native speaker norms "in a time of large-scale migration, cross-national and cross-cultural encounters, and increasing linguistic and pragmatic differences among speakers of the same language," (Kramersch, 1998, p.16). Although it is possible to agree on what constitutes native speaker competence, one question rises itself is how appropriate this model is to learners of foreign languages, both because it sets the impossible objective of becoming like a native speaker, something could potentially demotivate learners and devalues the social identity and competences they have developed within their own culture (Byram, 1997), and because the communicative needs of non-native speakers (NNSs) are different from native speakers (NSs) existing in a particular speech community and vary according to the social context in which they wish to operate (Saville-Troike, 1996).

Byram and Fleming (1998, p.12) suggest to expand the model of communicative competence CC to become intercultural communicative competence ICC. Based on the assumption that instead of having learners model themselves on the 'native speaker', it is becoming apparent to teachers and their learners that successful cross-cultural communication depends on the acquisition of abilities to understand different ways of thinking and living as they are embodied in the language to be learnt, and to mediate between different modes present in any specific interaction. This is not 'the communicative competence' on which people using the same language in the same or closely related, cultures rely; it is an 'intercultural communicative competence' which has some common ground with CC, but which also has many unique characteristics. Thus, rather than expecting learners to abandon their own social identities and competences in an attempt to replicate some native speaker ideal, ICC emphasizes the knowledge and skills needed to understand people from other unfamiliar cultures, and mediate between the foreign culture and the learner's own culture in a way that leads to successful communication (Risager, 2007). This is a dimension of CC that many native speakers, particularly those with limited experience of 'otherness', tend to lack. Learners may still want to acquire many of the aspects of native speaker CC, but with the objective of mediating between disparate cultures rather than compete integrating into a particular community (Byram and Fleming, 1998).

Savignon (2006, p.677) has raised a reconceptualization of CLT in regard to three major themes:

- The highly contextualized nature of CLT is underscored again and again. It would be inappropriate to speak of CLT as a teaching method in any sense of the term as it was used in the 20th century. Rather, CLT is an approach that understands language to be inseparable from individual identity and social behaviour. Not only does language define a community, but a community, in turn, also define the forms and uses of language. The norms and goals appropriate for learners in a given setting, and the means for attaining the goals, are the concern of those directly involved.
- Related to both the understanding of language as culture and to the multilingual reality in which most of the world population finds itself is the futility of any definition of a 'native speaker' a term that came to be prominent in descriptive structural linguistics, and was adopted by teaching methodologists to define an ideal for language learners.
- Time and again assessment seems to be the driving force behind curricular innovations. Increasing demands for accountability along with a positivistic and measured by a common yard stick continue to influence programme content and goals. Irrespective of their own needs or interests, learners prepare for the tests they will be required to pass. High-stakes language test often determine future access to education and opportunity.

Research in language education is then advocating a reconceptualization of learners' communicative competence by adding an intercultural perspective. This can be achieved through undergoing a process of change in terms of the approaches adopted, the syllabus design, the roles of teachers and learners as well as the type of activities implemented. Furthermore, it is highly important to integrate new ways of assessment that take into consideration the intercultural dimension.

Conclusion

As this chapter indicates, the development of the concept of communicative competence as an ultimate goal of language learning/ teaching methodology played a significant role in the learning of a second or foreign language. CLT has served as a major source of influence on English language teaching practice in both ESL and EFL settings. However, communicative competence frameworks have recently been criticized by a number of researchers because it models itself on the native speaker and takes his communicative competence as the ultimate goal of foreign language learning. Consequently, Byram and Fleming (1998, p.12) suggest to expand the model of communicative competence CC to become intercultural communicative competence ICC. Based on the assumption that instead of having learners model themselves on the 'native speaker', it is becoming apparent to teachers and their learners that successful cross-cultural communication depends on the acquisition of abilities to understand different ways of thinking and living as they are embodied in the language to be learnt, and to reconcile or mediate between different modes present in any specific interaction.

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Sociolinguistic Competence and Foreign Language Teaching

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the teaching of sociolinguistic competence in EFL settings. This will be achieved by first reviewing the literature related to the sociolinguistic perspective on language learning. Besides, light will be shed on the development of this important aspect of communicative competence; several aspects of sociolinguistic competence will be discussed starting by presenting its definition and enumerating its components to raising its importance for EFL learners. A historical account of the sociolinguistic component in the different models of communicative competence is also provided by considering the contributions of the most prominent figures in the field of foreign language education from the very beginning to present-day studies. In addition, some of the problems that affect the learning of sociolinguistic competence will be discussed. Finally, the emphasis in the last section will be on the teaching of speech acts and particular attention will be paid to speech acts and culture.

1. The Sociolinguistic Perspective on Language Learning

1.1.Linguistic Variation and Language Learning

Sociolinguistics as a field of study is mainly concerned with the study of language in use. One of the major interests in the sociolinguistic perspective of language is to explain how language varies among its speakers in terms of different factors. Holmes(2001, p. 1) maintains that "Sociolinguists are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts' (cited in Methcell&Myles, 2004, p.224). In fact, it is now a settled issue among sociolinguists that native speakers vary their language use in regular ways, according to some factors such as the setting, the interlocutors, the aims, etc.

The point to note here is that although a rich literature about studies dealing with native speakers' sociolinguistic competence and variation in first language acquisitions is available, the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence among L2 and FL learners has received less attention. However, recent studies are now beginning to understand that this aspect of language acquisition and its related areas is as crucial in enabling learners to communicate with other people as is grammar (Regan, Howard and Lemée, 2009. p.2).

Recently, a set of studies that account for second language learners' acquisition of sociolinguistic variation have been carried out. These studies showed that second language learners may become sensitive to sociolinguistic variation in the target language, and may vary their usage patterns over time to accommodate increasingly to the norms of the target community. Much of this work has been conducted with English first language learners in Canada, who are learning French as a second language in an immersion setting (see Richie, 2009). Other studies have also been carried out in Europe with advanced learners studying French in an academic setting (Regan, 1996; Dewaele and Regan, 2002).

According to Methcell & Myles, (2004, p.233) research into second language variability confirms its complex nature. It is clear that sociolinguistic factors play a role, although probably outweighed in importance by linguistic factors. There is little hard evidence that beginning second language learners control stylistic variation. On the other hand, it is clear that more advanced learners who engage actively with first language users move rapidly towards community norms of (mildly) informal usage.

1.2. The Significance of Context in Language Teaching

As discussed earlier in the previous chapter, it is widely recognised in the field of FLT that one of the major innovations brought by the notion of CC along with CLT methodology is the fact that learners need not just knowledge and skill in the grammar of a language but also the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways to be competent

speakers. Consequently, FL pedagogy has been increasingly aware of the need to teach language in context-for example by contextualising grammatical exercises and situating them in socially appropriate verbal exchange (Kramersch, 1993, p.34).

From a theoretical perspective, context influences any communicative activity. According to Byram (2002, p, 9), when two people talk to each other, they do not just *speak* to the other to exchange information, they also *see* the other as an individual and as someone who belongs to a specific social group, for example a 'worker' and an 'employer' or a 'teacher' and a 'pupil'. This has an influence on what they say, how they say it, what response they expect and how they interpret the response. In other words, when people are talking to each other their social identities are unavoidably part of the social interaction between them.

On a practical level, to give a detailed account for what context in language teaching and communication entails, the CEFR (2002) identifies two major external factors embedding any communicative task: domains and situations. The CEFR presents the following illustrative table to sum up the aspects of context that any language learner needs to be informed about to ensure effective communication:

Domain	Locations	Institutions	Persons	Objects	Events	Operations	Texts
Personal	Home:, house, rooms, garden own of family of friends of strangers Own space in hostel, hotel The countryside, seaside	The family Social networks	(Grand)Parents offspring, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, spouses, intimates, friends, acquaintances	Furnishing and furniture Clothing Household equipment Toys, tools, personal hygiene Objets d'art, books, Wild/domestic animals, pets Trees, plants, lawn, ponds Household goods Handbags Leisure/sports equipment	Family occasions Encounters Incidents, accidents Natural phenomena Parties, visits Walking, cycling motoring Holidays, excursions Sports events	Living routines: dressing, undressing cooking, eating, washing DIY gardening Reading, radio and TV Entertaining Hobbies Games and sports	Teletext Guarantees Recipes Instructional material, Novels,magazines Newspapers Junk mail Brochures Personal letters Broadcast and recorded spokentexts
Public	Public spaces: street, square, park Public transport Shops (super)markets Hospitals, surgeries, clinics Sports stadia, fields, halls Theatre, cinema, entertainment Restaurant, pub, hotel Places of worship	Public authorities Political bodies The law Public health Services clubs Societies Political parties Denominations	Members of the public Officials Shop personnel Police, army, security Drivers, conductors Passengers Players, fans, spectators Actors, audiences Waiters, barpersons Receptionists	Money, purse, wallet Forms Goods Weapons Rucksacks Cases, grips Balls Programmes Meals, drinks, snacks Passports, licences	Incidents Accidents, illnesses Public meetings Law-suits, court trials Rag-days, fines, arrests Matches, contests Performances Weddings, funerals	Buying and obtaining public services Using medical services Journeys by road/ rails/ship/air Public entertainment and leisure activities Religious services	Public announcements and notices Labels and packaging Leaflets, graffiti Tickets, timetables Notices, regulations Programmes Contracts Menus Sacred texts, sermons, hymns
Occupational	Offices Factories Workshops Ports, railways Farms Airports Stores, shops Service industries Hotels Civil Service	Firms Multinational corporations Nationalised industries Trade unions	Employers/ees Managers Colleagues Subordinates Workmates Clients Customers Receptionists, secretaries Cleaners	Business machinery Industrial machinery Industrial and craft tools	Meetings Receptions Interviews Conferences Trade fairs Consultations Seasonal sales Industrial accidents Industrial disputes	Business admin .Industrial management Production operations Office procedures Trucking Sales operations Selling, marketing Computer operation Office maintenance	Business letter Report memorandum Life and safety notices Instructional manuals Regulations Advertising material Labelling and packaging Job description Sign posting Visiting cards
Educational	Schools: hall classrooms, playground Sports fields, corridors, Colleges Universities Lecture theatres Seminar rooms Student Union Halls of residence Laboratories Canteen	School College University Learned societies Professional Institutions Adult education bodies	Class teachers Teaching staff Caretakers Assistant staff Parents Classmates Professors, lecturers (Fellow) students Library and laboratory staff Refectory staff, cleaners Porters, secretaries	Writing material School uniforms Games equipment and clothing Food Blackboard Audio-visual equipment & chalk Computers Briefcases and school bags	Return to school / entry Breaking up Visits and exchanges Parents' days / evenings Sports days, matches Disciplinary problems	Assembly Lessons Games Playtime Clubs and societies Lectures, essay writing Laboratory work Library work Seminars and tutorials Homework Debates and discussions	Authentic texts (as above) Textbooks, readers Reference books Blackboard text OP text Computer screen text Videotext Exercise materials Journal articles Abstracts Dictionaries

Table 2. External context of use: descriptive categories

This table sums up the possible domains and situations that might be considered in any communicative event. They represent the external context where communicative events might take place; on the other hand, the learner's own perception and interpretation of the different factors is referred to as 'the mental context'. This latter is much determined by the learners' intellectual faculties. Considering both external and mental context is necessary for the production as well as the interpretation of different communicative events.

1.3.The Notion of Appropriateness

After that the concept of context is discussed, one other concept that determines the relationship between communicative events and context needs to be clarified; it is the notion of appropriateness. This latter refers to the use of language in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated; it implies the social dimension of language use upon which communicative events are judged. The concept of appropriateness is central to the concept of communicative competence as this latter is based on the idea that a speaker of a language needs both linguistic and cultural knowledge to ensure successful communication. According to Lillis (2006) communicative competence presupposes appropriateness because language user's knowledge (competence) is more than just grammar-based; knowledge of language requires knowledge of the appropriate social conventions governing what and how something can be said, to whom and in what contexts.

Accordingly, appropriateness underlies one major component of CC, which is sociolinguistic competence. It is clearly understood from Davies' words that appropriateness is a key issue as far sociolinguistic competence is concerned; he maintains that:

“The position taken up by communicative competence is that knowing what to say is never enough; it is also necessary to know how to say it. And by 'how' is not meant the performing of the speech that is getting the words out; rather what is meant in using the appropriate register, variety, code, script, formula, tone and formality” (Davies, 2003: 23)

From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is a matter of fact that native speakers of a language use their shared knowledge of their native community and society to convey and judge appropriateness of speech. Native speakers use this knowledge to vary their speech according to the context. However, this also represents a major issue for language teaching and raises many questions such as: to what extent this shared knowledge can be transmitted to FL learners? And how would they perceive it? Will they be able to use it in their production and interpretation of different speech events?

It should be noted that one major source of difficulty for non-native speakers to communicate with native-speakers, is the fact that they do not share the same community's memory and knowledge (Kramsch, 1993).

In his discussion of FL learners' acquisition of sociolinguistic competence, Dewaele (2004) highlights that most language learning researchers have experience in language teaching and are familiar with language learners' difficulties in acquiring the full range of speech styles in the target language (TL) and being able to vary between them. Despite the fact of having spent years learning "the standard norm", instructed L2 learners might find themselves at a loss when they suddenly become L2 users unable to produce informal speech. They might be distressed when having to use highly formal speech in authentic situations. Learners appear to be monostylistic at first, stuck somewhere in the middle of the speech style continuum.

In a FL context like the Algerian one, the situation is challenging for teachers and learners as well because it is very difficult to decide on the intentionality of inappropriate style, and that the labelling of something as being "inappropriate" is often open to debate.

Dewaele (2008) points out that it is unlikely that everybody will agree or disagree on degrees of (in) appropriateness of certain speech acts. Jokes are a typical case where appropriateness can be very hard to judge both by native and NNSs alike. What one NS may consider a perfectly appropriate (and funny) joke in a given situation may be perceived by another NS to

be offensive or rude and not funny at all. Even friends communicating in their L1 may occasionally misjudge “appropriateness” by embarking on a topic that may have become inappropriate because of changing circumstances in the friend’s life.

Considering the importance of appropriateness of speech to the context of communication, and being aware of difficulties involved when dealing with it in FL setting, teachers are faced with some questions; first to what extent can and should they teach foreign forms of discourse and insist their production by foreign learners (Kramsch, 1993), and the second question is whether or not to teach L2 learners words and expressions that are considered inappropriate in polite conversation, and whether or not a L2 learner should be equipped with the linguistic and pragmatic means to be consciously impolite (Dewaele, 2008).

On the ground of certain experiments in FL situations, the sociolinguist Saville-Troike (1992) stressed awareness raising instructions, she concluded that sociolinguistic rules can be talked about, but it should be left to the learners’ own decision to adopt them or not for productive use (cited in Kramsch, 1993).

2. The Concept of Sociolinguistic Competence

2.1. Definition of Sociolinguistic Competence

It is clear from the previous discussions that connection between sociolinguistics and language learning was shown in various ways, and several definitions of sociolinguistic competence are available within language teaching research as seen in the previous chapter. Although these definitions may have a wide range of meanings, they all meet on one broad view of sociolinguistic competence being mainly concerned with a general knowledge of appropriate linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour in a particular context (Kramsch, 1991). In other words, it is the ability to use linguistic forms appropriately for a specific situation, or the competence required to perform specific speech acts in socially appropriate ways, “the

capacity to recognise and produce socially appropriate speech in context” as confirmed by Lyster (1994, 263).

Sociolinguistic competence requires adjusting one’s grammatical forms to be appropriate to the setting in which communication takes place. Attention is paid to such factors as the age, status, and sex of the participants, as well as the formality/informality of the setting, Richard and Schmidt (2003) stressed the importance of such factors for communication when defining sociolinguistic competence as:

Knowledge of the relationship between language and its non-linguistic context, knowing how to use and respond appropriately to different types of speech acts, such as requests, apologies, thanks and invitations, knowing which address forms should be used with different persons one speaks to, and in different situations. P.90

Many researchers have been interested in looking at this competence because they have acknowledged the learners’ difficulties in acquiring and using the full range of speech styles or to develop “stylistic variation” (Dewaele, 2004).

In the definition proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), sociolinguistic competence includes learners’ sensitivity to social conventions for use and choice of address forms and politeness, dialect or variety, choice of register, naturalness and knowledge of cultural references and figures of speech. This is highlighted in the following statement:

Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with the knowledge and skills required to deal with the social dimension of language use. As was remarked with regard to sociocultural competence, since language is a sociocultural phenomenon, much of what is contained in the Framework, particularly in respect of the sociocultural, is of

relevance to sociolinguistic competence. The matters treated here are those specifically relating to language use and not dealt with elsewhere: linguistic markers of social relations; politeness conventions; expressions of folk-wisdom; register differences; and dialect and accent (Council of Europe, 2003, p. 118).

Bachman's discussion of sociolinguistic competence echoes these notions:

Sociolinguistic competence is the sensitivity to, or control of the conventions of language use that are determined by the feature of the specific language use context; it enables us to perform language functions in ways that are appropriate to that context. Without attempting to identify and discuss the features of the language use situation that determine the conventions of language use... it includes sensitivity to differences in dialect and variety, to differences in register and naturalness, and the ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech (2010, p.94).

In brief, the above definitions proposed for language education, and with reference to the most prominent models of CC dealt with in the previous chapter, sociolinguistic competence has been operationalized in terms of two basic and fundamental concepts:

- First, an understanding of the sociocultural context of communication, and
- Second, appropriate language use, which is shaped and constantly reshaped by this context. Competence in this sense is linked to a speaker's ability to use language for social action with an eye towards the appropriateness of an utterance in context as opposed to the grammaticality of a sentence in isolation.

2.2. The Sociolinguistic Component in Models of Communicative Competence

On the basis of the above views and to take up from the previous chapter, the concept of CC has been approached by many linguists and groups of researchers who have made various

attempts to explore its components and conceptualize a prominent model for classroom implementation. Accordingly, there has been a continuing debate about its components and the emphasis on one component over the others in different frameworks. When dealing with the sociolinguistic competence in models of CC, which essentially concerns the relationship between language, society and culture, it is worth noting that there is not a general consensus among theoreticians on the appropriate terminology to describe this component and its elements, therefore many confusing terms have been introduced.

Starting by Canale and Swain model (1980) and that was refined by Canale (1983). This latter used the term sociolinguistic competence in its broad sense to refer to the appropriateness of language use in particular social situations to convey specific communicative functions. Although the term, at first, came as comprehensive one, it was further expanded to include both appropriateness of meaning as well as appropriateness of form i.e., appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in a given situation.

Following Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) model of Communicative Language Ability, their model differs from the previous one in the treatment and interpretation of sociolinguistic competence by putting it under the heading of pragmatic competence together with illocutionary or functional competence. Within this framework, sociolinguistic competence is supposed to include mainly the use of language functions appropriately in social contexts; this requires sensitivity to differences in dialect and variety, to differences in register and naturalness, and the ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech. On the other hand, illocutionary or functional competence is utilized to refer to the knowledge of speech acts and language functions.

Coming to Celce-Murcia et al. model (1995), the authors use the terms *actional competence* to refer to the knowledge of how to use language to perform speech acts, and the term *sociocultural competence* which consists of the non-linguistic and contextual knowledge used to understand and convey a particular communicative activity. Both *actional competence* and *sociocultural competence* are the parallel terms of *illocutionary (functional)* and *sociolinguistic competence* used by Bachman and Palmer (1990, 1996), as well as *pragmalinguistic* and *sociopragmatic competence* used by Leech and Thomas (1983) accordingly.

Following the above discussion, it is quite clear that *pragmatic* and *sociolinguistic* competences are not always differentiated in the FL and L2 literature but still researchers agree in distinguishing both concepts in relation to two main points; while *pragmatic competence* concerns mainly the relation between what interlocutors say and what they intended to perform through the utterance, *sociolinguistic competence* is related to the appropriateness of the language choice in a given context of a communicative situation. For example, *pragmatic competence* is related to the act of making a request and *sociolinguistic competence* to the appropriate choice of register to address the interlocutor when making that request (Council of Europe, 2001).

A more practical and helpful framework is found in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and which will be discussed later in this chapter. This latter provides a good description of elements involved in the *sociolinguistic competence*: linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk-wisdom, register differences, and dialect and accent.

Taking into consideration the above discussion, it is quite apparent that this diversity of terminology for essentially the same component is a confusing one. The inability to settle

down on terms is indicative of the difficulty and vastness of this area of research and came to be unhelpful on the practical level as far as classroom instruction is concerned.

2.3. Components of Sociolinguistic Competence

Even if some of the major institutions concerned with foreign and L2 teaching recognized the importance of the sociolinguistic competence, resources which give a good description of the elements involved and which guide the instructors in the teaching and evaluation of this competence are difficult to find. For example, in Canale's model of CC (1983), sociolinguistic competence was used in a broad sense to address the appropriateness issue; it includes both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form. A more detailed description of what sociolinguistic competence entails can be found in the framework of communicative language ability proposed by Bachman (1990). Following Bachman (2010), as depicted in figure (5), illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence are two components of pragmatic competence; illocutionary competence is the knowledge of the relationship between utterances or sentences and texts and the intention of language user, sociolinguistic competence the knowledge that enables language users to create or interpret language that is appropriate to a particular language use setting.

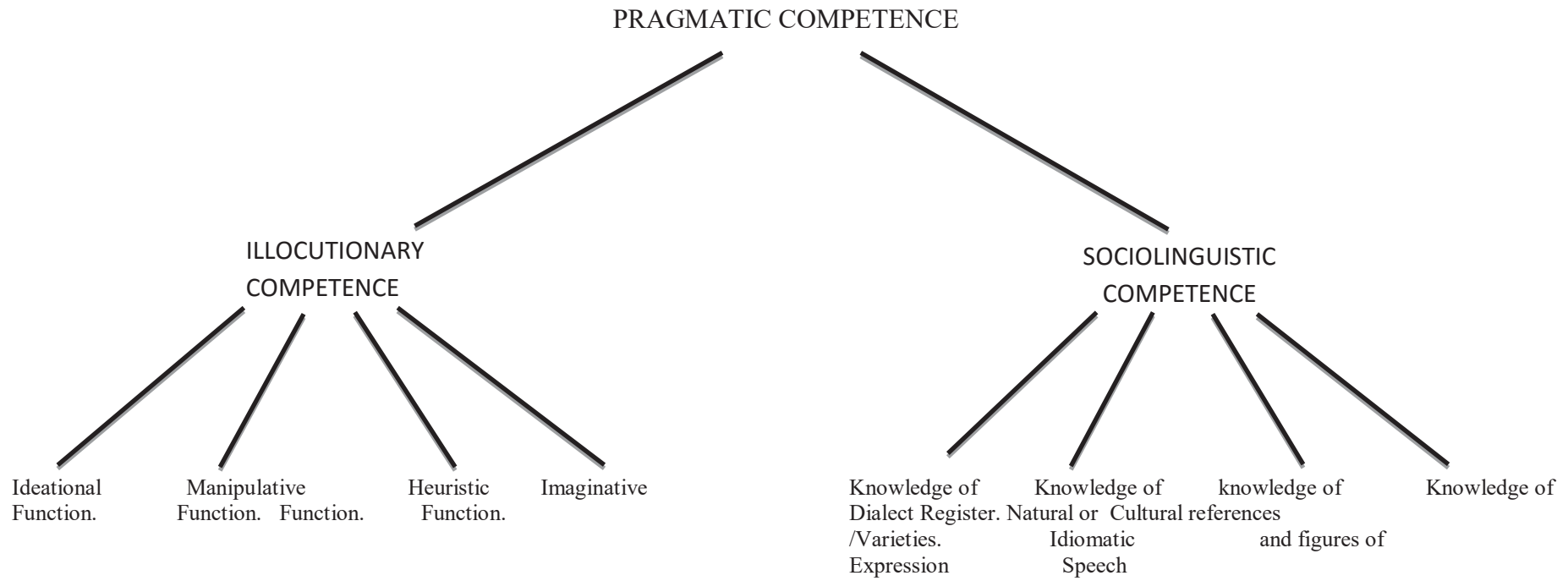


Figure 5. Components of Pragmatic Competence

As far as sociolinguistic competence is concerned, Bachman (2010, pp.95.97) discusses its components as follows:

- ***Sensitivity to Differences in Dialect or Variety.*** Sensitivity to differences in dialect or variety of language is an important aspect of sociolinguistic competence. In every language there are variations in use according to different geographic regions, or social groups. These regional or social varieties, or dialects, can be characterized by different conventions, and appropriateness of their use will vary, depending on the features of the language use context. For example, a Black student may indicate that she would not consider using Black English in class, where ‘Standard American English’ would be appropriate. On the other hand, she would be understood as either affected or joking if she uses Standard American English in informal conversations with Black friends.
- ***Sensitivity to Differences in Register.*** Register refers to variation in language use within a single dialect or variety. Differences in register are distinguished in terms of three aspects of the language use context: ‘field of discourse’, ‘mode of discourse’, and ‘style of discourse’. The field of discourse consists of the subject matter of the language use, as in lectures, discussions or written expositions; it may also refer to the entire language use context, as in the registers of playing football, planting trees, or computer ‘hacking’. The mode of discourse refers to the differences between the written and the spoken ones, trying to capture genuine dialogues in writing, or to present a written paper conversationally highlights the differences between written and spoken registers. Finally, the style of discourse refers to the relations among the participants. There are five different levels of style, or register, in language use: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. These five styles are characterized primarily in terms of the relationship between participants in the language use

context, so that the use of inappropriate style can be interpreted as presumptuous or even rude. Variations in register occur in both highly formalized language use, as in greetings, introductions, or leave takings, and in extended language use, as when using more elaborate syntactic structures and cohesive devices in formal writing, or when sustaining a conversation in a regional dialect with childhood friends and family members.

- ***Sensitivity to Naturalness.*** A third aspect of sociolinguistic competence is that which allows the user to either formulate or interpret an utterance which is not only linguistically accurate, but is also termed as ‘nativelike way’, that is, as it would be by native speakers of a particular dialect or variety and its culture.
- ***Ability to Interpret Cultural References and Figures of Speech.*** The final aspect of sociolinguistic competence in Bachman’s model is the ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech. Although many of them are incorporated with set meanings into the lexicon of any language and can be considered as part of lexicon or vocabulary competence, knowledge of the extended meaning given by a specific culture to particular events, places, institutions, or people is required whenever these meanings are referred to in language use. For example, to interpret the following exchange, the language user would have to know what ‘waterloo’ is used linguistically to symbolize a major and final defeat with awful consequences for the defeated:

A: I hear John didn’t do too well on his final exam.

B: Yeah, it turned out to be his Waterloo.

Knowledge of only the referential meaning of the place name without knowing what the name connotes in American and British English would not allow the correct interpretation of the

second utterance. Similarly, interpreting figurative language involves more than simply knowledge of referential meaning. For example, the correct interpretation of hyperboles such as, ‘I can think of a million good reasons for not smoking’ and clichés like ‘it’s a jungle out there’, require more than a knowledge of the signification of the words and grammatical structures involved. The specific meanings and images that are evoked by figures of speech are deeply rooted in the culture of a given society and represent an important component of sociolinguistic competence.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) represents one of the valuable documents published by the Council of Europe, and designed to provide a common basis for the description of objectives, content and methods in the teaching of modern languages across Europe. This document is a key reference and an important tool for those who are directly involved in language teaching especially that it provides a comprehensive vision of the competences necessary for communication. More importantly, this document gives a detailed description in terms of the elements entailed in the sociolinguistic competence. The model illustrated in figure (6) includes two major competences: general and communicative. The general competence comprises declarative knowledge, skills and know-how, existential competence, and ability to learn. On the other hand communicative competence entails sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

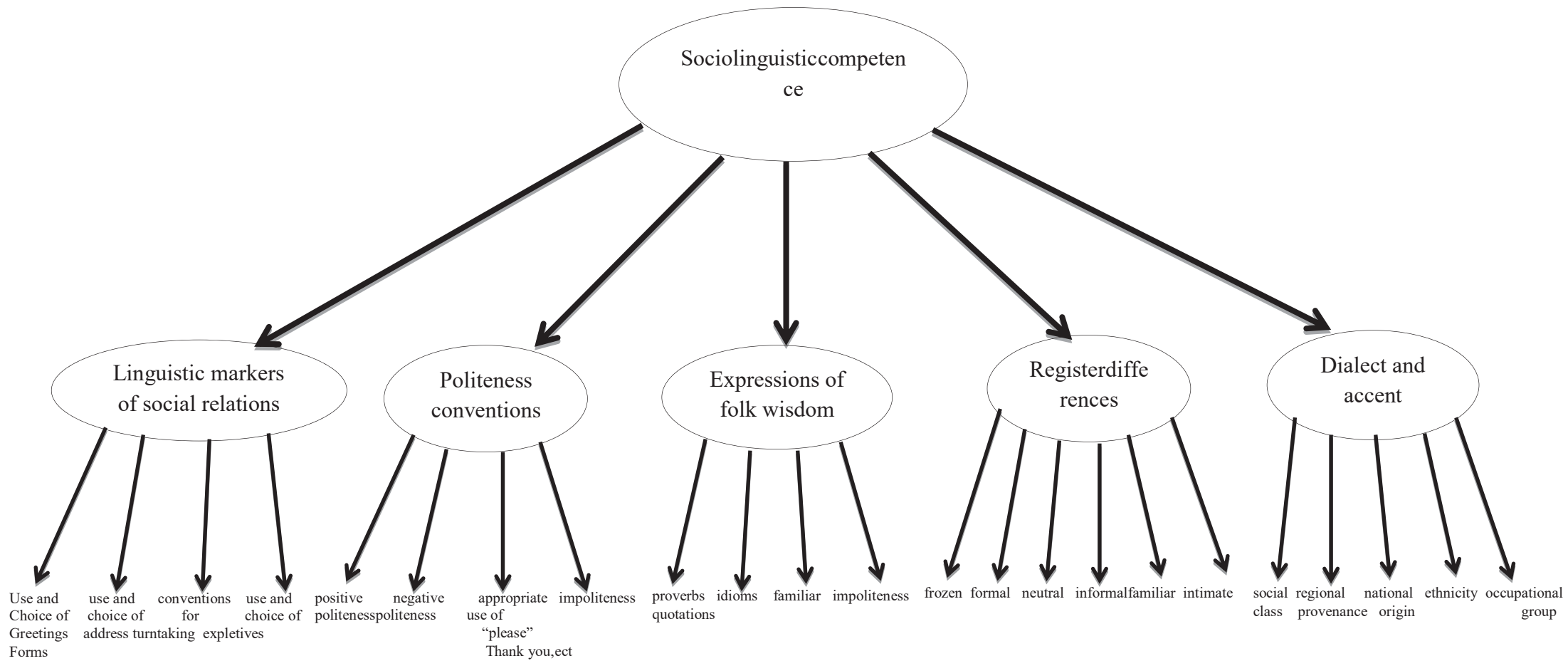


Figure 6. Components of Sociolinguistic Competence (CEFRL, 2001)

As far as sociolinguistic competence is concerned, the framework, as depicted in figure (6), presents its composing elements as follows:

2.3.1. Linguistic Markers of Social Relations. These are of course widely divergent in different languages and cultures, depending on such factors as a) relative status, b) closeness of relation, c) register of discourse, etc. examples in English may include:

- Use and choice of greetings: on arrival, e.g. *Hello! Good morning!*, introductions, e.g. *How do you do?*, leave-taking, e.g. *Good-bye . . . See you later*
- Use and choice of address forms:
 - Frozen, e.g. *My Lord, Your Grace*
 - Formal, e.g. *Sir, Madam, Miss, Dr, Professor* (+ surname)
 - Neutral, e.g. first name only, such as *John! Susan!*
 - Informal, e.g. no address form
 - Familiar, e.g. *dear, darling*; (popular) *mate, love*
 - Peremptory, e.g. surname only, such as *Smith! You (there)!*
 - Ritual insult, e.g. *you stupid idiot!* (often affectionate)
- Conventions for turntaking:
- Use and choice of expletives (e.g. *Dear, dear!, My God!, Bloody Hell!*, etc.)

2.3.2. Politeness Conventions. Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the ‘co-operative principle’. They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted.

a. ‘positive’ politeness, e.g.:

- showing interest in a person’s wellbeing;
- sharing experiences and concerns, ‘troubles talk’;
- expressing admiration, affection, gratitude;

- offering gifts, promising future favours, hospitality;

b. 'negative' politeness, e.g.:

- Avoiding face-threatening behaviour (dogmatism, direct orders, etc.);
- Expressing regret, apologising for face-threatening behaviour (correction, contradiction, prohibitions, etc.);
- Using hedges, etc. (e.g. 'I think', tag questions, etc.);

c. appropriate use of 'please', 'thank you', etc.;

d. impoliteness (deliberate flouting of politeness conventions), e.g.:

- Bluntness, frankness;
- expressing contempt, dislike;
- Strong complaint and reprimand;
- Venting anger, impatience;
- Asserting superiority.

2.3.3. Expressions of Folk Wisdom. These fixed formulae, which incorporate and reinforce common attitudes, make a significant contribution to popular culture. They are frequently used, or perhaps more often referred to or played upon, for instance in newspaper headlines. Knowledge of this accumulated folk wisdom, expressed in language assumed to be known to all, is a significant component of the linguistic aspect of sociocultural competence.

- Proverbs, e.g. *a stitch in time saves nine*
- Idioms, e.g. *a sprat to catch a mackerel*
- familiar quotations, e.g. *a man's a man for a' that*
- Expressions of belief, such as –weather saws, e.g. *Fine before seven, rain by eleven*
- attitudes, such as – clichés, e.g. *It takes all sorts to make a world*

- Values, e.g. *It ' s not cricket.*
- Graffiti, T-shirt slogans, TV catch phrases, work-place cards and posters now often havethis function.

2.3.4. RegisterDifferences. The term ‘register’ is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts. It is mainly concerned with differences in level of formality:

- Frozen, e.g. *Pray silence for His Worship the Mayor!*
- Formal, e.g. *May we now come to order, please.*
- Neutral, e.g. *Shall we begin?*
- Informal, e.g. *Right. What about making a start?*
- Familiar, e.g. *O.K. Let ' s get going.*
- Intimate, e.g. *Ready dear?*

In early learning, a relatively neutral register is appropriate, unless there are compelling reasons otherwise. It is this register that native speakers are likely to use towards and expect from foreigners and strangers generally. Acquaintance with more formal or more familiar registers is likely to come over a period of time, perhaps through the reading of different text-types, particularly novels, at first as a receptive competence.

Some caution should be exercised in using more formal or more familiar registers, since their inappropriate use may well lead to misinterpretation and ridicule

2.3.5. Dialect and Accent. Sociolinguistic competence also includes the ability to recognise the linguistic markers of, for example:

- Social class
- Regional provenance
- National origin
- Ethnicity

- Occupational group

Such markers include:

- Lexicon, e.g. Scottish *wee* for ‘small’
- Grammar, e.g. Cockney *I ain’ t seen nothing* for ‘I haven’t seen anything’
- Phonology, e.g. New York *boird* for ‘bird’
- Vocal characteristics (rhythm, loudness, etc.)
- Paralinguistic
- Body language

The CEFRL is a widely recognized document by language teaching practitioners all over the world as a useful tool for the teaching and assessment of languages. Following the presentation provided above, this document represents an important guide for the researcher of the current study because of its comprehensiveness and detailed description of the sociolinguistic competence elements.

3. Problems with the Teaching of Sociolinguistic Competence

Developing sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes poses no simple problem for language learners and their teachers. Indeed, this competence involves the learning of the sociocultural principles that determine the norms of appropriate behaviour and language use of a specific community, which is difficult to teach in a classroom (Hinkel, 2001). Although some of the major institutions concerned with foreign and L2 teaching recognized the importance of the sociolinguistic competence, resources which give a good description of the elements involved and which guide the instructors in the teaching and evaluation of this competence are difficult to find. Schmidt and Richard (1980, pp.145-149) identified a set of learning strategies used by language learners in the process of

learning sociolinguistic competence from the target language that can be the source of problems and are at the core of confusion or misunderstanding that can lead to communication breakdowns. The strategies are summarized as follows:

3.1. Inference

It refers to the process of forming hypotheses or conclusions about the target language by the learner based on evidence presented to him. However, making conclusions about the target language is not always true, as discourse value is not a constant one, but varies according to the type of discourse, the relationship between the participants, and the influence of the setting on the topic. Non-fluent language users generally operate at the surface structure of sentences, they rely on their knowledge of lexis and grammar to understand them, but they often miss indirectly marked speech acts and functions which may be problematic. Thus for example, the sentence “is the cook new?” said in a kitchen of a restaurant by a waiter on noticing an unfamiliar face in the kitchens, may be interpreted as a yes/no question asking for information. However, the same question can have the illocutionary force of a complaint if it is said by a client in the restaurant to a waiter on receiving a poorly prepared meal; things that foreign users may fail to interpret as they rely much on their linguistic knowledge to understand.

3.2. Transfer

It refers to the use of the speech act rules of one’s own speech community or culture group when interacting with members of the target speech community. This occurs in interactions in which an interlocutor is using a second or a foreign language, but employing the speech act rules of his or her native language. That is, he tends to transfer sociocultural patterns from native language to the foreign language, often lacking knowledge what he would do in the target language. This may be partly an unconscious process that can be useful strategy if the sociolinguistic expectations are the same, but of course there are many situations in which

they are not. This is obvious since research in language teaching and learning has proved that rules governing speech events may differ substantially from one language to another. Thus, leading to different rules and norms concerning turn taking, amount of talking, speech act realization and so on. Schmidt and Richards (ibid) gave the example of telephone conversations that have been compared from a cross cultural perspective, showing how transfer of rules and expectations from one language to another may create confusion or misunderstanding. In Japanese, callers rather than answerers generally speak first on the telephone. In France, the fact that telephone calls are generally regarded as impositions on answerers may account for the fact that there are restrictions on caller behaviour which do not hold in English speaking countries. In Egypt, there is an expectation that many calls will result in wrong numbers and callers frequently demand to know the identity of answerers; this is seen as rude to foreigners resident in Egypt, who often conclude that there are no rules at all for 'polite' telephone behaviour in the country.

Accordingly, Schmidt and Richard (ibid) identified three main dimensions on which transfer may operate:

- ***Differences in Opening or Closing Formulae for Speech Events.*** Speech event in a given language may have differing opening or closing formulae, which when transferred to the target language lead to incongruence. For example, with regard to meal talk, French begin with 'bon appétit,' which when transferred to English as 'good eating' or 'good appetite' appears unusual. Greetings in most languages speech communities may include questions about the addressee's health, e.g., 'how are you?' in English, Hindi, Spanish, French, and many other languages, such questions are ritualistic and need not be answered sincerely. In English, 'how are you' is often not answered at all. In Arabic, on the other hand, the question must be answered and in almost all contexts the only appropriate answer is the ritual response formulae

‘Ilhamdu Li lah,’ (meaning praise to God). In Thai, however, the unmarked greeting form is ‘pajnaj?’ meaning (where are you going). Transfer of unmarked formulas could well lead to English speakers judging Thai to be too curious about the others’ whereabouts, while Thai may wonder why English speakers are so concerned about health problems.

- ***Formulae Used to Realize Speech Act Have Different Meanings in Two Languages.*** A common transferable formula may exist, but with quite different meaning in the native compared to the target language. In German or Indonesian, an offer is declined with the equivalent of ‘thank you,’ but accepted with ‘thank you’ in English, which causes confusion to their interlocutors, if native speakers of English, who usually respond with ‘do you mean thank you or no thank you?.’ Similarly, a native speaker of English may be understood as declining an offer by an Indonesian when responding with ‘thank you’.
- ***Formulae which are realizations of the same communicative or politeness strategy but which are only parallel and not identical in form and use may cause particular difficulty.*** A general strategy of negative politeness is to try to minimize the imposition on the hearer. In English, this can be done by using such expressions as ‘just’, or ‘a little’, (e.g. ‘I just want to ask you a little favour ’), or a ‘second’, or ‘minute’ for ‘a few minutes’ (e.g. ‘I’ll be with you in just a second’). Exactly the same strategy and similar (but not identical) linguistic realizations are involved in the Arab’s or Persians’ or Indians’ or Mexicans’ use of such sentences as ‘this will be ready tomorrow’ meaning ‘in few days’. However, the native speakers of English generally will take ‘tomorrow’ in the literal sense, will be angry when the goods are not provided on time, and will make generalizations about the character and the sense of time of the people of this culture.

- *Different social conventions associated with realizations of speech acts; two main dimensions can be considered in this type of transfer.*

- Appropriateness of topic: here we are concerned with what, for example, can one request in one language compared with another. Which requests can safely be declined? What can be denied or disagreed with and how safely can one transfer such choices across languages? What topics can one ask about on a first encounter with a stranger; (1). With equal status. (2).of higher status (3). Of lower status (4). Of the same sex (5). Of a different sex etc.

Thus, common annoying questions from Asians on first encounters such as ‘are you married? How old are you? What is your salary? The Arabic questions how much did it cost? Such questions violate culturally specific speech act conventions in English.

- Degrees of directness of realizations of a speech act: particular speech acts such as refusals may be expressed differently in two languages. For example, in Japanese refusals are communicated indirectly. Persuading in some cultures is done through speech acts like the promise of a bribe, a threat of complaint to higher official, flattery, or overstating the case. Transference of routines from one culture to another may lead to interpretation that the speaker is aggressive, impolite, and uncouth.

3.4. Generalization

It refers to the extension of something known (rule) in the second or foreign language to a new context generally to inappropriate contexts. With regard to speech act generalization, it is concerned with:

- ***Opening and Closing Sentences for Speech Events.*** Greeting formulae may be generalized to speech events where they are not appropriate. The following exchange between a non-native speaker and a colleague on encountering him in the corridor illustrates this point:

Non-native speaker: how do you do?

Native speaker: oh hi

The phrase how do you do has been extended beyond its boundaries in English i.e., a greeting said on a first encounter in formal- semiformal situation to become a generalized greeting said on encountering friends. The appropriate greeting is of course how are you? Leave taking formulae may also be generalized to speech events where they are not appropriate.

- ***Speech Act Routine Generalized to Inappropriate Context.*** Some errors made by EFL learners are a result of a routine appropriate to a particular speech act, being a routine appropriate to a different type of speech act where it is not appropriate. For example, a yes/no question which functions as a request for information can be answered with yes/no plus verb repetition. Do you have a car? Yes, I do. A request, however, cannot be answered in the same way; can you pass me the milk? Yes, I can.

ESL and EFL learners have difficulties with phrases such as excuse me and I'm sorry, a typical mistake is to use these for inappropriate speech acts, as in the following example where the non-native speaker declines an invitation to a movie,

Excuse me, I'd like to go but I don't have time.

4. Teaching Speech Acts

4.1. *Overview and Definition of Speech Acts*

Speech act theory is usually attributed to the English philosopher J.L. Austin (1898-1951), whose ideas were presented in his lectures which were published posthumously as 'how to do things with words' in 1962. These ideas were refined by his pupil, the American philosopher John R. Searle who was considered later as the central tenet of speech act theory. Speech acts are one essential element to develop sociolinguistic competence as they play an important role in effective communication.

According to Schmidt and Richards (1980), speech act theory has to do with the functions and uses of the language. Hence, in the broadest sense, speech acts are all the acts speakers perform through speaking, all the things they do when they speak. Using more precise words, Cohen (1996) provides one brief definition as 'a functional unit in communication' p.334. This underlies the idea that linguistic utterances carry a communicative force leading to perform acts.

4.2. *Categories of Speech Acts*

According to Yule (1996), the action performed by producing an utterance will consist of three related acts:

- a. ***Locutionary Meaning.*** Refers to the production of a meaningful linguistic expression, which is the literal meaning.
- b. ***Illocutionary Meaning.*** Refers to the action intended to be performed by a speaker in uttering a linguistic expression, by virtue of conventional force associated with it, either explicitly or implicitly. In other words, it refers to the fact that when we say something, we usually say it with some purpose in mind. An illocutionary act

refers to the type of function the speaker intends to fulfil, or the action the speaker intends to accomplish in the course of producing an utterance; it is also an act defined within a system of social conventions. Examples of illocutionary acts include accusing, apologizing, blaming, ordering, refusing, swearing, and thanking. These functions are also referred to as the ‘illocutionary force’ of the utterance. Actually, the term ‘speech act’ in its narrow sense is often taken to refer exclusively to illocutionary acts.

It is important to mention that the same linguistic expression can be used to carry out a wide variety of different speech acts, so that the same locutionary act can count as having different illocutionary forces in different contexts. Depending on the circumstances, one may utter, for instance, if someone says ‘the gun is loaded’ to make a threat, to issue a warning, or to give explanation.

- c. ***Perlocutionary Meaning.*** Concerns the effect an utterance may have on the addressee. Technically speaking, a perlocution is the act by which the illocution produces a certain effect in or exerts a certain influence on the audience. In other words, a perlocutionary act represents a consequence of speaking, whether intentional or not.

The functions attributed to utterances have been studied by many linguists such as (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969; Schmidt and Richards, 1980; Cohen, 1996; Yule, 1996). These linguists have made an effort to assign functions to speech acts according to a set of categories. Accordingly, speech acts have been classified into the following five categories:

- Representatives (assertions, claims, and reports): are those types of speech acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition and thus carry a truth value. They express the speaker’s belief. In this type of speech acts, the

speaker represents the world as he or she believes it is e.g., the Berlin Wall came down in 1989.

- Directives (suggestions, requests, commands, advice, order, and questions): are those kinds of speech acts that represent attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something. They express the speaker's desire or wish for the addressee to do something. In using a directive, the speaker intends to elicit some future action on the part of the addressee. e.g., put the cake in the oven.
- Commissives (promises, threats, offers, pledges, and refusals): are those kinds of speech acts that commit the speaker to some future action. They express the speaker's intention to do something. E.g., I'll never buy you another computer game.
- Expressives (apology, complaint, thanks, blame, congratulation, complement, and praising): are speech acts that express a psychological attitude or state of the speaker such as joy, sorrow, and likes or dislikes. E.g. well done, Elizabeth!
- Declarative (decree, declaration, officially opening, declaring a war, firing from employment, excommunicating or nominating a candidate): are those kinds of speech acts that affect immediate changes in some current state of affairs. Because they tend to rely on elaborate extra linguistic institutions for their successful performance. They may be called institutionalized performatives. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker brings about changes in the world; that is, he or she affects a correspondence between the propositional content and the world. E.g. I object, your honour.

According to Schmidt and Richards (1980), although the majority of speech acts fall in the five categories mentioned above, there are some speech acts which are outside these

taxonomies. Examples of these speech acts are greetings and farewells, in addition to refusals of requests.

4.3. Activities for Teaching Speech Acts

In fact, research in second and foreign language teaching has shown that teaching speech acts promotes pragmatic/sociolinguistic competence development and helps learners to develop communicative competence. One study conducted by Olshtain and Cohen (1990) with EFL advanced learners about apologizing. The learners were pre-tested and after a series of explicit instruction about apology speech act in English, they were post-tested to determine what was learned. The findings were promising and significant development was noticed. Other studies such as (Dunham, 1992; King and Silver, 1993) also showed that teaching speech acts helped learners acquire pragmatic competence (Cohen, 1996 p.412). Accordingly, teaching speech acts should be an important component of any language teaching program that aims to form students who are communicatively competent.

By reviewing the literature of language teaching, various techniques and activities have been suggested to develop effective speech act instructions to EFL learners. Judd(1999, p.154) has grouped techniques for teaching speech acts and developing sociolinguistic awareness into three broad categories:

4.3.1.Cognitive –awareness Raising Activities. They are designed to make learners consciously aware of differences between the native and the target language speech act as most of these differences go unnoticed by learners unless they are directly addressed. To raise students' awareness, two techniques are employed: presentation of research findings on speech acts; and a student –discovery procedure based on students' obtaining information through observations, questionnaires, and interviews. Generally, the teacher

presents the target speech act and explains to the students how the speech acts manifest themselves in the foreign language. Detailed information is provided by the teacher on the participants, their status, the situations, and speech events that occurring. For example, simply to state that one way of apologizing is by saying 'I'm sorry' or 'excuse me' does not capture the intricacy of when to apologize, to whom, to what extent. Another cognitive technique is to have students acting as amateur investigators who gather their own examples of speech acts. Students can observe and record naturally occurring data, administer questionnaires, or conduct interviews. This technique provides both the students and the teacher with realistic speech act information from the real environment.

4.3.2. *Receptive Skill Development.* In this technique the students are exposed to the target speech acts for two main reasons: first in order to make them recognize it within natural language because speech acts are surrounded by other linguistic features that may affect their use in natural discourse, and EFL learners fail to identify these features as they occur naturally. Second, to change the students' view that there is only one way for a speech act to appear and this form works for all situations. Such technique begins by presenting the target speech act within natural discourse, not in isolation, and having the students recognize it. Students have to identify the speech act within the discourse in terms of its linguistic features and to comment on the sociolinguistic environment. For example, the students may listen to this dialogue, as part of studying how to disagree:

Professor A: I think we should continue our study to see if additional factors can be identified.

Professor B: you may be right, but I think we'd better recheck the statistics first.

Students may be asked to identify who disagrees, with whom, what features indicate that there is a disagreement, where the conversation is occurring, and what the

participant relationship is. Students can also be exposed to alternative pieces of discourse and be asked to identify factors affecting differences in the choice of language behaviour. For example, students may listen to another dialogue:

Susan: I really think the concert was awesome

Barbara: well, I don't. I think we got ripped off

And after comparison, the two pieces of disagreement in terms of linguistic differences and also the factors accounting for the differences in style, directness and other features will be highlighted.

4.3.3. Controlled Productive Skills. After being exposed to different speech acts, and being able to recognize and understand them, it is time that students activate their knowledge to produce speech acts. This can be achieved through two major activities:

- a. **Discourse completion tasks:** in this exercise, the teacher provides a language situation and natural linguistic, and the students are asked to fill in the appropriate speech act. For example,

Situation: your friend invites you to her house for the first time.

Friend: why don't you come in?

You: thanks/ (after looking around).....house you have.

(Possible answers: what a great/ wonderful/ beautiful), or

Situation: a colleague at a business meeting makes a point and you disagree.

Colleague: I think we should immediately contact all the parties involved and proceed to market the product directly.

You: well,, but I think we should wait until more tests are in before going on. (possible answers: I see your point/ that's a good point/ maybe we could).

- b. ***Role play activities:*** they are one useful way to help students learn about speech acts. In such activities, the teacher provides the situation including the appropriate sociolinguistic information, and then asks students to act out the situation. The amount of the provided information depends on the students' proficiency level. A variation of the role play is constructive role plays. Here, series of role plays can be presented, with differing sociolinguistic features, and acted out to show how the factors can affect the choice of the speech act. For example, in case of apologies, first the students are asked to apologize to a stranger whom they have accidentally bumped into on the street, then to a friend after coming late for an appointment, and finally, to a professor with whom the students had an appointment to discuss a term paper topic. These contrasting situations help illustrate how different situations affect the form of speech act.
- c. ***Acceptability rating activities:*** this type of task requires the learners to rate various responses on a continuum in terms of acceptability, politeness, directness, etc. For example, in a task of speech perception of acceptability, the students can be presented with a situation followed by a number of possible responses. For example, suppose that one accidentally bumps into an older person in a department store, causing her to drop some packages. Which of the following apologies would be most appropriate?
- (1) 'forgive me, please' (2) 'I'm really sorry' (3) 'are you okay' (4) 'lady, such things happen' (5) 'hey, watch where you're going'

If the students choose item 1, it may be a translation from their native language. If they choose item 3 or 4, they may not see the event as an infraction. If students choose item 2, they would be considered to have some grasp of what is appropriate in this instance (Cohen; 1996 p. 313)

Teaching speech acts seems to be a challenging task especially for non-native teachers in foreign language settings for many reasons namely the difficulty to make assertions about how native speakers say a given speech act in a particular situation. Cohen (1996, p.313) suggests a set of useful techniques for planning and implementation of lessons on speech acts, in addition to clarification to the roles of teachers and students. Accordingly, the role of the teacher is to obtain information on how native speakers perform certain speech acts, such as requesting, complaining, and apologizing. These information can be obtained from authentic textbooks and other sources such as observing speech acts as they occur naturally. On the other hand, learners have to notice similarities and difference between the way that native speakers perform certain speech acts, learners are given the chance to compare the same speech act in a variety of contexts, and carefully considering the similarities and differences. As far as the techniques are concerned, Cohen (1996) has arranged them in the following five steps:

1. **Diagnostic assessment:** is often the first step which helps the teacher determining the students' level of awareness of speech acts in general and of the particular speech act to be taught. Such assessments can be done orally or in writing through several production activities such as discourse completions tasks, and acceptability rating activities. The results obtained from these assessment measures are helpful as they make it easier for the teacher to plan teaching goals and procedures.
2. **Model dialogues:** these are a useful way to present students with examples of speech act in use. These dialogues should be short and natural. At the first stage, the students listen and identify the speech act(s) of concern. Then they are given the dialogues without the information concerning the particular situations, and they must guess whether the people speaking know each other, if they are of the same age, and other

social factors. These discussions can be done in groups, and helps to raise the students awareness to sociocultural factors that affect communication.

3. ***The evaluation of the situation:*** in order to reinforce the learners' awareness of factors affecting the choice of the semantic formula. In this activity, the students are given, for example, a set of complaint or apology situations, and they have to decide in pairs or small groups, whether the violation requiring the complaint or apology is mild or severe, whether the offender needs to intensify the complaint or apology, whether the hearer is likely to accept or provide a remedy.
4. ***Role plays activities for practicing the use of speech acts.*** It is important to provide the learners with information about the participants as well as the situation. For example, in complaint situation, the students may receive a card or see a video clip of a situation in which one role is that of a neighbour who is having a party and playing loud music late at night, and the other is that of the person in the next apartment who needs to get to sleep because s/he must take an exam next morning. The learners provide the details of the violation and then act out the dialogue.
5. ***Feedback and discussion:*** are useful activities for speech act teaching because students need to talk about their perceptions, expectations, and awareness of similarities and differences between speech act behaviour in the target language and in their first language and culture. Such feedback relating to role plays, or further discussion with a larger group of learners help them become more aware of speech act and recognize areas of negative transfer where communication failure may occur.

Cohen (1996) concludes that whatever technique is used in teaching speech acts, there are some points that should not be forgotten at all. These points are summarized as follows:

“it is always necessary to specify the situation (e.g. student making request for a professor, patron complaining to waiter), and to indicate the social factors involved (age, sex, social class and occupation, roles in the interaction, status of the participants) and then match the situation and the social factor with the most common realizations of the speech act.” P.313

4.4. Speech Acts and Culture

As aforementioned, speech acts are related to the functions of language. In its illocutionary meaning the speech act goes beyond the semantic meaning of the syntactic structure. It is strongly related to the sociocultural rules of its speech community. According to Cohen (1996, p.388), the production of a speech act depends on the sociocultural abilities as well as the sociolinguistic abilities. The former referring to the ability of choosing the appropriate speech act strategy to the culture involved, the age and sex of the speakers, their social class, and occupation, and their roles and status in the interaction. The latter referring to the ability of selecting appropriate linguistic forms in order to express the particular speech act (e.g. expression of regret in an apology, specification of the objective of a request, etc.). The sociolinguistic ability is related to the speaker's mastery of language forms used to realize the speech act such as differences between forms like 'sorry' vs. 'excuse me', 'really sorry', and the formality vs. informality of the language.

However, what makes speech act production a complex one especially for foreign language learners is the fact that the process of selecting the sociocultural appropriate strategy and the appropriate sociolinguistic strategy is conditioned by the social, cultural, situational and personal factors that remain relative and vary from one culture to the other. Hence, speech acts can seriously offend people if not presented according to the proper formulae and in the proper circumstances

Schmidt and Richards (1980) pointed out that many speech acts are culture-specific especially institutionalized ones. These particular speech acts have stereotyped formulae and are used in public ceremonies such as the speech act of divorcing in Muslim culture where the utterance of “I hereby divorce you” by a husband to his wife will constitute a divorce, which is impossible in Western cultures.

Although there is an agreement among linguists and philosophers on the most common categories of speech acts existing in different languages, there are still differences in these categories among languages. Cross-cultural studies highlighted that:

1. Some speech acts have no place in some cultures and others are present only in certain cultures.
2. In some situations, pertinent speech acts are carried out differently in different cultures (e.g. while in English, thanks and complaint are usually offered to the host when having a dinner party, in Japanese society, apologies such as ‘I have intruded on you’ is offered by guests.
3. In different cultures and languages, the same speech act may meet with different typical responses. For example, a complement normally generates acceptance/thanking in English, but self-denigration in Chinese and Japanese. The Japanese will never accept a compliment without saying no.
4. The same speech act may differ in its directness/indirectness in different cultures.

Conclusion

After reviewing the literature related to the teaching of sociolinguistic competence in language education, it is quite clear that sociolinguistic competence is as necessary in language learning and teaching as grammatical competence. The realization of speech acts in real-life communication requires more than mere mastery of linguistic forms as they vary from one culture to another. Therefore, students need to be aware of inter-cultural differences in realizing and recognizing speech acts in order to avoid cultural misunderstanding and communication breakdown.

A point worth noting is the difficulty of addressing sociolinguistic competence in EFL settings especially that this competence is directly linked to the native speakers' cultural norms; hence, students would develop this competence by having authentic contact with native speakers. With regard to EFL setting this contact is not always possible particularly as they do not have easy access to native speakers in their real life.

Nonetheless, many classroom frameworks have been presented as an attempt to address this topic for pedagogical implementation. The framework designed by the council of Europe (CEFR, 2001) was found a useful pedagogical tool for the teaching and assessment of sociolinguistic competence; it was thus used as a guide for the present study.

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The Cultural and Intercultural Dimensions of Language Teaching

Introduction

This chapter is mainly devoted to provide a broad understanding of intercultural language learning. The chapter begins with a discussion of link between the three concepts of culture, language and communication, and its implications to language teaching. The second section of the chapter gives an overview of the main cultural models and the different international variables accounting for intercultural communication. The third section investigates the cultural dimension of language education. Accordingly, a brief history of the cultural component in different teaching methods and approaches is reviewed, followed by an account to the shift towards the intercultural perspective in language teaching. A brief discussion of the challenges involved in integrating culture in EFL settings to both learners and teachers is also presented. In addition to that, a review of the model of intercultural communicative competence is presented followed by a discussion of its main components. Furthermore, the issue of implementing intercultural learning activities proposed by many researchers in the field of language teaching is considered. Finally, the chapter offers a discussion of the roles of both teachers and learners within the intercultural framework.

1. The Link between language and Culture and its Implication to Language Teaching

1.1. Towards a Working Definition of Culture in Language Teaching. A working definition for the concept of culture in the present study needs to be determined as the term “culture” is a broad one; it can be used in widely different contexts leading to confusing terminology. In fact, the concept of culture has been approached from multidisciplinary perspectives to the extent that it may not be an exaggeration to say that there are nearly as many definitions of

culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviours and activities (Hinkel, 1999).

One way in which culture has often been understood is as a body of knowledge that people have about a particular society as viewed by Anthropologists, who generally look at culture as a very broad concept (a complex whole), as described by Tylor (1971), in his well-known and classic definition, embracing all aspects of human life that shape the whole way of life of a particular group of people. Culture has a broad meaning that seems to cover and touch all aspects of human life as confirmed by Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler (2003), “Culture is a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals, and lifestyle of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artefacts they produce and the institutions they create.” P.45

Culture is at the heart of any social activity as seen from a sociologist perspective; sociologists argue that culture is the framework to everyday way of life of a particular society, and that shapes its members' behaviour. Culture is the social constructs that evolve within a group, the ways of thinking, feeling, believing, and behaving that are imported to members of a group in the socialization process (Hinkel, 1999, p.3).

From another perspective, culture is referred to as the software of the mind as described in more recent definition provided by Hofstede, (2010), culture for him is, “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. Culture is learned, not innate. It derives from one's social environment rather than from one's genes” p. 6. He maintains the collective feature of culture which he considers as the unwritten rules of the social game. He assimilates the human mind with the computer which needs programming before it can start doing what it is supposed to do. Culture then represents the program i.e., the software. Once programmed, it is very difficult to change.

As a matter of fact, coming out with a workable definition for culture, as far as foreign language education is concerned, is a necessity for the present study. Broadly speaking, two main aspects of culture are highlighted in the literature related to language: one is referred to as “high culture” which is synonymous with knowledge of literature and art; and the other as “small c culture” which is synonymous to everyday lifestyle.

Kramersch (2006, p.323) represents this perspective by pointing out that there are two main ways of looking at culture in foreign language education:

A. *Humanistic Concept:* As a humanistic concept, culture is the result of formal instructions acquired in school; it is synonymous with a general knowledge of literature and the arts. Also called ‘big C’ culture, it is the hallmark of the cultivated middle class.

Because it has been instrumental in building the nation-state during the 19th century, ‘big C’ culture, as the national patrimony, has been promoted by the nation state and its institutions, e.g., schools and universities. It is the culture traditionally taught with standard national languages. Teaching about the history, the institutions, the literature and the arts of the target country embeds the target language in the reassuring continuity of a national community that gives it meaning and value. The fact that in the United States, foreign languages curriculum still put a heavy emphasis on the study of literature is a reminder that language study was originally subservient to the interests of literary scholars. In the 1980s, with the advent of communicative language teaching, the humanistic concept of culture gave way to a more pragmatic concept of culture as way of life. But the prestige of big C culture has remained, if only as lieux de mémoire in Internet chatrooms named, for example, Versailles, Madison Avenue, or Piccadilly – cultural icons of symbolic distinction.

B. Sociolinguistic Concept: With the focus on communication and interaction in social contexts, the most relevant concept of culture since the 1980s has been that of ‘little c’ culture, also called ‘small cultures’ (Richards and Schmidt, 2003) of everyday life. It includes the native speakers’ ways of behaving, eating, talking, and dwelling, as well as their customs, beliefs, and values. Research in the 1980s was deeply interested in cross-cultural pragmatics and the sociolinguistic appropriateness of language use in its authentic cultural context. To study the way native speakers used their language for communicative purposes, and teachers were enjoined to teach rules of sociolinguistic use the same way they taught rules of grammatical usage i.e., through modelling and role-playing. Teaching culture has meant teaching the typical, sometimes stereotypical, behaviours, foods, celebrations, and customs of the dominant group or of that group of native speakers that is the most salient to foreign eyes.

The sociolinguistic concept of culture takes on various forms depending on whether the language taught is a foreign, second, or heritage language. In foreign language (FL) classes taught outside of any direct contact with native speakers, culture is mostly of the practical, tourist kind with instructions on how to get things done in the target country. In second language (SL) classes taught in the target country or in native speaker run institutions abroad (e.g., British Council, Alliance Française), culture can also take the form of exposure to debates and issues of relevance to native speakers in the target country, or of discussions about living and working conditions for immigrants. In heritage language (HL) classes taught to native speakers who wish to connect with their ancestral roots, culture is the very *raison d’être* of language teaching. It is, not, however, without presenting major difficulties when the heritage community has either lost much of its original everyday culture (e.g., Native American languages), or when its speakers belong to a community that historically no longer exists (e.g., western Armenian or Yiddish). The teaching of culture in HL classes is very much linked to identity politics.

In an attempt to consider the ways in which culture is presented in language education, Scarino and Liddicoat (2009) put them into two main dimensions where two views contrast each other:

One dimension is the axis of culture as facts or as processes: that is, whether culture is seen as a static body of information about characteristics of a society or as a dynamic system through which a society constructs, represents, enacts and understands itself. The second axis represents the way in which culture is conceived in terms of educational content. It makes a distinction between artefacts and institutions and practices: that is, whether culture is seen in terms of the things produced by a society or as the things said and done by members of a society.

The most static way to approach the teaching of a culture typically emphasises artefacts, institutions and factual knowledge. Both the approach to culture learning and the content itself are static. The most dynamic approach to culture sees learners actively engage with the practices of a cultural group.

The different levels and aspects of culture outlined from these various perspectives show the diversity of accounting for culture in FL education. This provides the possibility for language teachers and learners to stress various dimensions of culture at different levels of language proficiency. However, it is highly important to point out that there should be a balance between the two aspects of culture, the big C and small c. It is also necessary to stress the point that language classes represent a context where not a single culture is addressed as both the target language and culture as well as the learner's own language and culture are simultaneously present and can be simultaneously engaged. Learning to communicate in a foreign language involves developing an awareness of the ways in which culture interrelates with language whenever it is used (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler, 2003).

To sum up, the present research project views culture in terms of intercultural communication, that is as “the ability to enter other cultures and communicate effectively and appropriately, establish and maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of these cultures” (Moran 2001, p. 5). Concepts like “intercultural awareness” and “intercultural communicative competence” are especially important in the present study.

1.3. Appraising Culture in Language and Communication

In fact language, culture, and communication are fundamentally interrelated concepts. As a communication system language is never de-contextualised and abstract; an utterance gains its meaning not simply from the formal properties of the grammar and lexicon that are used to construct it, but from its use by a speaker to a listener at a particular time, and in a particular context, to achieve a particular communicative function. Meaning, therefore, comes from the interrelationship and the interactivity of the utterance with its context (Leddicoat and Scarino, 2009, p.44). This implies the fact that language cannot be separated from its social and cultural contexts; language is social and communicative, not simply structural.

From a theoretical perspective, the relationship between language and culture has been a subject of discussion for many scholars; it has been investigated particularly by anthropological linguists, the most prominent being Sapir, and Whorf, who have paid special attention to the interrelationship existing between language and culture.

Edward Sapir (1884-1939) considered that people’s view of the world is effectively determined by their language. His views offered the foundation to the theory of linguistic relativity introduced in the late 1920’s.

Sapir's student, Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941), offered a wide conception of language in relation to culture, society and the individual. He argued that language organises experience the way people think is strongly affected by their native languages (Corder, 1993).

This view expressed by Sapir and Whorf about the relationship between language and culture is known as "Sapir - Whorf hypothesis"; combines two principles. The first is "linguistic determinism" i.e., language determines the way we think. The second is known as "linguistic relativity", it states that the distinctions encoded in one language are not found in any other language due to cultural differences. Language is a marker of identity; it shapes reality by providing categories and labels that people use to understand and communicate about their world. Each language represents the world in different ways by encoding different categories and concepts in its lexicon and grammar (Leddicoat and Scarino, 2009, p.44)

It is also admitted that the language of the community reflects the culture and serves the needs of that community. Corder (1993) explains the relationship existing between language and culture by the fact that language mediates between the individual and the culture of its community through the process of socialisation; it is through the language of the community that the child acquires the attitudes, values, and ways of behaving that we call its culture.

To approve the way culture is present in the language of its speakers, it is important to mention that the intrinsic relationship of language and culture is reflected both at the semantical and grammatical levels of the language. Savill - Troike (1996) notes, "the vocabulary of a language provides an interesting reflection of the culture of the people who speak it, since it is a catalogue of things of import to a society, an index of the way speakers categorise experience, and often a record of past contacts and

cultural borrowings ” p.360. She illustrates that point when she states that foreign learners of English may quickly memorise colour terms (blue , yellow , and so on), but they are unlikely to learn what psycho aesthetic values English people culture attributes to colours . She further states that the grammar of a language may reveal the way time and space are segmented and organised.

Seen from a communicative perspective, language allows communication between people in a society, and this latter is based on conventional norms that apply to its members. For that very reason, Fantini (1997, p.10) stressed the fact that to fulfil communicative tasks with each other, people make use of the following interrelated systems:

- Linguistic component (sounds, signs, and/or graphemes, forms and grammar of language)
- A paralinguistic component (tone, pitch, volume, speed, and affective aspects)
- An extra linguistic component (nonverbal aspects such as gestures, movements, grimaces)
- When context is considered, a sociolinguistic dimension (a repertoire of style, each appropriate for different situations)

These four overlapping aspects constitute the core components of any individual’s knowledge of his society’s language and which ensures him to carry out communicative events for different contexts.

The fact that communication can never be held out of context implies the necessity of adjusting to that particular situation, and it also conveys information about speakers’ sex, age, social class, place of residence, and often indicates their religion, occupation, and interest Seelye (1997). In other words, since any linguistic communication occurs in context, it must be appropriate to the context in which it is used.

Broughton, et.al (2003) highlighted the significance of context in communication by stating that in the process of communication, every speaker adjusts the way he speaks (or writes) according to the situation he is in, the purpose which motivates him and the relationship between him and the person he is addressing. Certain ways of talking are appropriate for communicating with intimates, other ways for communicating with non-intimates; certain ways of putting things will be understood to convey politeness, others to convey impatience or rudeness or anger.

DeVito (2006) stresses the fact culture influences communications in its verbal as well as non-verbal form. He explains that culture not only influences what to say and how to talk with friends and family in everyday conversations, but also cultural differences exist across communication from the way of using eye contact to the way to develop or dissolve a relationship. Consequently, many cultural differences may prevent understanding as well as develop negative opinions between native and non-native speakers.

As far as language learning is concerned, Barret et al. (2013) stressed the fact that it is cultural identities (i.e., the identities which people construct on the basis of their membership of cultural groups) which are central to the concerns of the intercultural communication because cultural affiliations influence not only how people perceive themselves and their own identities, but also how they perceive others, other groups and other ways of acting, thinking and feeling, and how they perceive the relationships between groups.

Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler (2003) accounted for the importance to consider the role of culture in communication as well as language education in the following statement,

Understanding the nature of the relationship between language and culture is central to the process of learning another language. In actual language use, it is not the case that it is only the forms of language that convey meaning. It is

language in its cultural context that creates meaning: creating and interpreting meaning is done within a cultural framework. In language learning classrooms, learners need to engage with the ways in which context affects what is communicated and how. Both the learner's culture and the culture in which meaning is created or communicated have an influence on the ways in which possible meanings are understood p.18

Accordingly, it is important for foreign language learners to be equipped with the command of English which allows them to express themselves in a much greater variety of contexts and to be aware of such relationship in order to achieve a kind of communicative competence that allows them to avoid putting themselves in any kind of trouble. Bennet (1997), goes further to claim that a fluent fool is someone who speaks a foreign language well but doesn't understand the social and cultural content of that language. According to him, such people are likely to get into all sorts of trouble because both they themselves and other one estimate their ability; therefore, to avoid becoming a 'fluent fool', we need to understand more completely the cultural dimension of language.

2. Implications of Cultural Models to Communication

2.1. Cultural Models. Cultural models underlie the approach developed by some leading anthropologists and international business consultants to study culture. A Cultural model compares the similarities and differences of two or more cultures by using international variables which are presented as categories that organize cultural data (Hoft, 1995). Some of the popular and tested cultural models that are in use today are as follows:

2.1.1. The Iceberg Model. The Iceberg model is a popular model proposed by Edward T. Hall (1976); a well-known anthropologist and intercultural communication consultant. This model is often used by cross-cultural communication consultants, since it provides a useful metaphor for describing the layers of culture and how aware we are of their influence in our lives. The analogy drawn in the Iceberg model is that just as 10 percent of the iceberg is visible above the surface of the water, only 10 percent of the cultural characteristics of a target audience are easily visible to an observer. It follows that just as the remaining 90 percent of an iceberg is below the surface and not visible, the remaining 90 percent of our cultural characteristics are hidden from view and therefore easier to ignore and more difficult to identify and study. The Iceberg model identifies three metaphorical layers of culture, which are illustrated in figure (9)



Figure 7. Hall's Iceberg Model (Hoft, 1995)

Surface: the cultural characteristics at this level are visible, obvious, and easy to research. They include: number, currency, time, and date formats, language and so on.

Unspoken Rules: the cultural characteristics at this level are somewhat obscured. You generally need to identify the context of situation first in order to understand what the unspoken rules are. Examples include business etiquette and protocol.

Unconscious Rules: the cultural characteristics are out of conscious awareness and difficult to study. Examples include nonverbal communication, a sense of time and physical distance, the rate and intensity of speech, and so on.

2.1.2. The Pyramid Model. Geert Hofstede has first introduced this model in his book *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the mind* (1991). In this model, three layers of culture are presented in the form of a Pyramid. The three layers, which are illustrated in figure (8), attempt to show the origin of culture and why it is unique in “human mental programming”

Personality: personality is specific to an individual and is both learned and inherited.

Culture: culture is specific to a group or category of people. It is learned and not inherited “culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from an individual’s personality on the other ... although exactly where the borders lie between human nature and culture, and between culture and personality, is a matter of discussion among social scientists”

Human Nature: human nature is what is common to all human beings. It is universal and it is inherited, not learned. It is passed down through the generations via DNA.

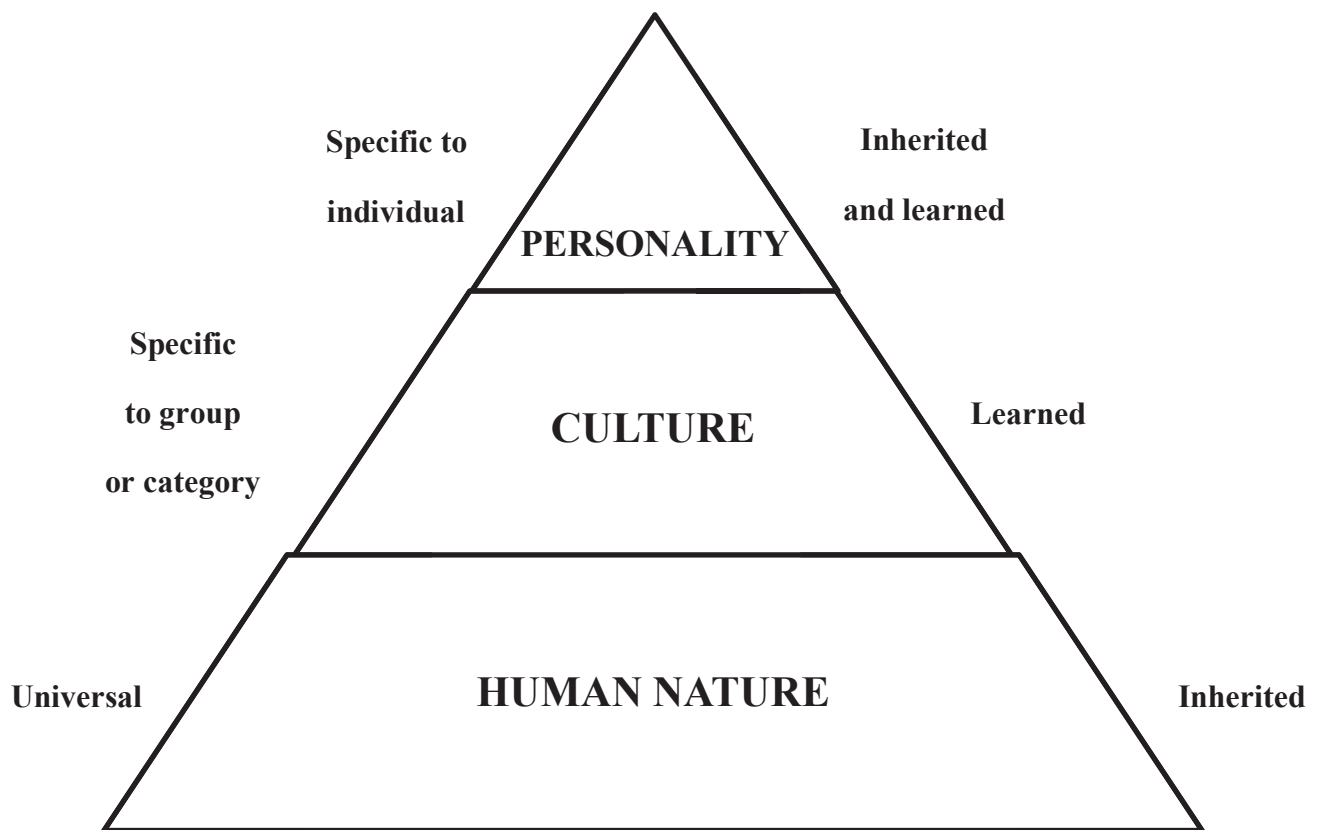


Figure8. The Pyramid Model Three Levels of Uniqueness in Mental Programming (Hofstede, 2010)

2.2. International Variables (Culture Dimension)

As previously stated, a culture models study culture in terms of international variables; these latter can focus on objective, easy-to-research differences like political and economic contexts, or differences in the way to format the time of the day, dates and numbers. International variables can also focus on subjective information, like the value system, behavioural systems, and intellectual systems of one or more cultures. Examples of these more complex international variables include attitudes towards authority and concepts of time and space (Hoft, 1995).

It is quite clear from the above reviewed models that most culture is “below the surface,” buried in unconscious reality. Below is a summary of the most important international variables developed by the most influential authors of the culture models:

2.2.1. Context: High Context VS Low Context. Edward T. Hall (1976) provides useful and important ideas to account for the organisations of cultures and how this can affect communication; his international variables have greatly influenced the study of culture and of how people from different countries tend to respond to different situations. In his idea of context, he refers to the amount and kind of detail people should include while communicating to ensure maximum effectiveness. According to Hall (1976), there are two kinds of contexting, high context and low context. A highly contexted communication is one in which most of the meaning is in the context while very little is in the transmitted message. A low context communication is similar to interacting with a computer-if the information is not explicitly stated, the meaning is distorted. People who know each other over a long period of years will tend to use a high context communication.

Hall created a context square to illustrate communication, the square is depicted in figure (9)

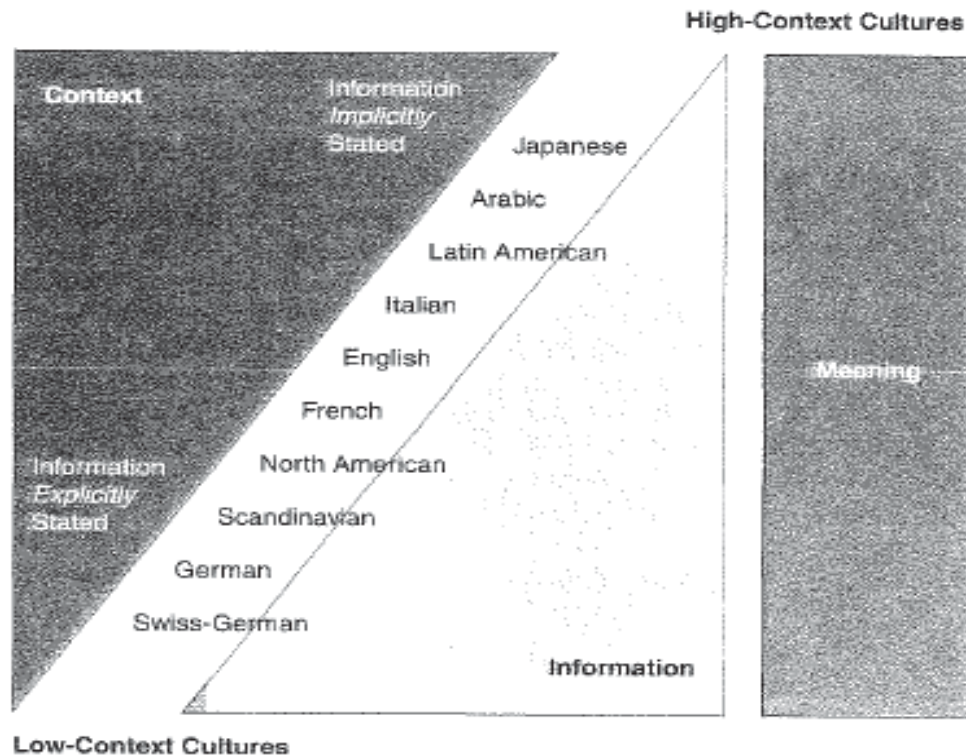


Figure 9. Hall's Context Square: Ranking of Culture (Hofstede, 1980)

First in the continuum of high-context cultures is Japan, where information is implicitly stated. Last in the low-context cultures are the Swiss-Germans for whom the information must be explicitly stated. The French and the British fall in the middle of the continuum while the Arabs fall in roughly at the end just before the Japanese.

2.2.2. Space: All cultures have different senses of space, or invisible boundaries. Hall qualifies these invisible boundaries in the following ways:

Territoriality: this cultural trait includes "ownership" and extends to communicate power. The layout of the floors in an office building in Japan, for example, is very different from the one in the United States. In Japan, it is often difficult to identify who has power and authority based on the layout of a floor or even of a building. The United States, those with power typically have the largest and most lavish offices, which are often located on the top floors of a building.

Personal Space: cultures have different expectations of personal space and therefore have unspoken and unconscious rules about when personal space is violated. Hall cites an example of how in northern Europe you don't touch others, and even brushing the overcoat sleeve of another in passing is enough to warrant an apology.

Multisensory Space: invisible boundaries extend to all five senses. Cultures have unconscious rules about what is too loud and intrusive, for example. In low-context cultures like Germany, a loud conversation is perceived as infringing on another's private space. In high-context cultures, as in Italy, loud conversations are expected to take place and are not perceived as infringing on invisible boundaries.

Unconscious Reactions to Spatial Differences: the distance you keep when having a conversation can influence the response the person has to you and your conversation. For example, if you have a conversation with someone from a culture where maintaining a close physical distance during conversation is expected, and yet you converse at a greater distance than this, you send an unconscious and negative message to the other person

2.2.3. Time: Polychronic VS monochronic: Time is an important and complex international variable in Hall's model of culture. In its simplest form, time, as an international variable, is of two types, polychronic time and monochronic time.

Polychronic time (P. time) is characterised as simultaneous and concurrent. "Many -things-at -once" is the phrase Hall uses to define polychronic time. On the other hand, monochronic time (M. time) is characterised as sequential and linear. (One-thing-at -a-time) is the phrase Hall uses to define monochronic time.

Hall applies these definitions to cultures and speaks about polychronic and monochronic people, which are identified in table (3). Examples of monochronic people include Northern European cultures. Examples of polychronic people include Middle Eastern, Latin American,

and Mediterranean cultures. (Notice the geography at work here; warmer climates tend to be polychronic, while colder or erratic climates tend to be monochronic. Successful communication with these cultures is often attributed to a respect for their concept of time. Cultures are not exclusively polychronic or monochronic; the Japanese, for example, are polychronic in their dealings with other people, but monochronic in their approach to official business dealings. The relationship with a client and a rigid schedule for accomplishing goals are closely entwined. The following table gives a summary of the characteristic of polychronic and monochronic people:

Monochronic People	Polychronic People
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do one thing at a time - Concentrate on the job - View time commitment as critical - Are low –context and need information - Are committed to the job - Adhere strictly to plans - Emphasize promptness - Are accustomed to short-term relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do many things at one - are highly distractible and subject to interruptions - view time commitments as objectives - are high-context and already have information - are committed to the people and human relationships - change plans often and easily - base promptness on the importance of and significance of the relationship - have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationship

Table 3. Monochronic People VS Polychronic People (Hoft, 1995)

In addition to the above international variables proposed by Edward T. Hall, Hofstede (2010) proposes the following variables:

2.2.4. Power Distance: High Power-Distance VS Low Power Distance: Power distance measures how subordinates (employees, staff members) respond to power and authority (leaders, managers), which Hofstede summarises as how subordinates value (respond to and perceive) inequality. What he found is that high-power distances tend to exist in Latin American countries, France, Spain, and in Asia and Africa. In these countries, subordinates tend to be afraid of their bosses; bosses tend not to confer with their subordinates, and bosses tend to be paternalistic or autocratic. Low-power distance countries include the United States, Great Britain, much of the rest of Europe, (Sweden, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark), and New Zealand. In these countries, subordinates are more likely to challenge bosses and bosses tend to use a consultative management style.

2.2.5. Collectivism VS Individualism: These polar values measure the ties among individuals in society. In individualistic cultures, people are expected to look out for themselves; there is little social cohesion. Examples of countries that value individualism include the United States, France, Germany, South Africa, and Canada. Some values include personal time, freedom, and challenge.

In collectivist cultures, people develop strong personal and protective ties and are also expected to provide unquestioning loyalty to the group during their lifetimes and sometimes beyond. Examples of cultures that value collectivism include Japan, Middle Eastern countries, Costa Rica, Mexico, Korea, and Greece. Some values include training, physical conditions, and use of skills.

2.2.6. Femininity VS Masculinity: Hofstede found that men’s work goals are markedly different from women’s work goals, and that these differences could be expressed on a masculine pole and a feminine pole, which summarised in table (3)

Masculine index	Feminine index
Have a high opportunity to earning	Have a good working relationship with your direct supervisor
Get the recognition you deserve	Work with people who cooperate well with one another
Have opportunity for advancement to higher-level jobs	Live in an area desirable to you and to your family
Have challenging work to do to derive a sense of accomplishment	Have the security that you will be able to work for your company as long as you want to

Table 4. Masculine Pole VS Feminine Pole (Hofstede, 2010)

Examples of countries where the feminine index is more valued include Sweden, Spain, Korea, France, Denmark, Finland, and Indonesia. The masculine index is more valued in the United States, Japan, Mexico, Great Britain, Honk Kong, Italy, Germany, and New Zealand.

Uncertainty Avoidance: strong uncertainty avoidance VS weak uncertainty avoidance: This international variable focuses on “the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations”. It is an attempt to plot on a continuum people’s response to unknown situations. Hofstede characterises uncertainty avoidance as “what is different, is dangerous.” Uncertainty is measured using the units strong and weak.

Strong uncertainty avoidance indicates that a culture tends to perceive unknown situations as threatening and that people, therefore, tend to avoid such situations. Weak uncertainty

avoidance indicates that a culture is less threatened by unknown situations. The following table summarises some of the characteristics that Hofstede lists for cultures measuring low on the uncertainty avoidance scale and for cultures that measure high on the uncertainty avoidance scale:

Strong uncertainty avoidance	Weak uncertainty avoidance
<p>Uncertainty is a continuous threat that must be fought.</p> <p>There is acceptance of familiar risks, but fear of ambiguous situations and of unfamiliar risks.</p> <p>What is different is dangerous</p> <p>Students are comfortable with structured learning situations and concerned with the right answers.</p> <p>Teachers are expected to have all the answers.</p> <p>Precision comes naturally.</p> <p>There is suppression of deviant ideas and behaviour</p> <p>There is a resistance to innovation</p> <p>Motivation is by security and esteem and belongingness</p>	<p>Uncertainty is a normal feature of life</p> <p>People feel comfortable with ambiguous situations and unfamiliar risks</p> <p>What is different is curious</p> <p>Students are comfortable with open-ended learning situations and concerned with good discussions</p> <p>Teachers may say ‘I don’t know’</p> <p>Precision has to be learned</p> <p>There is tolerance of deviant and innovative ideas</p> <p>Motivations is by achievement and esteem and belongingness</p>

Table 5. Strong uncertainty avoidance VS Weak uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2010)

Examples of countries where this is so include Latin American countries, Japan, and South Korea. Examples of countries where this is so include the Netherlands, Germany, the US, Singapore, Honk Kong and Great Britain.

3. The Cultural Dimension in Foreign Language Teaching

3.1. The Cultural Component in Language Teaching Methodologies

The fact that language and culture are interrelated concepts when dealing with language teaching is widely recognised in the different language teaching methodologies. The cultural component has been always present in language classes as confirmed by many scholars in the field (see Kramsch, 1993; Byram and Fleming, 1998). However, it is also admitted that cultural instruction has been treated from various perspectives depending mainly on factors such as the theoretical framework underlying the approach used and objective of teaching the language. Consequently, this had been reflected in the different ways culture is presented and taught to students.

To start with, the grammar translation method was the main language teaching methodology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The main objective of learning languages at that time is to gain access to the so-called ‘great work’ of literature, and the only academically respectable languages taught were Latin and Greek “dead languages”, which were studied mainly so that learners could read and translate the works of literature in these languages (Kramsch, 1996). Therefore, the cultural aspect of the target language within the grammar translation methodology emphasized the selection and presentation of cultural achievements which is referred to as big/capital ‘C’ culture, dealing with art, literature, and great events in the history of the target country. Topics such as the Pilgrim Fathers or the Boston Tea Party may be included (Neuner, 1997). Aspects related to the ways Romans and

Greeks actually spoke or thought i.e. small 'c' culture are rarely dealt with within the grammar translation framework.

In the second half of the twentieth century, other methods of language teaching together with a different approach to culture started to develop. The audio lingual method marked a shift to a more pragmatic conceptualization of foreign language teaching which viewed culture as a way of life in an attempt to meet the communicative needs of ordinary learners (Larsen Freeman, 2000). As a result, there was a shift from topics concentrating on "Big C" culture to aspects of everyday life "little c" culture presented in typical situations often dealing with the encounters of tourists with the native speakers of the target country. Within this framework, culture was often taught through situations and dialogues in the foreign country, and is subordinated to the memorisation of useful phrases and the reproduction of typical social roles. This may include topics such as shopping in the supermarket, asking for directions, ordering in the restaurant, etc. (Neuner, 1997 p. 20). This view to culture was also backed by the growth of social sciences, especially anthropology and sociology, which resulted in more understanding of culture and communication as Steele (1989, p.155) confirms, "communication begun to take centre stage, along with spoken rather than written language, and what is often termed as 'small c' culture" (quoted in Lessard Clouston, 1997).

However, culture was separated from language learning and taught on courses known as "background studies, area studies, British life and institutions, civilisation" (Byram, 1998 p. 2; Kramsh, 1993, 8). As commonly known, Algerian universities offer courses such as British /American literature and civilisation. According to Kramsch (1993), within these courses, the teaching of culture was considered to be supplementary to language teaching, not part of it. Culture was seen as mere information conveyed by the language. Teachers' guidelines often refer to teaching the four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) plus culture.

3.2. The Intercultural Perspective in Language Teaching

Probably the major innovation that language teaching methodology had known in the last quarter of the twentieth century was the notion of communicative competence. This latter, as seen in the previous chapter, implies that teaching language means more than the linguistic component alone, but also the sociolinguistic component to be able to produce appropriate speech to the context of communication. Therefore, within the communicative approach framework, the role of culture grew increasingly as confirmed by Canale and Swain (1980), “a more natural integration of language and claimed culture takes place through a more communicative approach than through a more grammatically based approach” p. 31

As a result of this growth in researching language and culture, the importance of culture in foreign language education increased. Particularly, the link between culture and language in communicative language teaching emphasised the pragmatic and semantic functions expressed through language in everyday ways of speaking and acting (Kramsch, 1996, p. 4). Cultural topics within a communicative syllabus concentrate on speech acts of everyday communication, and the use of authentic texts reflecting everyday life experiences of ordinary people; how they work, how they live, spend their leisure time, travel, etc. (Neuner, 1997).

However, the ‘communicative turn’ in FL teaching has in fact been criticized for emphasizing speech act and discourse competence rather than cultural competence. According to Fantini (1997), the role of culture within communicative methodology framework remained theoretical; in practice, however, linguistic considerations often continue to dominate the major portion of time in classroom teaching. Nowadays, one of the main aims of foreign language teaching is to develop learners’ ability to “communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries” (CEFRL, 2001, p. 3). As a consequence, the prevailing perspective in foreign language teaching is the one advocating the increasing awareness that a

language can rarely be taught without including the culture of the target community, and that learners' communicative competence can not be enhanced without taking into account its' speakers' culture which may enhance or inhibit communication as confirmed by most researchers in the field (see Byram, 1997; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Kramsch, 1993; Kramsch, 1996; Seelye, 1997; Fantini, 1997; Cortazzi and Jinn, 1999)

The recent works in language education, mentioned above, played a prominent role in better understanding the place of culture in the language classroom regarding the objectives, materials, approaches, etc. They approached the teaching of language and culture as integrated, and advocated "intercultural mediation". Hence, the native culture of the learner is also advocated as highlighted by Byram and Morgan (1994, p. 43), "learners are committed to their culture and to deny any part of it is to deny something within their own being" (cited in Hinkel, 1999, p.7). According to Risager (1998), in the current language teaching perspective, there is a great interest in the 'intercultural' perspective, and in both similarities and dissimilarities between the target countries and the learners' country.

However, this view is not wholly adopted in all language classrooms; Lazar et al. (2007) point out that language learning and teacher education still largely focus on the acquisition of grammatical and lexical competence though it is acknowledged that fluency alone is not sufficient to communicate successfully with people from other cultures.

3.3. From Cultural to Intercultural Perspective in Language Teaching

Bearing in mind the aforementioned points of view, it is quite obvious that one of the main aims of foreign language education today is to develop the learners' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations and contexts. In order to achieve this aim, learners' mere mastery of linguistic competence does not ensure successful communication; recent research findings show that within the contemporary models of CC, the cultural component is stressed; however, it is worth noting that an intercultural perspective in language learning should be maintained. Leddicoat and Scarino (2009) highlight that there is another way to think about culture in language teaching: the distinction between a cultural perspective and an intercultural perspective. This 'cultural' pole implies the development of knowledge about culture which remains external to the learner and is not intended to confront or transform the learner's existing identity, practices, values, attitudes, beliefs and worldview. The 'intercultural' pole implies the transformational engagement of the learner in the act of learning. p.21

Cortazzi and Jin (1999, p. 197) emphasized the importance of language learners' awareness about differing cultural frameworks, both their own and those of others; otherwise they will use their own cultural system to interpret target language messages whose intended meaning may well be predicted on quite different assumptions. This implies that students need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone; they have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behaviour.

Peterson and Coltran (2003) represent a similar line of thought when pointing out that, language teachers should teach the cultural features reflected in language explicitly in relation to the linguistic form to be studied in order to make students aware of such features. They

further explain that, for instance, a teacher of English could help students understand socially appropriate communication, such as making requests that show respect; for example, 'hey you, come here' may be a linguistically correct request, but it not a culturally appropriate way for a student to address a teacher in this way. Therefore, students will master a language only when they learn both its linguistic and cultural norms.

However, it is highly important to maintain the view that in the language classroom, it is not just a question of learners developing knowledge about another culture but of learners coming to understand themselves in relation to some other culture. This is why there is a contemporary emphasis on 'intercultural' Learning. To be intercultural involves much more than just knowing about another culture: it involves learning to understand how one's own culture shapes perceptions of oneself, of the world, and of our relationship with others. Learners need to become familiar with how they can personally engage with linguistic and cultural diversity (Leddicoat and Scarino, 2009, p.21)

Not far from the abovementioned views, Lazar et, al., (2003) pointed out seven learning objectives for developing intercultural communicative competence. These learning objectives are as follows:

- To reflect on the students' own culturally determined values, behaviour and ways of thinking;
- To raise awareness of intercultural differences in values, behaviour and ways of thinking;
- To raise awareness of culturally determined aspects of language use;
- To practise observation and interpretation skills as well as critical thinking;
- To develop and adopt multiple perspectives;
- To negotiate common ground;

- To develop empathy, open-mindedness and respect for otherness.

Camilleri (2002) summarized what intercultural learning involves in the following statement,

learners realize that their culturally -bound ways of thinking and behaving are not universally shared. They learn different ways of responding to the environment, from very simple comportment such as expressing gratitude to a friend to more complex social interaction such as developing and maintaining an intimate relationship with a member of a different cultural and linguistic community p. 48.

In sum, the importance of emphasizing intercultural learning is at the heart of any methodology aiming to develop learners' communicative competence. Having previously decided objectives for the teaching of culture is highly stressed as it is always for the benefit of teachers, learners and the teaching learning process as a whole. Leddicat and Scarino (2009) suggested a set of interconnected activities aiming to develop intercultural capabilities. These activities involve:

- noticing cultural similarities and differences as they are made evident through language
- comparing what one has noticed about another language and culture with what one already knows about other languages and cultures
- reflecting on what one's experience of linguistic and cultural diversity means for oneself: how one reacts to diversity, how one thinks about diversity, how one feels about diversity and how one will find ways of engaging constructively with diversity

- interacting on the basis of one's learning and experiences of diversity in order to create personal meanings about one's experiences, communicate those meanings, explore those meanings and reshape them in response to others. P.23

3.4. Challenges and Limits of Classroom Instructions

From a theoretical point of view, it might be easy to list all the desired objectives of language instruction, but one should also consider the enormous demands placed upon teachers to meet the expectations put upon them as a result of changes in the objectives of language teaching on the practical side. The transmission of cultural information by means of language teaching is an issue of wide interest among theorists and practitioners in the field of foreign language teaching, it is also open to discussion from many perspectives at the same time. In fact, this concern has generated some debates and controversy as to question the effectiveness of classroom instruction; particularly, in terms of content and assessment.

According to Kramsch (1996), “the intercultural approach to teaching foreign languages and to writing foreign language textbooks is not without raising some controversy among politicians and library scholars alike, who feel that language teachers should be responsible for teaching “only language” not culture nor politics. Instead culture cannot and should be taught in classrooms, they say, but rather, learners should be sent abroad to experience the culture” p.6. Such a statement seems to make language teaching and learning more challenging for both teachers and learners

In compliance to that, it is necessary to mention that incorporating culture learning activities for language education programmes means much more than just adding them to a lesson plan. According to Damen (1987:216) “Because [culture learning] is so deeply concerned with norms, values, beliefs, worldviews, and other aspects of subjective

culture, it is a type of learning subject to the action of many variables and often accompanied by feelings of discomfort and even shock ” (quoted in Ryffel, 1997, p.28).

This statement confirms the fact that culture is so bound to the members of its community, which makes the perception of the different norms difficult or in some cases impossible from an outside perspective. This may discourage language teachers to deal with culture related topics and make it uncomfortable area to teach.

Another area of difficulty pertaining to culture teaching is in terms of assessment; for Byram (1997) most difficult of all is to assess whether students have changed their attitudes, become more tolerant of differences and the unfamiliar. Whereas for example with vocabulary or grammar, we can easily check whether the input has been effective, with culture we are primary dealing with awareness of context that is not open to a quantitative type of assessment. Yet, it seems on the surface not difficult to assess learners' acquisition of information, there can be tests of facts about the target country, but the real difficulty for the teachers is to decide which facts are important, and which country's culture should be dealt with . Byram (1991) suggests that the goal of culture instruction cannot be to adopt another identity which might entail a rejection of one's own, instead teachers should develop intercultural understanding (Lantof, 1999,p.29). According to Lazar (2001), in the foreign language context, teachers should not be surprised when tolerance and understanding is not the immediate results of the students learning a foreign culture. Since sometimes the reverse happens: learners experience ethnocentrism , culture shock , or see the other culture in a stereotyped way which are the result of evaluative overgeneralisations.

While teaching culture, teachers are supposed to deal with three levels of instruction: the instructional level, the communicative level and the attitudinal level which are essential and equally important. At the instructional level, the aim is to give information about the target cultures and the learners' relation to them. It is necessary not only to refer to the countries where the target language is spoken but to include also other cultures. At the communicative level the aim is the acquisition of the practical skills needed for intercultural communication. At the attitudinal level, the aim is to develop attitudes such as open-mindedness, respect and tolerance and to avoid stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.

As matter of fact, the challenge to deal with everything related to culture in the classroom may lead learners as well as teachers to go beyond the classroom as the process of learning can never be fully achieved through merely classroom instruction. Leddicot and Scarino (2009) confirmed this reality by stating that that the ability to learn beyond the classroom is probably more important than any particular information that students may learn about another culture during their schooling. This is because it is impossible to teach *all* of any culture because cultures are variable and diverse. As languages educators, we know that what we can teach in the classroom is inevitably only a partial picture of a language and culture p.22.

4. Framework for Implementing Intercultural Language Learning

4.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence as an Objective of Language Teaching

To take up from the previous chapters, the history of language teaching reflects the continuous development of understanding of the nature of language from a theoretical point of view in one hand, and attempts to adapt these developments to the language classroom by integrating new methods and objectives for language education on the other hand. These developments are the result of a change in the paradigm overlapping linguistic theory as a whole, and led to a shift in the overall aim of foreign language instruction.

Being influenced by structuralist mode of thinking, which was dominant during the 1930's and 1960's, language teaching was prevailed by approaches advocating mastery of linguistic competence which was considered as the overall aim of foreign language instruction. However, the shift of paradigm during the 1970's and 1980's towards the sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspective entailed a shift of focus from linguistic competence to communicative competence as an overall aim of language learning.

The realization that students' mere mastery of grammatical rules does not ensure them the ability to communicate in real-life contexts led to a consideration of communicative and sociolinguistic competences in FL instruction as a major aim of the teaching/learning process. Accordingly, the notion of cultural competence was also reconsidered, because interpreting the communicative meaning of linguistic behaviour requires knowing the cultural meaning of the context in which it occurs (Saville-Troike, 1996). The relevance of cultural instruction in developing learners' CC is highly important as in teaching English for communication and neglecting culture, learners may be given access to an impoverished means of communication effective for survival and for routine transactions, but lacking the cultural reference that makes it fully meaningful for native speakers (Pulverness, 2003).

Byram (2002) argues that language teaching should have as one of its principal aims the development of learners' ability to communicate with those who speak another language, and to introduce learners to a different way of life, the cultural products of speaker of another language. He further explains that the notion of CC lacks the factors of culture since it is based on the native speaker model as he noted, "the problem with the notion of communicative competence is that it is based on a description of how native speakers speak to each other. It does not take into account what is required for successful communication between people of different cultural origins, who have different social identities" (Byram, 1997, p. 94)

Fantini (1997) joins Byram by indicating that even language educators who commonly express interest in culture as part of the language experience, they often treat culture as supplemental or incidental to the real task. He also mentions that even when culture is considered, the intercultural dimension is neglected.

Consequently, a model of intercultural communicative competence, as proposed and developed in the literature, is considered as the major aim of language instruction in the sense that it accounts for a better understanding of the foreign culture as well as the learners' own culture.

4.2. A Comprehensive Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence

The efforts made by eminent researchers in the fields of language education and intercultural communication (IC) have resulted in a shared goal, that is the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). A concept made popular by Byram (1997), and his colleagues (Byram and Zarate, 1997; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Fantini et al., 1997). This concept was developed as an extension of the concept of communicative competence, and represented a guiding concept for overall aim of FL education (Hall, 2002).

In the context of foreign language education, intercultural competence is linked to communicative competence in a foreign language. Intercultural competence has been described by Meyer (1991) as, “the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures” (quoted in Cortazzi and Jin 1999, p. 198). It has also been referred to as: “the ability to enter other cultures and communicate effectively and appropriately, establish and maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of these cultures” (Moran, 2001:5 quoted in Lazar 2003: 41). Accordingly, the linguistic, discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic competences presented in the different models of CC as its main components

were extended to include intercultural competence (IC); they all form Intercultural Communicative Competence.

Barret et.al (2013) provide a detailed definition for intercultural communicative competence based on the main aspects that it entails, “Intercultural competence is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action which enables one, either singly or together with others, to:

- understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself
- respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people
- establish positive and constructive relationships with such people
- understand oneself and one’s own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural ‘difference’ p.7

Byram and Zarate (1997) emphasized that the outcomes of teaching languages should be the ability to see how different cultures relate to each other in terms of differences and similarities, and to act as mediators between them. Learners should be able to reflect on their own cultural identity, question taken for granted values and beliefs and compare their own culture with that of the interlocutors’ (Byram, 1998, p.4). Comparison forms a basis for understanding and helps learners to perceive and cope with differences; therefore, the learners’ own culture is highly valued and treated on equal bases since any comparison should be built on the learners’ background knowledge.

The ability to take a double perspective by bringing into contact two sets of values, beliefs and behaviours allows a person to be an “intercultural speaker”. A concept that is defined by Byram and Fleming (1998, p. 9) as: “someone who has a knowledge of one or, preferably, more cultures and social identities and has a capacity to discover and relate to new people from other contexts for which they have not been prepared”. By holding such a belief, Byram, Zarate, and their colleagues have reoriented language teaching from the prevailing assumption that the aim should be to imitate the “the native speaker”. This latter has been regarded as the authority and ultimate objective of instruction that will enable the learner to function effectively in contexts where other languages and cultures exist.

CEFRL (2001) maintains that language learners should not be regarded as individuals who abandon their social identity in favour of another, but as social agents whose whole personality and sense of identity are respected and enriched through the experience of otherness in language and culture.

Following the above arguments, ICC has become a key concept in directing language teaching objectives leading to a better understanding of the role of culture in language education. Accordingly, CC as the goal of language teaching is extended to become ICC. This latter can be achieved by adding the intercultural dimension to the teaching of sociolinguistic competence.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned views, one can conclude that the past fifty years have seen a number of successive developments leading to significant shifts of interest concerning objectives of language teaching, as well as the ways these objectives can be implemented in the language classroom in a context that is described as a “cultural turn”. The figure below shows the continuous development regarding aims of foreign language

education as far as the different competences suggested by foreign language teaching are concerned:

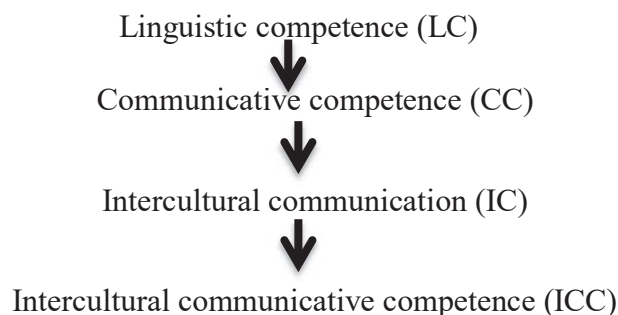


Figure 10: The Changing Aim of language Education

As mentioned previously, the works of Byram played a prominent role in introducing and elaborating the concept of ICC; his conceptual framework is worth mentioning as it clarifies well what this concept entails and how its different components work together to form the comprehensive model of ICC. According to Byram (2002, p. 7), the intercultural speaker possesses four competences: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural; this latter overlaps three main components presented as: attitudes, knowledge, and skills complemented by the values one holds because of one's belonging to a social group, these values are part of one's social identity. These components are also referred to as the five savois. Byram (1997) proposed a comprehensive model that overlaps all these components as illustrated in figure (11)

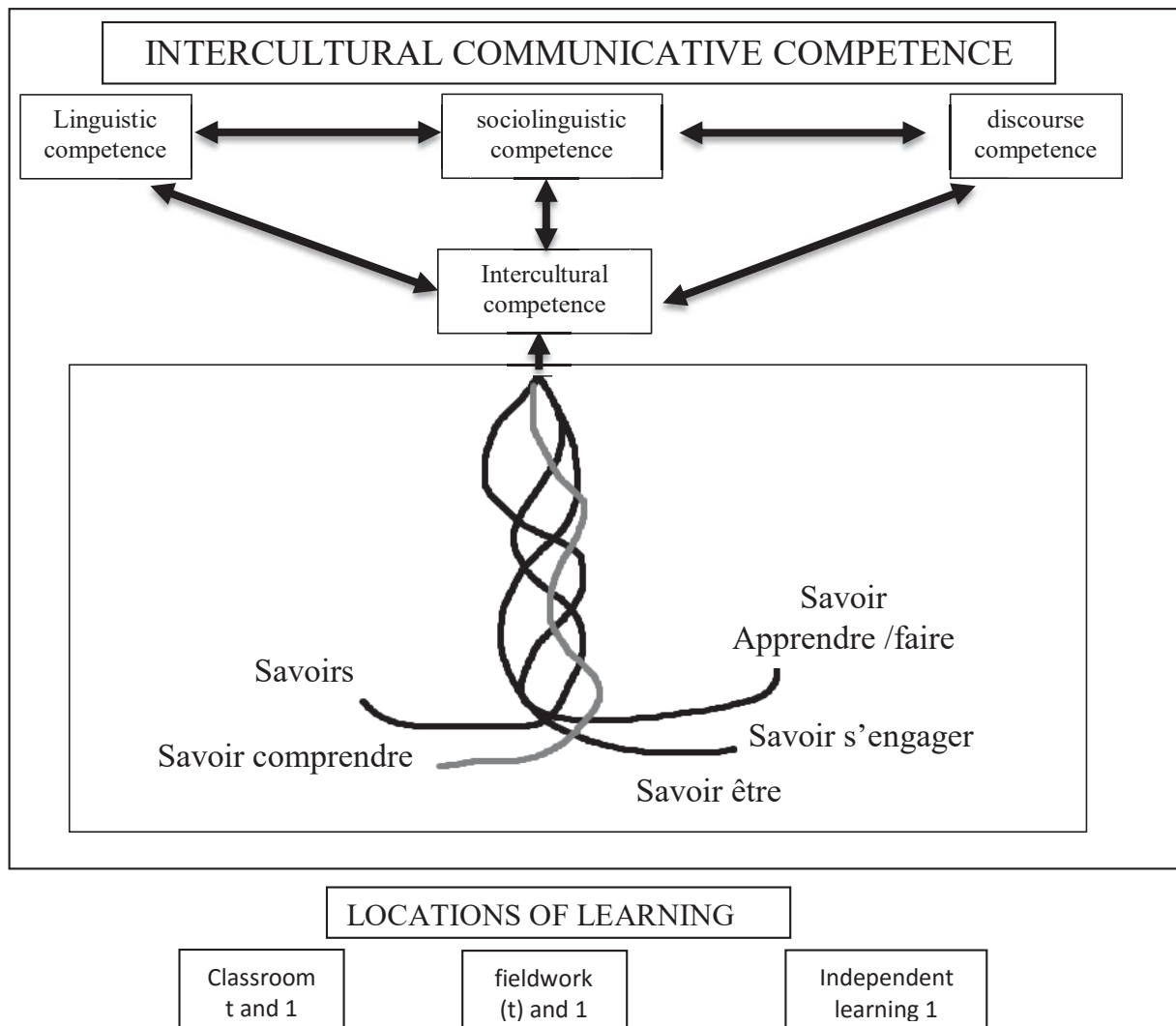


Figure 11. Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram, 1997)

- **Knowledge (Savoirs):** constitutes the knowledge dimension of the conceptual framework. It has been defined as ‘knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one’s own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor’s country on the one hand, and similar knowledge of the processes and interaction at individual and societal levels, on the other hand’ (Byram, 1997:35). Apart from culture specific knowledge, the interculturally competent person also needs to acquire a certain amount of culture-general knowledge, which will allow him/her to deal with a large diversity of foreign cultures (Sercu, 2005)

- **Attitudes (*Savoir être*):** this refers to a general disposition that is characterised by ‘the capacity and willingness to abandon ethnocentric attitudes and perceptions and the ability to establish and maintain a relationship between one’s own and the foreign culture (Byram, 1997 p.54). It is characterised by curiosity and openness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about one's own . This means a willingness to relativize one's own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from an outsider's perspective; who has a different set of values, beliefs and behaviours. This can be called the ability to 'decentre '.
- **Skills:** this component overlaps three subcategories (*savoirs*) namely:
 - **Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*):** this refers to ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own.
 - **Skills of Discovery and Interaction (*savoir apprendre / faire*):** this refers to refers to the capacity to learn cultures and assign meaning to cultural phenomena in an independent way .
 - **Critical Cultural Awareness (*savoir s'engager*):** this refers to refer to a general disposition that is characterised by ‘a critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one’s own culture.

Accordingly, Byram (1997) maintains that the role of the teacher is to develop skills, attitudes and awareness of values just as much as to develop a knowledge of a particular culture or country. Hence, the 'best' teacher is neither native nor the non-native speaker, but the person who can help students to acquire interest in and curiosity about otherness, and people 's perspectives. He concludes:

developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching involves recognizing that the aims are: to give learners intercultural competence as well as linguistic competence; to prepare them for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviours; and to help them to see that such interaction is an enriching experience p.9.

On the basis of the above figure, it is quite clear that ICC is a comprehensive concept that consists of a number of interrelated elements. And since not all objectives can be attained within classroom work, Byram places intercultural learning in different contexts: the classroom, fieldwork (pedagogically structured visits abroad), and independent learning which places the responsibility on the learners for reflection on their learning experiences and personal growth.

4.4. A Process Approach for Implementing Intercultural Learning Activities

On the basis of the aforementioned points of view in this chapter, one can assume that developing learners' communicative competence requires the vital component of cultural knowledge. Hence, it has become obvious that the study of language cannot be divorced from the study of culture (Fantini et al., 1997). However, implementing culture learning activities in language classrooms means much more than just adding them to a lesson plan; to maintain the focus on culture/intercultural dimensions of language teaching, it is necessary to adopt a process approach framework that would help to design course syllabi, and even the individual lesson plan.

Accordingly, Ryffel (1997, p.28) points out that culture learning activities can be used more effectively by paying attention to two important areas: structure and strategies. She further explains that concerning structure; well and carefully structured activities are

important to ensure that they are more than just fun (or meaningless games), and that meaningful learning occurs. As far as strategies are concerned, these are important to decrease the learners' discomfort, reduce anxiety, and provide safe environment by more closely conforming to what students expect as appropriate classroom behaviour. Ryffel (1997) identifies two main concerns regarding the successful implementation of culture learning activities based on the careful choice of the activity, as well as its adaptation to the given context.

First, the teachers' choice of the activity should be based on the following considerations:

1. Logistics: that is time constraints, space limitations, and material required
2. Aims and nature: for example, the objectives, the topic, the risk level, and the balance with other types of activities planned.
3. Students: their language level, stage of cultural adjustment, preferred learning style(s), expectations for the classroom, and level of trust among the group and with the teacher.
4. The teacher: the relationship with the students, comfort level with culture learning activities, and experience.

Second, to adapt the activity to the context in which it is used, the following criteria should be used:

1. Instructions: the teacher should be clear and consistent when giving instructions; by using clear language, providing examples, s/he can also ask students to restate their understanding of direction to ensure that they have understood.
2. Pacing: the teacher should avoid anxiety by proceeding slowly in a step by step manner. He may allow extra time to introduce new procedures.

3. Teacher participation or intervention: teachers should balance between the students' needs for directions and help with their desire to be the source of their own learning. Students' silence may not be always a sign of lack of understanding; they may need more time to formulate responses to the task.
4. Grouping: in case of group work, students may be allowed to form their groups themselves to ensure working comfortably.
5. Students' participation: to reduce students' anxiety of failure or exposure in some tasks, the teacher can design small group work rather than having an individual be responsible for a role or task. A volunteer group reporter can help take burden off others unprepared for this task.
6. Learning preferences: teachers should vary the tasks so that all style preferences are acknowledged; he can alternate group work with individual work, s/he can also mix oral, reading, and writing tasks.
7. Discussion: teachers can promote discussions using open-ended questions rather than yes/no questions (except in groups with very low levels of English proficiency)
8. Students as source of information: teachers should elicit students' information in order to help them realize that they are also valid sources of information.
9. Teacher as source of information: teachers should maintain credibility and acceptance as a source of information, by offering short lectures, guidance, and input, and then adjust teacher-students roles gradually over time, introducing more participatory type activities.

Fantini (1997, pp. 42-43) maintains that a process approach is needed when dealing with culture related activities in EFL classes; he offers a helpful process framework made up of seven interrelated steps that serve as a guide in the selection and implementation of activities,

materials, and techniques, it also helps to ensure that all aspects of IC are addressed. The process approach is presented as follows:

A Process Approach Framework:

A Syllabus and/or Lesson Schema

- I. Presentation of the New Material
 - 1. A full abbreviated dialogue
 - 2. A two-line exchange (question/answer)
 - 3. Manipulation of Cuisenaire rods (à la silent way)
 - 4.
 - 5.

- II. Practice in Context
 - 1. Pattern practice (all types of drills)
 - 2. Controlled narrative and questions
 - 3. Structured conversation or other activity
 - 4.
 - 5.

- III. Grammar Exploration
 - 1. Grammatical explanation of rules
 - 2. Students figure out rules (à la Counselling Language Learning)
 - 3. Use of grammar references books
 - 4.
 - 5.

IV. Transposition (or Use)

1. Unstructured or free conversation
2. manipulation of visual aids, objects, and so on
3. Free narratives
4. Games
5.

V. Sociolinguistic Exploration

1. Research aspects of language use
2. Simulations and role play (with varying social factors such as age, sex, role)
3. Practice interactional strategies (e.g. greeting, commands, interrupting)
4.

VI. Target Culture Exploration

1. Cultural operations (e.g., making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich)
2. Panel and/or group discussion of cultural themes (e.g., family unit, time concepts, respect systems, humour, personal hygiene)
3. Viewing video segments of events in the target culture
4.
5.

VII. Intercultural Exploration

1. Comparing and contrasting target culture and students' own culture(s)
2. Exploring cultural contact and entry
3. Exploring causes for cultural shock/stress
4.

To sum up, it is quite clear from the above discussion that intercultural language learning does not only consist of the transmission of cultural facts; it basically involves developing with learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture. It involves the learner in the ongoing development of his/her ability to communicate, to understand communication within one's own and across languages and cultures, and to develop the capability for ongoing reflection and learning about languages and cultures (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler, 2003). Intercultural communication is also significant in the sense that it can be a source of personal development and enrichment. Scarett et al. (2013) confirm the fact that intercultural encounters and communication can always be in the benefit of the learner,

intercultural competence does not involve abandoning one's own cultural identifications or affiliations, nor does it require individuals to adopt the cultural practices, beliefs, discourses or values of other cultures. Intercultural competence instead involves being open to, curious about and interested in people who have other cultural affiliations, and the ability to understand and interpret their practices, beliefs, discourses and values. Intercultural competence enables people to interact and cooperate effectively and appropriately in situations where cultural 'otherness' and 'difference' are salient. It also enables people to act as 'mediators' among people of different cultures, and to interpret and explain different perspectives p.12

4.5. Teachers' and Learners' Roles

4.5.1. Teachers' Role

In the literature regarding intercultural communication in FL education, teachers are challenged to develop new competences in order to meet the new demands and to adjust the available means to achieve the prescribed objectives for their classes. In his discussion of the requirement for the intercultural dimension of FL teaching, Sercu (2005, p.2) maintains that:

Foreign language education is, by definition, intercultural. Bringing a foreign language to the classroom means connecting learners to a world that is culturally different from their own. Therefore, all foreign language educators are now expected to exploit this potential and promote the acquisition of intercultural competence in their learners. The objective of language learning is no longer defined in terms of the acquisition of communicative competence in a foreign language. Teachers are now required to teach intercultural communicative competence.

Basically, within the current perspective in language teaching, teachers are supposed to change their traditional foreign-culture approach in favour of the intercultural approach.

As far as knowledge and competences are concerned, FL teachers are asked to master aspects of culture related to the target language, which is not quite easy. According to Byram and Moran (1996, p. 64) FL teachers are expected to study the whole way of life of at least one country where the foreign language is spoken natively, it might seem that they are being required to become historians, sociologists, economists, political scientists and so on. Furthermore, there arises the question as to whether they are expected to study the society and culture according to the traditions of those disciplines as they are established within the society itself. Or should they be taking an external perspective, drawing on the different disciplinary traditions of their own society? Or should they be making an explicitly

comparative study? This discussion highlights the main challenges that arise when dealing with teaching culture taken from the teachers' perspectives.

However, when it comes to promoting learners' intercultural competence, teachers' knowledge about the target culture is not enough to ensure that their learners have acquired the necessary skills for intercultural communication. It is widely recognized in the literature related to ICC that mere transmission of information about the target culture does not necessarily lead FL learners towards achieving intercultural competence in the target language. In that context, Sercu (2005, p. 155) confirmed that:

“The demands made on teachers' knowledge go well beyond a sufficient degree of familiarity with the foreign culture. Teachers should also know their own culture well and possess culture general knowledge that can help them to explain similarities and differences between cultures to learners. Teachers should also know both what stereotypes pupils have and how to address these in the foreign language classroom”.

Accordingly, to fulfil the requirements of language teaching with an intercultural dimension, teachers are asked to play the role of a mediator, which can be developed through helping learners to compare and contrast their own culture and the target one, in addition to helping them acquire interest in the target culture, as well as an awareness of themselves and their own cultures seen from other people's perspectives. Byram (2002, p.15) offers practical instructions that can be helpful for every wishing to incorporate the intercultural dimension in his language classes. According to him, teachers can design activities based on discussions, but the important thing is to encourage comparative analysis with learners' own culture. He continues to explain that the methods of doing this can include simulations and role-play which will activate their background knowledge about other countries and cultures: learners act the role of visitors to their own country and meet with other learners acting as themselves and not as the stereotypes that the visitors are expecting. This kind of experiential learning is

powerful in developing self-awareness as well as perceptions of other countries. The teacher can encourage learners to become more observant in terms of various variables of cultural behaviour. Learners are sure to emerge out of these experiences much better prepared to communicate with other intercultural speakers, tolerate the differences and handle everyday situations they are likely to encounter in a foreign country.

It is clear from the above discussion that incorporating the cultural dimension as an integral part of foreign language teaching raises the question of the numerous demands put on the teachers' competences and performance. These challenges can be met through the cooperation of both teachers' professional development and the teachers' education and in-service-training institutions as well. It is the role of institutions responsible for teachers' education to provide suitable theoretical support and practical means to cope with these difficulties and to help teachers to face these implications.

Byram and Moran (1996, p.73) emphasised the importance of teachers' education in promoting the intercultural dimension of language teaching, they point out that:

Teacher education, in both its academic and its pedagogic dimensions, needs to provide opportunities for learning which is both cognitive and experiential. Foreign language teachers are among the most important mediators. They need to experience a foreign culture as well as analyse it. They need to reflect upon their experience as well as carry out comparative analysis of their own and the foreign culture. And they need to understand the implications of cultural learning, both cognitive and affective, for their practices in the classroom as well as for their teaching 'in the field'. The responsibilities of the foreign language teacher for introducing learners, whether young or old, to learning which challenges and modifies their perspective on the world and their cultural identity as members of a given social and national group, are enormous.

4.5.2. Learners' Attitudes and Role

Attitude, in broad terms, refers to an underlying psychological predisposition to act or evaluate behaviour in a certain way; it is linked to a person's values and beliefs and promotes or discourages the choices made in all types of activity, whether academic or informal (McGroarty, 1996, p.5). Students' attitudes have usually been considered to be an essential component of language learning pedagogy. Over the years, research in language education demonstrated consistent relationships between language attitudes, motivation and second-language achievement. Consequently, it quite approved that there is a close relationship between students' attitude and language as well as culture learning.

Methcel and Myles (2004, p. 26) recognized this match between attitudes and achievement by stating that social psychologists have long been interested in the idea that the attitudes of the learner towards the target language, its speakers and the learning context, may all play some part in explaining success or lack of it. This can be explained in terms of success or failure because attitude, being negative and positive, is believed to have a strong impact on students' success in language learning. According to McGroarty (1996) success is related with attitudes that have to be accompanied with adequate action to accomplish the purpose; thus, positive attitudes about language and language learning may be as much the result of success as the cause. However, students with positive general attitudes may not be particularly successful if these attitudes are not linked with effective strategies that enable them to take advantage of instructional opportunities presented to them.

As far as culture learning is concerned, Byram (1997: 34) in his discussion of attitudes towards acquiring cultural knowledge stated that learners' attitude is one important element in ICC and it is regarded as pre-condition for successful interaction. He further explained that attitude means "the attitude of curiosity and openness, of readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours".

Seliger (1988, p. 30) also suggests that success and positive attitudes to the target language and culture are interdependent: “Since language is used in social exchanges, the feelings, attitudes, and motivations of learners in relation to the target language itself, to the speakers of the language, and to the culture will affect how learners respond to the input to which they are exposed. In other words, these affective variables will determine the rate and degree of second language learning” (cited in Byram and Moran, 1994, p.6)

Within the intercultural paradigm of language teaching, Byram (2002) stressed the fact that it is not the purpose of teaching to try to change learners’ values, but to make them explicit and conscious in any evaluative response to others.

Conclusion

The current chapter has focussed on the issue of cultural and intercultural dimensions of foreign language education. The discussion included accounting for different views concerning incorporating culture in EFL classes with regard to the controversy over the conceptualisation of culture in language education and the interrelationship between language learning and culture. In addition to the debate over the effectiveness of classroom instruction when taking into consideration the limits and challenges put on both teachers and learners, particularly, in EFL settings.

Throughout this chapter, the need for learners to develop not only their linguistic and communicative competence, but also their intercultural communicative competence is highly recommended. It is also argued that the aim of foreign language education should be to give the learners opportunity to develop cultural knowledge, competence and awareness in such a way that might lead to a better understanding of the foreign culture, as well as the learners' own culture. Teachers are supposed to encourage their students to raise awareness for cultural context of day-to-day conversational conventions such as ways of greeting, farewells, forms of address, thanking or making requests, and giving or receiving complements. Besides, it is worth noting that integrating culture in EFL classes should be in context where learners should not be regarded as individuals who abandon their social identity in favour of another, but as social agents whose whole personality and sense of identity are respected and enriched through the experience of otherness in language and culture.

The shift of focus from a linguistic to a communicative, and then to an intercultural paradigm in foreign language education will contribute to teachers' professional development and will enhance their awareness of interdependent relationship between language and culture leading to incorporating culture as an integral part of English language teaching curricula. It also helps to develop teachers' intercultural perspective that may have an impact on the on their teaching methodologies and syllabus design. Nonetheless, this shift remains a challenge that both EFL teachers and learners have to deal with to meet the needs and goals of language education in this globalized world.

Part Two: Field Work

Chapter V: Data Presentation and Analysis of the Findings for Research Stage one

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V. Data Presentation and Analysis of the Findings for Research Stage one

Introduction

The current chapter is concerned with the presentation and analysis of the data collected in stage one of the research. This stage aims to explore both teachers' and students' current practices and views about the issue under investigation. Such an investigation was necessary to provide a basis from which a teaching programme incorporating culture based activities to help students' develop their sociolinguistic competence and to improve their intercultural communicative competence as a whole can be implemented. This chapter is organized into three sections; the first section presents teachers' views on intercultural learning and the development of sociolinguistic competence. The second section accounts for the students' attitudes and amount of use and exposure to English language and culture both inside and outside the classroom prior to the next stage of the research. The final section draws implications from the analysis of data and the discussion of the findings for research stage two.

1. Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

1.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The review of the related literature in the previous chapters provided a basis for the researcher to construct the questionnaire. This latter was designed for EFL teachers currently working at the department of English at Khenchela University during the academic year of 2014/2015. As indicated earlier, the main aim of the teachers' questionnaire is to explore their views on the importance of teaching sociolinguistic competence, their view on intercultural communication, and to get insight into the difficulties confronted in presenting such content to their students. The significance of this step for the research procedure lies essentially in the fact that teachers' views have a considerable role in the process of language learning since much of the students' knowledge, and competence in the target language rely heavily on what they receive in the classroom. Therefore, this step can be very informative, and can provide guidance regarding the ways of introducing culture in EFL classes efficiently.

The role of the modern language teacher and the responsibility for building "intercultural communication" into the curriculum is a recurrent element in the intercultural debate. It is often argued by many authors such as Liddicoat and Scarino (2009) that no amount of preparation could ever ensure a successful classroom performance, and that individual attitudes and personality are the key factors in success or failure; in fact, they maintain that the way in which teachers understand culture, just as the way they understand language, affects the way they teach culture in language learning. What is learned in the language classroom, and what students can learn, results from the teachers' understandings.

This questionnaire yielded two types of data about the respondents:

Factual questions (open-ended): mainly used in section one, which are asked to find out certain facts about the teachers' background information (for example, their gender, educational background, teaching experience, the amount of time spent in an English speaking country, and finally, whether they had participated in any kind of training devoted to intercultural communication).

Attitudinal questions (closed-ended): used in section two, which aims to find out teachers' views and opinions regarding the importance attributed to the teaching of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural learning in their current classroom practices. This section is made up of thirteen statements; for each statement, the respondents are asked to choose from a four point Likert scale:

4: strongly agree 3: agree 2: disagree 1: strongly disagree (see appendix B).

The choice of a closed ended questionnaire as the means of collecting data could be said to have many advantages; it allows the researcher to collect a lot of data in a relatively short period of time, it is also easy to be distribute and does not take a lot of time and effort for the respondent to complete. As a consequence, the return rate is much higher compared to open-ended questionnaires. Besides, the results obtained from the closed-ended questionnaires are easier to be interpreted compared to some other techniques (e.g., interviews and observations). According to Dornyei (2003), the most professional questionnaires are primarily made up of 'closed ended' items, which do not require the respondents to produce any free writing; instead, respondents are to choose one of the given alternatives (regardless of whether their preferred answer is among them). The selected response options can, then, easily be numerically coded and entered into a computer database.

1.2. Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The results of teachers' questionnaire are presented in tables that include both statistical frequency and weighed percentage for each statement in the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics of the data are also presented in graph forms.

It is worth noting that the statements of the questionnaire are meant to investigate teachers' perceptions of the importance of intercultural learning and sociolinguistic competence in terms of the following aspects:

- Teachers' perceptions of language and culture teaching objectives
- Teachers' perceptions of the importance of intercultural learning
- Teachers' perceptions of the importance of sociolinguistic competence in language teaching
- Teachers' perceptions of the difficulties involved when dealing with this component
- Teachers' views on the role of pre-service and in-service training in terms of developing their intercultural communicative competence.

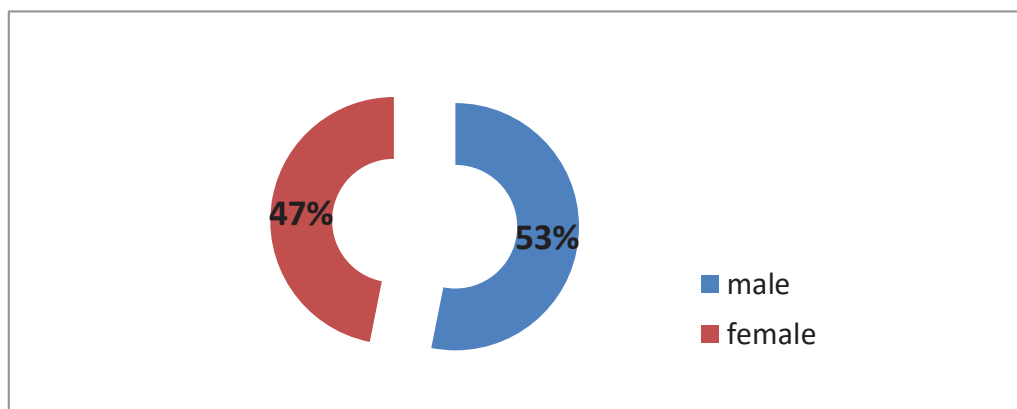
1.2.1. Teachers' Background Information

Variables		Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	17	53,12
	female	15	46,87
Work experience	2-5	16	50.00
	5-10	07	21.87
	10-15	04	12.50
	15-30	05	15.62
Highest degree	PhD	01	3.12
	Magister	13	40.62
	MA	12	37.50
	BA	06	18.75
Travel experience	Foreign country	11	34.37
	English speaking country	07	21.87
	Never been foreign country	14	43.75
Intercultural communication training experience	Yes	00	00.00
	No	32	100
Benefits from the experience	00	00	00

Table 6. Teachers' background information

- As displayed in table (6) above, teachers' background information indicates that the sample is pretty balanced with respect to gender distribution; the percentage of male teachers is (53.12%) which exceeds the female one (46.87%) by only two teachers.

Figure 12. Teachers' Gender Distribution



2. The teachers' teaching experience ranges from 2 to 30 years; hereunder, (15.62%) of teachers had experience between 15 to 30 years, (12.50%) of them have from 10 to 15 years, and (21.87%) of teachers have a teaching experience of 5 to 10 years, whereas (50%) had an experience that ranges from 2-5 years. This latter indicates that half of the population is not that experienced one.

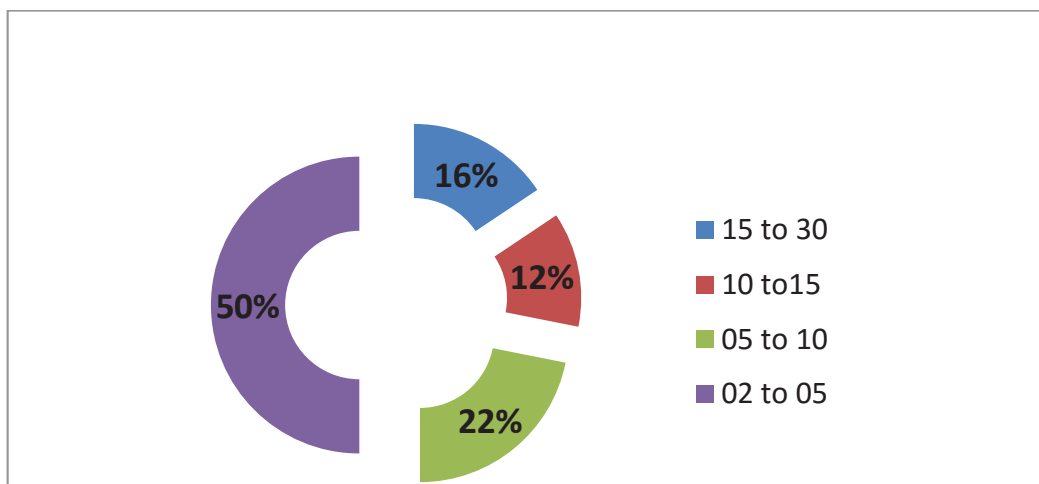


Figure 13. Teachers' Work Experience

3. Out of 32 teachers, only one teacher holds a Ph.D. degree, (40.62%) hold a magister degree and work as permanent teachers at the English department while the remaining 18/32 are actually part time teachers who either hold a master degree (37.50%), or BA degree (18.75%). This is a disappointing point since part time teachers with BA degree represent a considerable percentage. Actually, this does not meet the requirements that university teachers must at least hold a magister degree; therefore, it is important to stress the fact that the amount of education that teachers had received has a great and direct impact on the quality of his teaching experience.

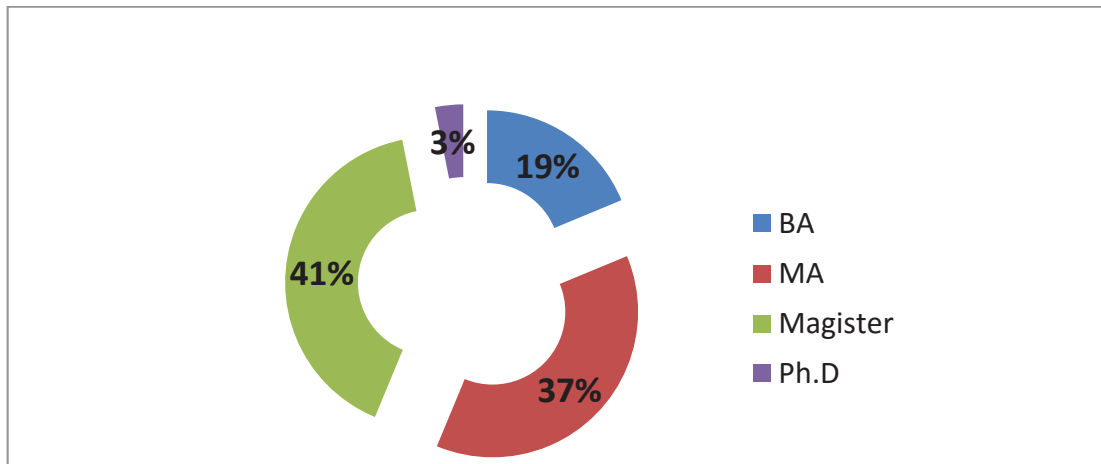


Figure 14. Teachers' Highest Degree

- Concerning travelling experience, teachers' responses indicate that only (34.37%) had been abroad, among whom only (21.87%) had the opportunity to be in an English speaking country. On the other hand, (44%) of teachers had never been abroad; hence they may not have experienced a real intercultural encounter.

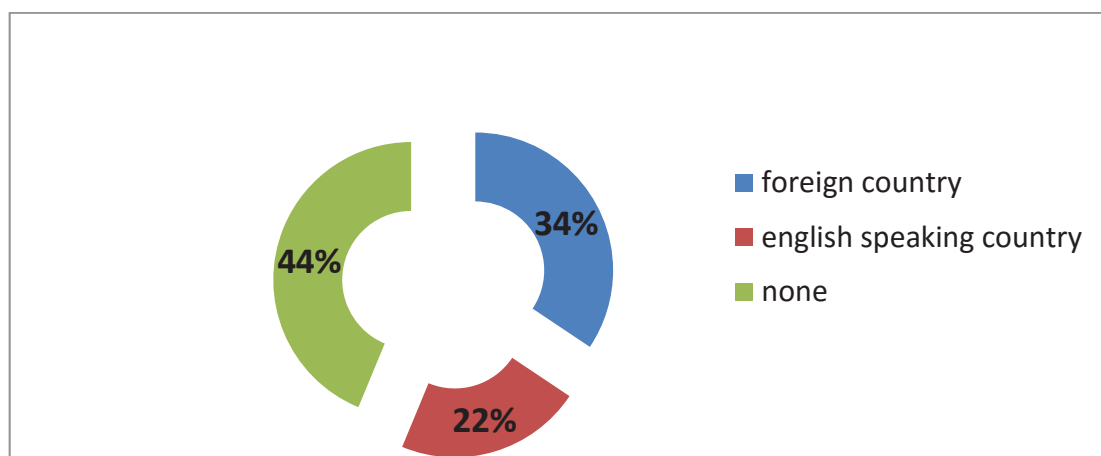


Figure 15. Teachers' Travel Abroad Experience

- As indicated by the figure 16, no teachers have ever benefited or participated in any kind of program or special training incorporating intercultural communication, which reflects a severe shortage with respect to in-service training, intended to develop teachers' competences.

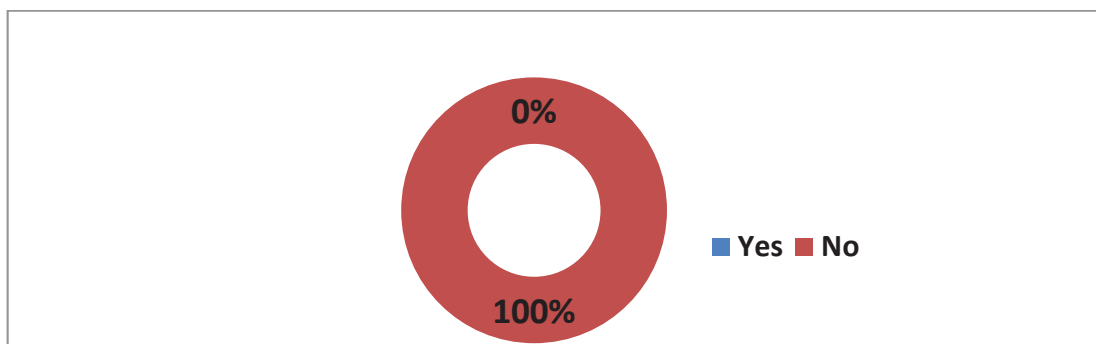


Figure 16. Teachers' Intercultural Communication Training Experience

1.2.2. Statistical analysis of Teachers' views on sociolinguistic competence and intercultural language learning

Statement	Level agreement							
	S. Agree		Agree		Disagree		S. disagree	
	nbr	%	nbr	%	nbr	%	nbr	%
1. One of the major aims of teaching English is to enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately, as well as to enable them maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of English speaking countries.	22	68.75	10	31.25	00	00	00	00
2. To prepare learners to communicate effectively and appropriately, topics have to be related to real-life situations; teachers have to design activities that help students draw their attention to the different ways of performing speech acts in different situations.	20	62.50	12	37.5	00	00	00	00
3. English is learnt most effectively when it is used as a tool for doing something, such as greeting, requesting, giving, apologizing, etc.	10	31.25	16	50	6	18.75	00	00
4. Effective English learning necessitates teaching varieties and registers of English (e.g., formal/informal language that are appropriate to a variety of situations and purposes).	00	00	14	43.75	18	56.25	00	00
5. English can be taught successfully by focussing only on the formal register or variety that is suitable for mastering English in all situations.	00	00	13	40.62	14	43.75	5	15.62

Statement	Level agreement							
	S. Agree		Agree		Disagree		S. disagree	
	nbr	%	nbr	%	nbr	%	nbr	%
6. Learners should develop their knowledge and use of expressions related to the target culture's folk wisdom such as idioms to enhance their communicative competence	08	25.00	24	75.00	00	00	00	00
7. The concept of intercultural learning is about enhancing language learning through understanding the target cultures and reflecting on the native culture in the target language.	12	37.5	20	62.5	00	00	00	00
8. Teachers have to design activities that help students raise their awareness to cultural differences existing between the target language and their own.	8	25	12	37.5	12	37.5	00	00
9. Teachers have little time to develop material and activities for intercultural communication	10	31.25	11	34.37	11	34.37	00	00
10. Both teachers and students lack exposure to uses of English in natural situations outside the classroom.	10	31.25	20	62.5	2	6.25	00	00
11. There are few opportunities for teachers to get training about English cultural norms of communication.	21	65.62	11	34.37	00	00	00	00
12. Algerian EFL teachers should benefit from summer intercultural courses in English speaking countries.	32	100	00	00	00	00	00	00
13. Educational policy makers can launch prospects for establishing active cooperation with English speaking counterparts (e.g., establishing online communications between Algerian EFL students and English counterparts)	22	68.75	10	31.25	00	00	00	00

Table 7. Teachers' views on sociolinguistic competence and intercultural language learning

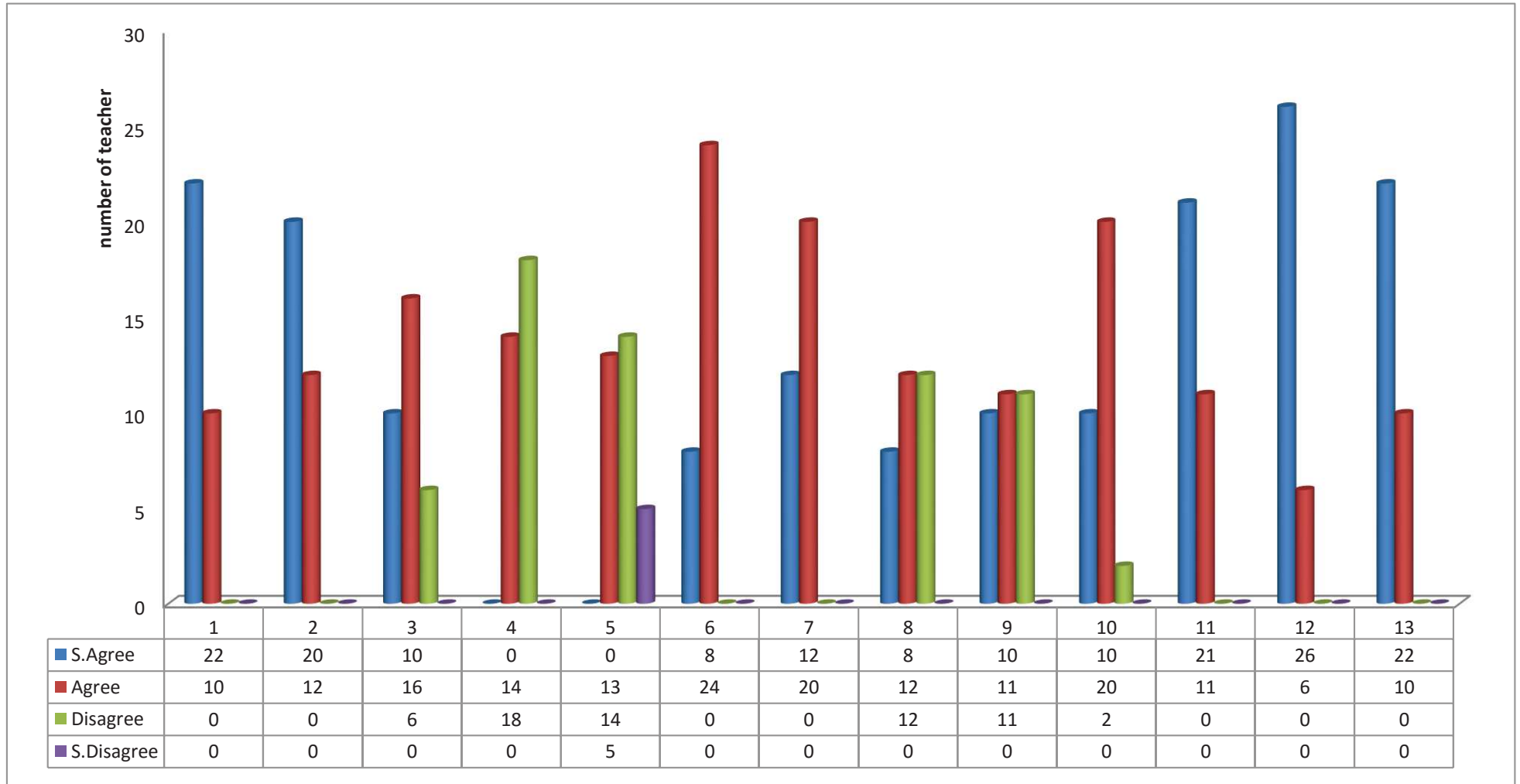


Figure 17. Teachers' Views on Intercultural Learning and Sociolinguistic Competence

1. The first statement in the questionnaire is intended to investigate teachers' perceptions of teaching objectives as a whole, and whether intercultural communicative competence holds an integral part in the curriculum, particularly in terms of teaching objectives. It is clearly indicated from the results shown in the table (7) that teachers have a positive attitude towards the cultural dimension of language teaching. When answers with 'strongly agree'(68.75%) and 'agree'(31.25%) with this statement are combined together, the result will be that the total majority of teachers 32/32 (100%) think that teaching English is meant to enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately, as well to establish relationships with people from English speaking countries. Therefore, it can be deduced that teachers on the whole show great interest in intercultural communication in EFL classes which indicates their raising awareness of the importance of intercultural communicative competence in teaching/learning process.
2. The second statement concerns mainly teachers' views regarding the most appropriate activities which could help students to develop the various components of communicative competence and particularly sociolinguistic competence. It is noticeable that the majority of teachers (62.5%) show a 'strong agreement' that language learning should be related to real-life requirements, being able to perform speech acts in different situations is the core content of communicative competence development which is necessary for learners to use the language for practical purposes.
3. Statement three investigates teachers' conceptualization of the sociolinguistic component of communicative competence. This latter requires designing activities that engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic and functional use of language to convey meaningful messages. Teachers' responses revealed that (31.25%) 'Strongly

agree' and half of them (50.00%) 'Agree', which indicates that the majority of teachers perceive language in terms of its practical use for real-life communication, i.e., a pragmatic oriented view. Only a small minority (18.75%) disagrees with this statement.

4. Statement four is meant to investigate teachers' opinions on the importance of including various registers and varieties of English used in different social situations and purposes. Being an integral part of sociolinguistic competence, the aim of this statement is to determine whether teachers encourage students to vary their registers according to the context (e.g., friendly discussion, formal meeting, or a conversation at home, etc.). The obtained results show that (43.75%) of the teachers 'agree', while (56.25%) 'disagree' with this statement which is quite a majority; this may limit the students' opportunities to learn about English varieties and registers in the classroom, hence being exposed to only one standard variety.
5. Statement five is in direct contrast to the previous one, as it suggests that teachers concentrate mainly on one register namely the formal one which is considered to be suitable for all communicative situations and purposes. Teachers' responses indicate that only (15.62%) of the teachers 'strongly disagree', (43.75%) 'disagree', whereas (40.62%) of them agree. It seems from the results obtained from item 4 and 5 that teachers are not pretty interested in providing various varieties and registers of English to ensure effective communication as well as to teach English usage successfully.
6. Statement six deals with one main aspect of sociolinguistic competence which related to knowledge of expression of folk wisdom. The majority of teachers are in favour with this statement; (25.00%) of teachers 'strongly agree' and (75.00%) of them 'agree' with it. Teachers believe that it beneficial for learners to know more about the way native speakers use the language especially in terms of idiomatic expression.

7. Statement seven concerns teachers' perception of the concept of intercultural communication. As indicated by the results (37.5%) 'strongly agree' and (62.5%) 'agree', teachers' views came to confirm that intercultural learning is based on the openness and reflections; teaching activities should take students to a higher analysis level from their own culture to the target one.
8. As far as classroom activities are concerned, teachers' responses to the current statement came in line with the previous one; the majority of teachers either 'strongly agree' (25.00%) or 'agree' (37.5%) with the view that intercultural learning can be achieved through designing activities that take students to higher level of analysis by knowing about the target culture and reflecting on their own culture at the same time. On the other hand, (37.5%) are not in favour with this view; these teachers might perceive intercultural learning in terms of outside classroom activities in informal settings.
9. Statement nine addresses one of the major difficulties that teachers might encounter while designing activities for intercultural communication which is the lack of time and material. Responses to this item are varied, (31.25%) of teachers 'strongly agree', while (34.37%) of teachers 'agree'. It is quite surprising to find that (34.37%) 'disagree' that teachers have little and material to develop activities for intercultural learning. This finding may be encouraging to include intercultural activities as an integral part of teaching syllabus.
10. Statement ten concerns teachers' views regarding the amount of exposure and use of English in natural situations outside the classroom. The obtained findings indicate that the majority of teachers 'agree' (62.5%) and (31.25%) 'strongly agree' that there is a lack of exposure to the target language and culture in natural settings, only (6.25%) disagrees with that. This result highlights one of the major difficulties and

challenges encountered in EFL contexts where learners do not have easy access to native speakers in their real-life. This result goes also in line with Cortazzi (1999) kin observation that in FL classes, the target language tends to be an object of study instead of a means for socialization and communication.

11. Statements eleven and twelve address the teachers' perception of the role of in-service training in developing their knowledge about English speaking countries culture and norms of communication, therefore in developing their intercultural communicative competence. The findings indicate that teachers either strongly agree 65.62% or agree 34.37% with statement eleven, furthermore all the teachers without exception 'strongly agree' with statement twelve. Consequently, teachers confirmed that there is a need for having more opportunities to get training about English cultural norms of communication which can be achieved through taking part in intercultural courses in English speaking countries.
12. Statement thirteen is a suggestion to overcome the lack of contact with native speakers as well as a useful way that can help both teachers and learners to enhance their sociolinguistic and intercultural communicative competence. The findings indicate that (68.75%) of teachers 'strongly agree' and (31.25%) with this statement. No doubt that establishing active cooperation with English speaking counter parts via involving in on line communication between Algerian EFL students and English counterparts represents an alternative way to reduce their lack of exposure to active use of English in real-life communication.

1.2.3. Discussion of the Teachers' Questionnaire Findings

The present section is basically meant to discuss the results obtained from investigating teachers' views on the importance of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural teaching/learning at the department of English at Khenchela University. Issues investigated included: teachers' views of language and culture teaching objectives, their views about the importance of enhancing learners' sociolinguistic competence and the activities they include to help students communicate effectively, their perception of the concept of intercultural communication, their opinions regarding the techniques and material used in the realization of culture teaching objectives, and finally the difficulties and prospects involved while integrating intercultural communicative teaching.

As previously stated in this chapter, the first section of the questionnaire provided a general picture of the department teachers' profile in terms of their gender, educational background, years of teaching, their experience concerning English speaking countries travel, and whether they have benefited from an intercultural training.

The obtained data show that the population is quite balanced in terms of gender distribution; the percentage of male teachers is 53% which exceeds the female one by only two teachers 47%. While the participants' teaching experience ranges from 2 to 30 years, the results regarding teachers' educational background are quite disappointing as a considerable majority (56.25%) of teachers are actually part time teachers who either hold a master degree (37.5%), or BA degree (18.75%) which, in fact, does not meet the requirement that university teachers must at least hold a magister degree. In addition, it is worth mentioning that no teachers have ever benefited or participated in any kind of training related to intercultural communication. It is noticed that only (34.37%) of teacher had been abroad, among whom (21.87%) had the opportunity to be in an English speaking country. Such an opportunity would have been

beneficial in terms of acquiring more experience as far as intercultural communication is concerned.

In the second section of the questionnaire, data around the teachers' views on ways of dealing with sociolinguistic competence and intercultural dimension of language teaching were presented. The data obtained in this section indicated teachers hold positive attitudes towards intercultural education in terms of teaching objectives. The majority of teachers are in favour with statements approving that teaching English is meant to enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately, as well to establish relationships with people from English speaking countries. They perceive language and culture teaching objectives more in terms of a pragmatic oriented perspective: relating language use to real-life requirements, being able to communicate effectively in different situations, and to use the language for practical purposes. The findings got from items dealing the possible ways of dealing with sociolinguistic competence, such as dealing different ways of performing speech acts, extending students' knowledge and use of idiomatic expressions, including various registers and varieties of English, indicated that teachers do not attribute the same importance to all aspects of sociolinguistic competence; teachers are not quite interested in providing various varieties and registers of English to ensure effective and appropriate communication. However, they regard teaching idioms as an essential aspect of learners' competence.

The data obtained from items concerning intercultural dimension of English language education revealed that this latter is considered by the majority of teachers in terms of openness and reflections; regardless of their current practices, teachers are in favour of teaching activities that take students to a higher analysis level from their own culture to the target one.

The information gained from the statement concerning the difficulties encountered while dealing with culture/intercultural activities indicated that one of the major challenges encountered lay in the lack of exposure to the target language and culture in natural settings. This result confirmed the view that EFL contexts are a challenging situation; where both learners and teachers do not have easy access to native speakers in their real-life and the target language tends to be used for academic rather than socializing and communicating purposes. Regarding the role of in-service training to overcome some of these difficulties, the questionnaire results confirmed that there is a need for implementing more programmes to teachers and to create more opportunities to take part in intercultural courses in English speaking countries.

Finally, all the teachers were in favour of online communication between Algerian EFL learners and English counterparts which was suggested as an alternative way to overcome the lack of contact with native speakers as well as to enhance their sociolinguistic and intercultural communication competences.

2. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

2.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The student' questionnaire has been designed essentially to elicit data related to the students' background, attitudes towards learning English language and its culture, and finally the students' current exposure and uses of English both inside and outside the classroom.

The questionnaire starts with a brief introduction in which the aim of the research project is stated. The students are requested to tick in the box they find appropriate or make full answers. The questionnaire consists of thirty seven items organized into three sections, each section is intended to investigate and provide particular set of information as follows:

Section One: Background Information: This section contains six items that provide information about the students' gender, age, number of years studying English, purpose of studying English, their perceived level of language proficiency, and finally whether they have ever visited a foreign or an English speaking country.

Section Two: Attitudes towards learning English Language and its culture: This section is made up of eighteen items seeking to get insight into the students' attitudes towards English language and its culture. It is widely recognized by many authors in the field of FL language education (see for example, Richards and Schmidt, 2002; Byram, 1997) that exploring the learners' attitudes provides information that can be useful in language teaching and language planning; language attitudes also have an effect on language learning. According to Richards and Schmidt 2002, expression of positive or negative feelings towards a language may effect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language.

Byram (1997: 34) in his discussion of attitudes towards acquiring cultural knowledge stated that learners' attitude is one of the most important elements in ICC, and it is regarded as pre-condition for successful interaction. He further explained that attitude means "the attitude of curiosity and openness, of readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours".

Accordingly, in this section, students were provided with eighteen statements; each statement expresses an attitude. For each statement, the respondents were asked to choose from a four point Likert scale: 4: strongly agree 3: agree 2: disagree 1: strongly disagree (see Appendix B).

Section Three: Students' Current Use of English: This section is constructed to obtain information on students' amount of use and exposure to English language in their daily life, both inside and outside the classroom. Students were asked to report how much time, per week, they have contact with English through a list of activities. The section is made up of fourteen items; each one was concerned with a given activity. Students were asked to rate the frequency of each activity by choosing: never, rarely, sometimes, or always. The set of given activities fall into two main dimensions of exposure:

- A. Exposure through productive uses of English (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8), these items concern productive language skills i.e., speaking and writing. Such activities include:
- Communicating in English with friends, teachers, or family members for brief exchange or long discussions,
 - Chatting in English with friends online or communicating via skype,
 - Writing homework assignments and research papers in English,
 - Writing personal notes, messages, e-mails, and comments in English.

- B. Exposure through receptive use of the English language (items 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14). These items address the receptive skills of the language i.e., listening and reading. Such activities include:
- Reading textbooks, novels, newspapers, and magazines in English,
 - Watching English movies, series, and TV programs,
 - Listening to English songs,
 - Surfing English websites on the internet (see appendix B).

It should be noted that 'performing' in a language not only involves speaking it, comprehending the language is an equally essential aspect of performance. Indeed, it is basic common ground among all theorists of language learning, of whatever description, that there is close relationship between using (i.e. performing in) a second language, and learning (i.e. developing one's competence in) that same language. It is necessary for learners to understand and to use the language in order to develop their communicative competence (Methcel and Myles, 2004, p.20).

Concerning sociolinguistic competence, according to Dewaele (2008, p.3) continued learning and frequent authentic interactions with native speakers (NS) of the target language allow FL learners to gradually extend their stylistic range in written and oral production and develop a fully-fledged sociolinguistic competence.

2.2. Results of the Student' Questionnaire

2.2.1. Students' Background Information

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age	21	27	22.50
	22	74	61.66
	More	19	15.83
Gender	Male	22	18.33
	Female	98	81.66
Learning experience	10 years	101	84.16
	More	19	15.83
Reasons for studying English	a. to get a good 'better' job	72	60.00
	b. to go abroad	10	08.33
	c. to communicate in English	07	05.83
	d. interested in the English culture,	09	07.50
	e. more than one option	22	18.33
Perceived level of proficiency	Beginner	19	15.33
	elementary	47	39.16
	Intermediate	51	42.50
	Advanced	03	2.50
Travel abroad experience	Foreign country	07	05.83
	English speaking country	02	01.66
	Never been Foreign country	111	92.50

Table8. Students' background information

As shown in the table (8, p.175), students' responses indicated the following:

1. Age: The majority of students' age ranges from 21 to 22 years old, representing a percentage of (84.16%), only a small proportion of students (15.83 %) are more than 22 years old. It is quite clear that the target population is characterized to be young; this may lead them to be expected to have willingness to learn more about English language and its culture.

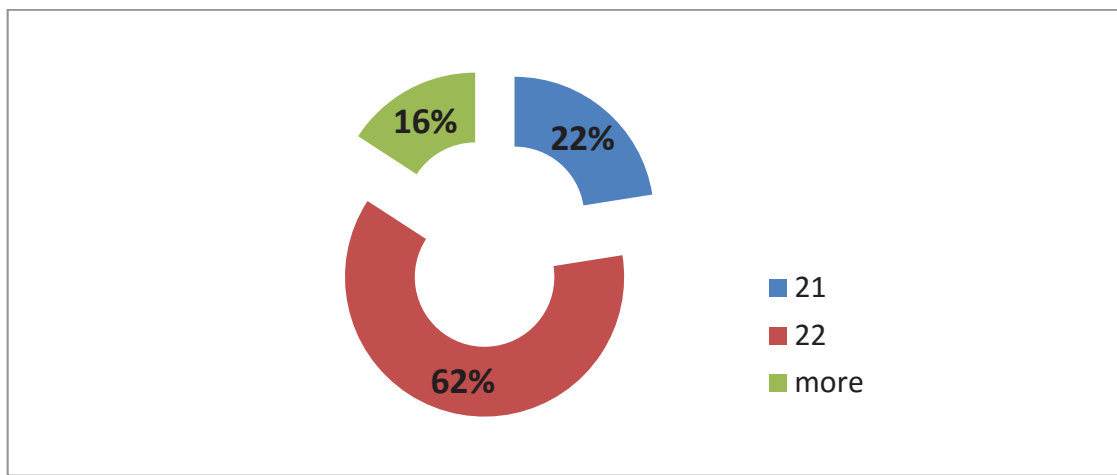


Figure 18. Students' Age Distribution

2. Gender: a Female overrepresentation is clearly noticed; female students represent (81.66 %), male students represent only (18.33 %) of the whole population. This is pretty expected since most Algerian EFL classes are overwhelmed by female students.

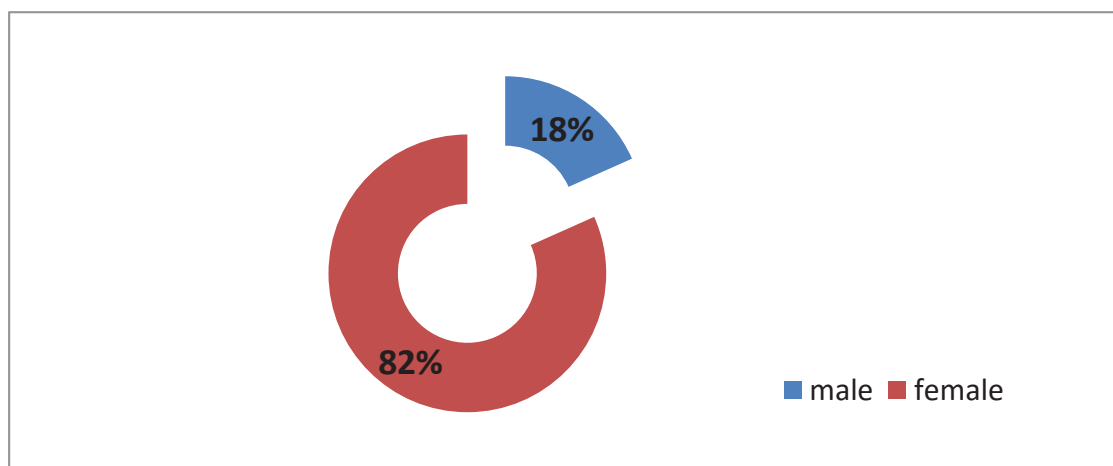


Figure 19. Students' Gender Distribution

3. English learning experience: students learning experience ranges from 10 to 11 years i.e., students are in their third year at the university, they have started learning English from their middle school for four years, in addition to three years in secondary school.

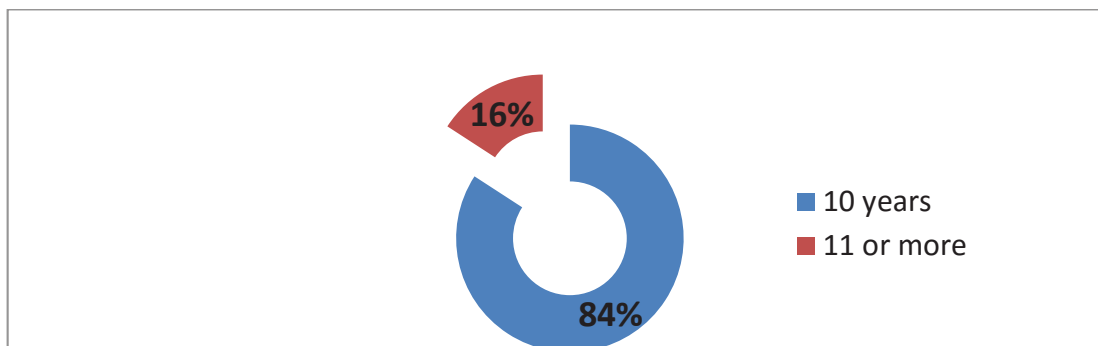


Figure 20. Students' English Learning Experience

4. Students' reasons for studying English: Students' choices to the items of this question are varied; however, the majority of students (60.00%) think that studying English is the key to have a job or even to get a better one. As far as the rest of the choices, 18.33% consider learning English is helpful for them to achieve more than one objective since they chose more than one option, it is surprising that a small minority of students (05.83%) are interested in communication; this may be due to the fact that student are not using English in their daily life for real communication. For the two remaining options, only (08.33%) are studying English to go abroad, and (07.50%) are basically interested in the English culture.

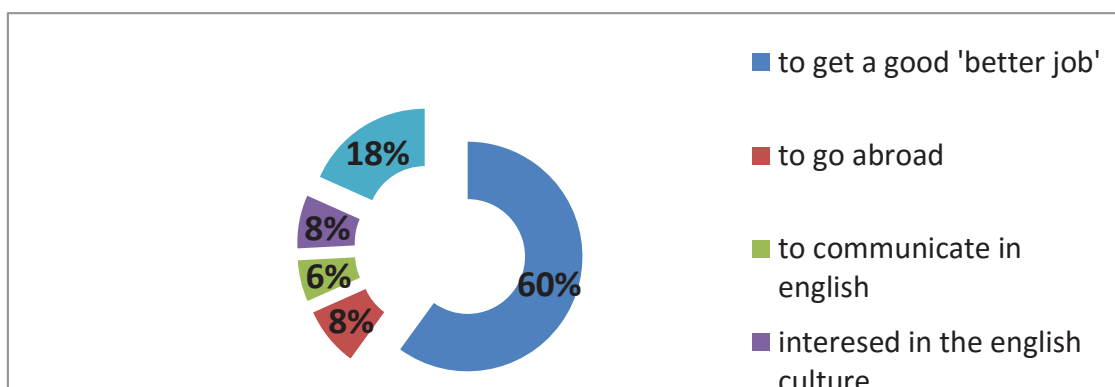


Figure 21. Students Reasons for Studying English

5. Perceived language proficiency: In terms of language proficiency, (42.50 %) of the students' characterized themselves as being intermediate, and (39.16%) as being elementary while (15.33 %) as being beginner, and only (2.50 %) see themselves as being advanced. Although almost half of the population claimed to have an intermediate level, the result is quite disappointing as very few students (only 2.50%) rated themselves as advanced learners yet third year students are in the their final year of graduation, and are expected to be in their way to be teachers. Similarly, too many students perceived themselves as beginners (15.33%). This demonstrates students' lack of confidence as far their English language proficiency is concerned.

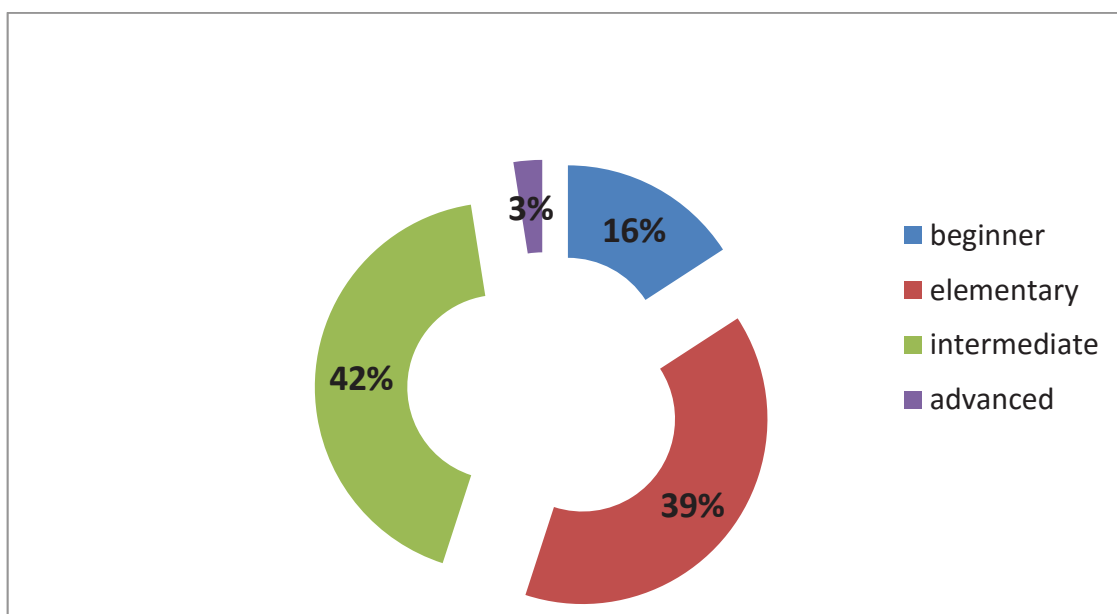


Figure 22. Students' Perceived Level of Language Proficiency

6. Travel to foreign or English speaking countries: unfortunately, only (05.83 %) of the students have had the experience of being abroad, yet; (01.66%) of the students have been in an English speaking country. It is quite recommended to encourage more travelling abroad as it widens students' horizons, and enriches their intercultural experience to have more understanding of foreign people and cultures.

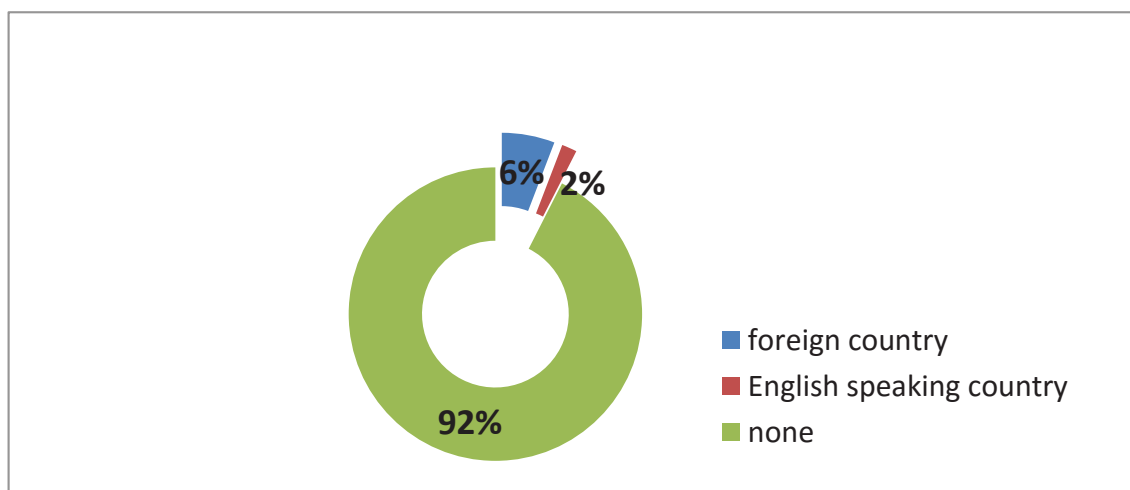


Figure 23. Students' Travel Abroad Experience

As a summary to students' background information, the students' responses demonstrated that the target population has very similar backgrounds. First the population is overwhelmed by female students (81.66%) and is characterized to be young; the students' average age ranges from 21 to 22 (84.16%), only a minority (15.83%) are more than 22 years old. The majority of students (81.16%) started learning English from middle school i.e., they learned English for approximately 10 years. It also worth mentioning that (60.00%) of the students consider that the main objective for studying English is directly related to job expectations. Despite the fact that the target population is third year classes, only a minority (02.50%) considered themselves as being advanced, while the majority of students classified themselves as intermediate (42.50%) or elementary (39.16%). Surprisingly, (15.33%) of students perceived themselves as being beginner respectively which reflects a lack of confidence in their language proficiency. Concerning the students' traveling experience, only

5.38% have been abroad and their experience was in non-English speaking countries. Only 1.66% of students had a significant exposure to English native speakers for a real communicative experience.

As a conclusion, the results obtained from the students responses demonstrated that they had very similar backgrounds; both in terms of their experience of language learning, as well as their limited interaction with English native speakers prior to their participation in the current study. There is no evidence in the personal data collected from the students, in this section, that there are any major differences in the characteristics of the students that may affect their attitudes, knowledge and experience of intercultural learning before their participation in the experimental program. Therefore, the selected participants for the study are considered to be representative of third year classes at Khenchela University.

2.2.2. Statistical Analysis of Students' Attitudes to English Language and Culture

Statement	Level of agreement							
	S. Agree		Agree		Disagree		S. disagree	
		%		%		%		%
1. Learning English is interesting	76	63.33	36	30.00	08	06.66	00	00
2. I feel excited when I communicate	73	60.83	39	32.50	08	06.66	00	00
3. I wish I will be able to communicate in English the way the native speakers do	92	76.66	20	16.66	08	06.66	00	00
4. I am highly interested in everything related to English language	42	35.00	37	30.83	30	25.00	11	09.16
5. I admire people who can speak English fluently	78	65.00	27	22.50	10	08.33	05	04.16
6. I think English will have a great impact on my job	98	81.66	18	15.00	04	03.33	00	00
7. Using English indicates prestige and civilizations	22	23.33	40	33.33	47	39.16	05	04.16
8. Using English facilitates communication with	97	80.83	18	15.00	05	04.16	00	00

international institutions and foreign friends								
9. Learning English would help me to travel abroad	37	30.83	31	25.83	38	31.66	14	11.66
10. Frankly, I study English just to have a degree	12	10.00	11	09.16	48	40.00	49	40.83
11. I cannot apply my knowledge of English to my real-life	22	18.33	34	28.33	57	47.50	07	05.83
12. Learning English is important to understand English movies, TV shows, music...etc.	26	31.66	67	55.83	20	16.66	07	05.83
13. It is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries products and great achievements in history, literature, politics, economy, geography, etc.	48	40.00	43	35.83	21	17.50	08	06.66
14. It is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour, etc.	37	30.83	53	44.16	15	12.50	15	12.50
15. I am able to speak about English speaking countries products and great achievements in history, literature, politics, economy, geography, etc.	15	12.50	22	18.33	56	46.66	27	22.50
16. I am able to speak about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour, etc.	08	06.66	19	15.83	54	45.00	39	32.50
17. I find it difficult to understand members of English speaking countries cultural and social behaviour	17	14.16	43	35.83	42	35.00	18	15.00
18. There are not enough classroom activities that help me to raise awareness to cultural differences existing between English culture and my own culture	52	43.33	49	40.83	13	10.83	06	05.00

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Attitudes to English language and Culture

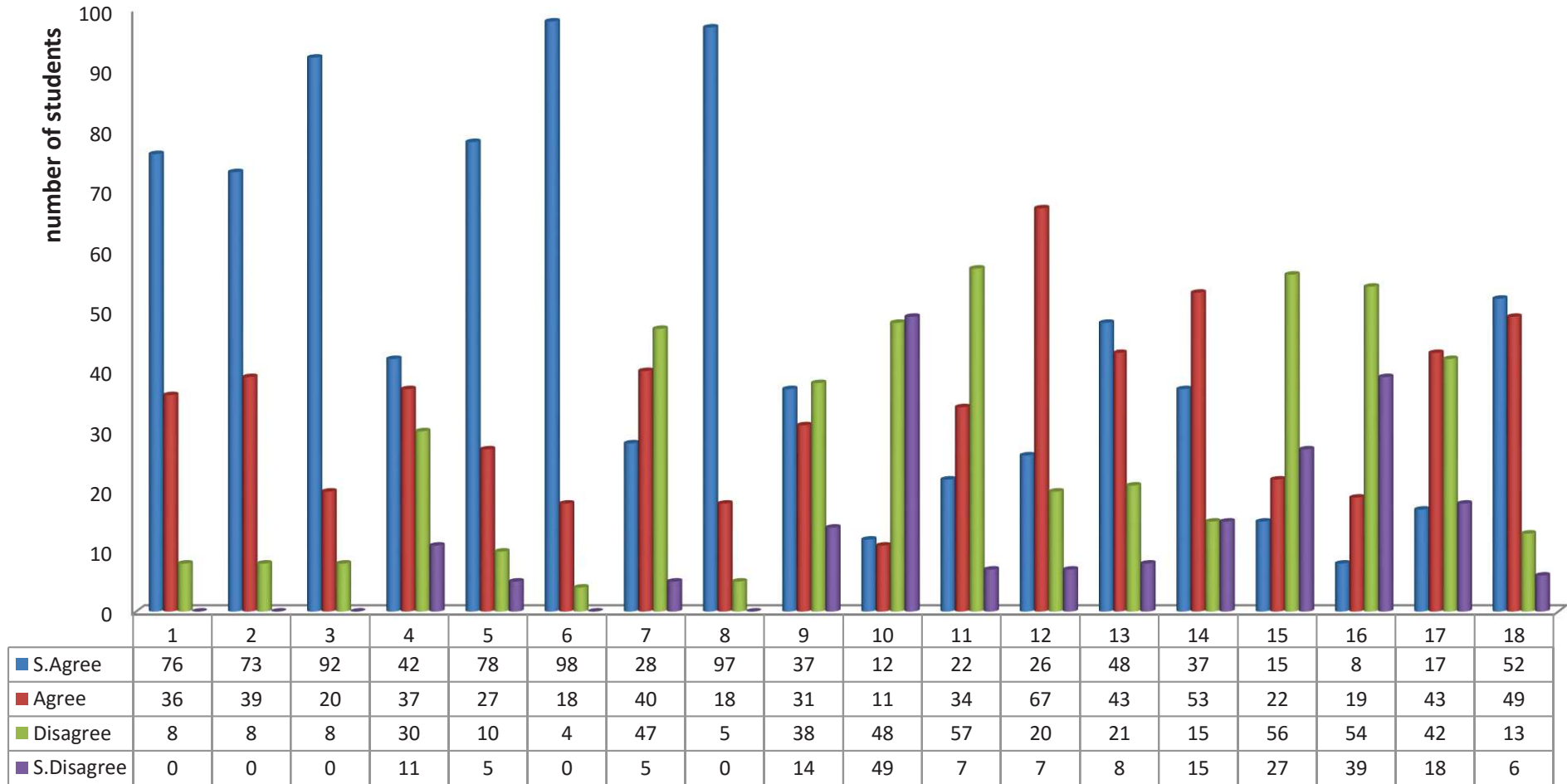


Figure 24. Students Attitudes to English Language and Culture

Table (9, p.181) and graph (24, p.182) present a summary of the results obtained from descriptive statistics concerning students attitudes to English language and culture.

1. As seen in (table 9, p.181), the first statement received a high level of agreement as the majority of students find English interesting to learn, this result is statistically significant; a percentage of 93.33% of students either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with this statement. Out of the 120 students, only 8 students' (6.66%) 'disagree' with the current statement.
2. The students' level of agreement with the second statement came to support their responses to the first one; the same percentage of students (93.33 %) either 'strongly agree', or 'agree' that they feel excited when they communicate in English indicating that they had great desire to speak English fluently similar to native speakers. The percentage of students disagreeing with this statement is not really significant since it is expressed by only (6.66 %).
3. The number of students 'agreeing' with the third statement is also represented by 93.33 %. Here, it is clear that almost all students have a high willingness to develop their communicative abilities in English. This finding reveals the students' awareness of the importance of communicative competence in EFL classes. Just (6.66 %) of students 'disagree' with this statement.
4. When asked if they are highly interested in everything related to English language in the fourth statement, the number of students 'disagreeing' with it is rather high compared to the previous ones; (25.00 %) 'disagree' and (09.16%) 'strongly disagree', this means that a considerable number of students are not really interested in everything related to English language; yet, a significant proportion of students (65.83%) indicated that they either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' in their responses

5. Being so interested to develop their communicative abilities as stated in items 3, students' responses to this item came to confirm this willingness by an overwhelming majority of (65.00%) who 'strongly agree' and (22.50%) who 'agree' that they admire people who speak English fluently. Only (12.49%) of students 'disagree' with the current statement.
6. Statement six is meant to explore students' attitudes to the importance of English as far as their future jobs are concerned. The overwhelming majority represented by a percentage of (96.66%) admitted that English will have a great impact on their future job. This finding supports the students' responses to their objectives of learning English revealed in the first section, and of course goes with the general held belief that knowing English opens doors for getting a job.
7. In item number seven, it is stated that using English indicates prestige and civilisation. The results demonstrated that (23.33%) and (33.33%) of students 'strongly agree' and 'agree' respectively with this statement. On the other hand (43.32%) of students are not in favour for this statement. Accordingly, a significant number of students do not take using English as something to be proud of or indicating prestige. This can be explained in terms of social considerations; Algerian people tend to use French in their daily communication rather than English which is limited to formal conversations' either related to work or study requirements.
8. Statement number eight deals with the usefulness of English in facilitating communication with international institutions and foreign friends from different parts of the world. It is clear from the obtained results that approximately the whole population (95.83%) of students 'agree' with this statement, just a small percentage (4.16%) do not agree with that. Consequently, it is confirmed that even the students, who do not take English as a sign of prestige as revealed in the previous item, admit

the usefulness of English for international communication. This finding shows that the students are aware of the importance of English in maintaining relationships outside the country.

9. In item nine, it is stated that learning English would be helpful to travel abroad. The number of students 'disagreeing' with this statement roughly equals the total number of students who 'agree' with it, this is perceived by a proportion of (56.66%) and (43.32%) respectively. This result can be explained by the fact that not all students have easy access to go abroad; it might seem to be impossible for some students especially for English Speaking Countries
10. Students' responses to item ten which states that "frankly, I study English just to have a degree" revealed that students valued and appreciated learning English regardless of the only motif of graduating with a degree. This is illustrated by the fact that (80.83%) of them reported either a strong disagreement or a disagreement with this statement. There were 19.16% of students who expressed an agreement with this statement; these students admit that their first motif to study English is to get a degree. These students see their studies basically in terms of job requirements i.e., they are studying for the sake of having a diploma to work with.
11. Students appreciated the importance of learning English in regard to its use for real life purposes; this illustrated by the fact (53.33%) reported their 'disagreement' with the statement "I cannot apply my knowledge of English to my real-life". However, quite a considerable proportion of students (46.66%) expressed their 'agreement' with this statement; these students may be influenced by the fact that English is not widely used in Algerian social life except for research purposes or international communication, or simply because English is not important for their lifestyle.

12. An overwhelming majority of students are in favour of the statement 'learning English is important to understand English movies, TV shows, music, etc.' this is indicated by a percentage of (21.66%) and (55.83%) who either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with it. This result shows that students are interested in media and influenced by it; one of the motives behind their choice to study English is to understand these programs.
13. In compliance with the previous statement, students' responses to item thirteen show that a great majority of students reported their 'agreement' or 'with the statement "it is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries products and great achievements in history, literature, politics, economy, geography, etc."; 48 (40.00%) 'strongly agree' and 43 (35.83%) 'agree'. Meanwhile, (24.16%) reported either a 'disagreement' or 'strong disagreement' with the current statement; these students don't see the need for learning more about English speaking countries great achievement, they might be satisfied of what they receive in classroom, or simply they are not interested.
14. Without any surprise, the statement " it is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour, etc." received almost the same level of agreement as the previous one. The majority of students are in favour of this statement; (74.99%) of students expressed either a 'strong agreement or an 'agreement' with it. Yet, (25.00%) 'disagree' with this statement . This result indicates that almost all students admit that they lack this knowledge; they also express a great willingness to have these aspects of cultural knowledge as part of their course syllabus.
15. Students' responses to the statement "I am able to speak about English speaking countries products and great achievement in history, literature, politics, economy,

geography, etc.” confirmed their answers to the two previous ones. Despite the fact that students are actually taught about these aspects of culture in separated modules like literary texts and civilisation during their graduation curriculum, only a small percentage of (30.83%) of students perceived themselves as being able to discuss such topics. Quite a considerable proportion of students either ‘strongly disagree’ (22.50%) or ‘disagree’ (46.66%) with this statement; this means that (69.16 %) of the respondents admitted that they are unable to speak about English speaking countries big C culture.

16. Students revealed a lack of knowledge as far as ‘small c’ culture issues are concerned, this is illustrated by the fact that students’ responses to the statement ‘I am able to speak about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour, etc.’ go in line with the preceding ones; (77.50%) of students reported either a ‘disagreement’ or ‘strong disagreement’. Only few students who (06.66%) ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ (15.83%) to be able to tackle such topics.
17. The number of students who ‘agree’ to find a difficulty to understand the members of English speaking countries cultural and social behaviour almost equals the number of students who ‘disagree’ with that. This is represented by the same percentage (50%) and (50%) respectively.
18. The findings extracted from item 18 are completely overlapping with the findings got from items 13, 14, 15, and 16. The percentage of students, who expressed their ‘agreement’ that “there are not enough classroom activities that help them to raise their awareness to cultural differences existing between English culture and their own culture”, is (84.16%) among which (43.33%) ‘strongly agree’ with this statement. Only (15.83%) expressed their ‘disagreement’ with this statement. This, in fact,

implies that students need to learn more about English speaking countries both small c and big C culture.

2.2.3. Statistical Analysis of Students' Amount of Exposure to English

This section accounts for the students' uses of English in their daily life; inside and outside the classroom, both in terms of productive and receptive uses of English language. The results obtained from the students' responses are displayed in the table below followed by an analysis of the findings.

Type of activity	Frequency							
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Always	
		%		%		%		%
1.Communicating in English with your friends (for brief exchange, e.g. greetings and farewells)	07	05.83	13	10.83	57	47.50	43	35.83
2.Communicating in English with your friends (for long exchange, e.g. discussions and chatting)	49	40.83	35	29.16	26	21.66	10	08.33
3.Communicating in English with your teachers for class related work	32	26.66	49	40.83	24	20.00	15	12.50
4.Communicating in English with your family members	70	58.33	29	24.16	14	11.66	07	05.83
5.Chatting or communicating with friends online in English (Facebook, skype)	28	23.33	37	30.83	36	30.00	19	15.83
6.Writing homework assignments and research papers in English	00	00	05	04.16	13	10.83	102	85.00
7.Writing personal notes and letters (messages) in English	25	21.66	34	28.33	43	35.83	17	14.16
8.Writing e-mails and comments on social networks in English	29	24.16	38	27.5	43	35.83	15	12.50
9.Reading textbooks in English	50	41.66	37	30.83	24	20.00	09	07.50
10.Reading English novels and poems	29	24.16	49	40.83	29	24.16	13	10.83
11.Reading English newspapers and magazines	98	81.66	18	15.00	02	01.66	02	01.66
12.Watching English movies and series, and TV programs	00	00	16	13.33	65	54.16	39	32.50
13.Listening to English songs (MP3 or mobile)	05	04.16	35	30.00	52	43.33	27	22.50
14.Surfing English websites on the net	00	00	19	15.83	39	32.50	62	51.66

Table 10. The Frequency and Percentage of Use for Activities Related to the Two Types of Language Exposure.

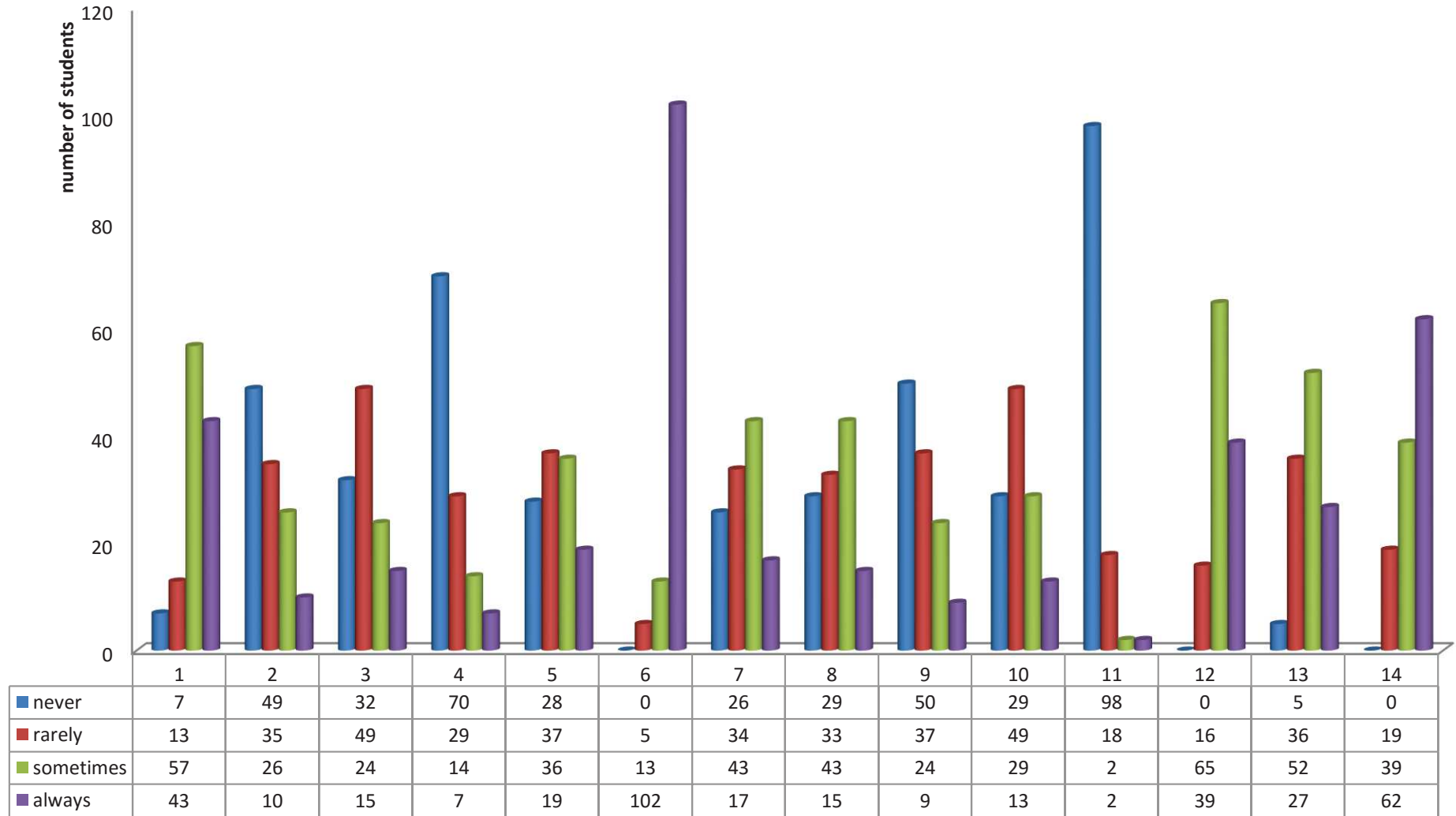


Figure 25. Students 'Amount of Exposure to English

1. Communicating in English with your friends (for brief exchange, e.g. greetings and farewells): a considerable percentage of students reacted positively to this activity by choosing either 'sometimes' (47.50%) or 'always' (35.83%) as a response. Only (18.83%) of the participants reported using this activity 'rarely', and (05.83%) of the students admitted that they 'never' use English for brief exchanges in their daily conversations. Consequently, students' responses to this item indicate that they tend to use brief English expressions with one another as part of their daily meetings.

2. Communicating in English with your friends (for long exchange, e.g. discussions and chatting): compared to the previous activity, this activity has received a less proportion in terms of the frequency use. It is clear from the students' responses that only a minority of them (08.33 %) engage 'always' in long communicative tasks in English. A considerable proportion of students, (40.83%) is not actually using English for long discussions i.e., 'never'. Out of the 120 students only (21.66%) declared using English for long communicative tasks 'sometimes', besides the remaining (29.16%) declared that they 'rarely' engage in long discussions with their friends using English. This result highlights students' deficiency in terms of communicative skills; it also shows that students in most cases could only use English just for brief exchanges of greetings, farewells, thanks, etc. This is not quite surprising since a big number of students considered themselves being elementary or intermediate in terms of language proficiency in the first section. This, again, indicates an overall hesitation and lack of confidence in their abilities as frequent users of English.

3. Communicating in English with your teachers for class related work: classroom participation can be a good environment for students to practice their communicative abilities; however, only (12.5%) of students said they 'always' use English for classroom discussions with their teachers. Almost half of the respondents (40.83%) declared that they 'rarely' participate in classroom discussions. Furthermore, (26.66%) students and (20.00%) of them

revealed that they 'never' or 'sometimes' use English for classroom participation respectively. This finding indicates that the majority of students tend to have a passive style of learning, where they listen to the teacher explaining without being engaged actively in the learning tasks.

4. Communicating in English with your family members: without any surprise, the result of the students' responses to this item goes in line with the previous items; the percentage of students, who 'never' use English to communicate at home, is (58.33%), the percentages of students who use English with their family 'rarely' or 'sometimes' is (24.16%) and (11.66%) for both options respectively. Finally, (05.83%) of students reported using English 'always' with their family members. As stated earlier, this result is expected since English language is not widely used in the Algerian society for daily real life conversations.

5. Chatting or communicating with friends online in English: students' responses to this activity are varied; the two options that received the highest proportions are 'sometimes' and 'rarely' being chosen by (30.00%) and (30.83%) students respectively. The number of students who 'never' chat with friends in English is (23.33%), only (15.83%) revealed that they are 'always' chatting with their friends in English. Students' responses to this item can be affected by the availability of the internet i.e., whether they have access to the internet either at home, in the campus, at university library or computer centre. With the widespread of social networks in recent years, result got from this item highlights the issue that compared to real communication; English is rather used for online communication.

7. Writing homework assignments in English: as a matter of fact, none of the student declared 'never' writing his assignments in English. Nonetheless, (04.16%) and (10.83%) of them have chosen 'rarely' and 'sometimes' respectively. Basically, (85%) claimed that they 'always'

write their homework assignments in English. This is obvious since as students of English writing assignments is directly related to students' studies.

8. Writing personal notes and letters (messages) in English: students' responses to this item reported that their use of English for writing personal notes and messages is either 'sometimes' or 'rarely' since these are the two options that received the highest proportions being chosen by (35.83%) and (28.33%) students respectively. The number of students who declared 'never' use English for such purpose is (21.66%), and finally (14.16%) students are 'always' using English for this aim.

9. Writing e-mails and comments in English: students' use of English for the aim of writing emails or comments on social networks is represented by different proportions; (24.16%) assumed 'never' use English for such purpose, (27.50%) are 'rarely' doing this activity. The option 'sometimes' and 'always' are chosen by (35.83%) and (12.50%) students respectively. Again, students' responses to this item depend a lot on the possibility to have access to the internet either at the university or at home.

10. Reading textbooks in English: only a small number of students (07.50%) declared 'always' reading English textbooks, (20.00%) and (30.83%) assumed they 'sometimes' or 'rarely' read textbooks in English; meanwhile, (41.66%) declared they 'never' read English textbooks, which is quite a considerable proportion. This result highlights the problem of the lack of reading among university students. Although textbooks are important resources for students' studies, it is noticeable from the students' responses that they are not really using them. The reason behind this can be the fact that students, most of the time, rely the information that they get from the net, or they are just satisfied with the teachers' hand-outs.

11. Reading English novels and poems: the result got from this item came in line with the previous one with slight differences in the proportions; (10.83%) are 'always' reading novels

or poems in English while (24.16%) declared they ‘never’ read short stories or novels in English. Concerning the options of ‘sometimes’ and ‘rarely’, these are chosen by (24.16%) and (40.83%) students respectively. Compared to the previous item, it seems that students prefer to read literary works such as novels or short stories rather than formal textbooks, this might be due to the fact that literature is more enjoyable than other subject matters such as linguistics or civilisation.

12. Reading English newspapers and magazines: without any surprise, this activity received the lowest rate of frequency; (85.83%) of the students declared they ‘never’ read English newspapers or magazines, meanwhile, (09.16%) are ‘rarely’ reading newspapers or magazines in English, the options ‘sometimes’ and ‘always’ are chosen by only (01.66%) representing the same proportion for both options. The reason behind this is the fact that reading English newspapers and magazines depends on their availability in the market, which is not the case here. Therefore, students do not have access to them except via internet.

13. Watching English movies and series: contrary to the previous activity, this activity is among the activities that received the highest rates of frequency. Watching English movies, series, and TV programs is among the most frequently used activities; (54.16%) of the population declared ‘sometimes’ do this activity and (32.50%) are ‘always’ doing it. Only few students (13.33%) are ‘rarely’ watching English movies or TV shows, furthermore, none of the students assumed ‘never’ do this activity.

14. Listening to English songs: in compliance with the previous item, the result indicate that the majority of students are either ‘sometimes’ (43.33 %) or ‘always’ (22.50 %) listening to English songs. Again, very few students (04.16%) of the students declared that they ‘never’ listen to English songs while (30.00%) of them said the ‘rarely’ do so.

14. Surfing English websites on the net: students' use of English when accessing to the internet is high; more than half of the population (51%) of students are 'always' using English for such purpose, (32.50%) use it 'sometimes', and only (15.83%) of students use it rarely. None of the students declared 'never' use English while surfing on the net. This result can be explained by the fact that students rely most of the time on the internet in their studies, particularly while preparing their research papers. Thus, students use it as a learning resource for their English lessons as well as for entertainment purposes.

2.2.4. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire Findings

Coming up to the discussion of the findings obtained from the analysis of the students' responses to the questionnaire, the most significant points to be raised are:

- ***Students' Attitudes towards English Language and Culture:*** Looking at table (9), it is clear that students reflect positive attitudes towards studying English language and a great interest to know more about English speaking countries culture.

Despite the fact that students perceive studying English as having a great impact to ensure a future job, they showed a great interest and a strong desire to develop their communicative skills, furthermore, students' responses came to confirm their agreement on the usefulness of English regarding international communication either with institutions or foreign friends.

It is also clear from the results obtained that students consider the study of the target culture as necessary for their linguistic proficiency. However, when they were asked whether current classroom activities help them to develop their cultural awareness, almost all students agreed that there are not enough classroom activities that deal with the differences existing between the target culture and their own culture.

It is quite noticeable from the students' answers that they admit their deficiency regarding target culture knowledge, in addition to their desire to learn more about English speaking countries culture being it related to great achievements or daily life behaviour.

- ***Students' Amount of Exposure to English:*** As far as this section is concerned, the results obtained revealed that the majority of students lack authentic contact with English language and people both in terms of productive and receptive skills.

Although a considerable number of students affirmed using English with each other for brief exchanges of information, they are still reluctant to use English for long discussions in various social contexts such as with friends outside the university or with family members.

Despite the fact that reading can play an important role to enhance students' linguistic and cultural knowledge, it appears from the students' answers that they do not take reading as an integral part of their studies.

It is also worth noting that, most of the time, the only way for students to get in touch with the authentic context of language use is via media. Accordingly, students make little use of their linguistic knowledge to perform real communicative tasks.

3. Implications for the Teaching Programme Development for Research Stage Two

This chapter has presented the findings from Stage One of the research. Both teachers' and students' current practices and views about the issue under investigation were explored.

The study took place during the academic year 2014/2015 and the number of teachers at the department of English was 32, to whom the questionnaire was administered.

The total of 120 students has participated in the investigation about attitudes and current English language use. These students are likely to be typical of third year students at Khenchela University, as well as of many others in similar circumstances in other Algerian universities.

The findings of Stage One of the research provided some answers to the researcher's initial research questions of:

1. How do EFL teachers at Khenchela University perceive the importance of teaching sociolinguistic competence and intercultural dimension of language learning? Besides, what are the difficulties they might encounter in teaching students this important aspect of English language knowledge?
2. How do EFL learners at Khenchela University perceive the learning of English and its culture, and to what extent are they exposed to English language in their daily life?

On their perspective, teachers confirmed that the intercultural dimension of the language is regarded as a major objective of teaching English and that learners' communicative competence should be complemented by an understanding of the target culture to enable them establish and maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of English speaking countries. Although teachers stressed the importance of knowing idiomatic expressions in promoting learners' communicative abilities both in terms of understanding and performance, the sociolinguistic component of communicative competence seems to be deemphasised particularly in one of its essential aspects which is stylistic variation. As a matter of fact, teachers expressed willingness to have more opportunities for intercultural training in authentic English contexts.

Regarding background information collected from section I of the students' questionnaire, in brief, the participants had very similar backgrounds; both in terms of their experience of language learning, as well as their limited interaction with English native speakers. There is no evidence in the personal data collected from the students, in this section, that there are any major differences in the characteristics of the students that may affect their attitudes, knowledge and experience of intercultural learning before their participation in the experimental programme. Therefore, the selected participants for the study are considered to be representative of the third year classes.

The findings confirmed the willingness of students to embrace the experience of intercultural learning as they show a positive attitude towards the English language and the English speaking community, most importantly they showed the need and interest to raise awareness to cultural differences existing between target culture and their own culture. It is interesting to note that 84.16% of the participants agreed that they lack opportunities to compare and contrast cultural topics.

However, the findings revealed a serious lack of exposure to English language in its authentic context, most importantly; the data indicate a serious weakness concerning the productive skills of the language for university students. Actually, students are still reluctant in using the English language for variety contexts of communication like diversity of language in the many situations encountered in everyday life and in familiar contexts.

As a consequence, there are number of implications that can be drawn from Stage One of the research for the development of a programme that seeks to exploit the potentials of intercultural learning in the development of sociolinguistic competence.

The major implications are:

4. As the majority of students revealed a weakness in their ability to talk about daily life and cultural patterns of English speaking countries i.e., small c culture; teachers should reconsider these activities, and make the balance between both types of culture with emphasis on fostering learners' intercultural communicative competence. Greater attention should be paid to themes such as values, customs, life style, and non-verbal communication in order to enhance students' sociolinguistic competence.
5. Students need to be strongly encouraged to use the language for daily life communications and in diverse contexts.
6. Students need to develop awareness of the diversity of language in the many situations encountered in everyday life and in familiar contexts.
7. Students need to consider the importance of factors normally taken for granted (age, gender, relationship between participants) which influence the choice of language used in different social contexts
8. Teachers have to challenge the idea that there is only one type of "correct" English which is socially acceptable and desirable.

9. Teachers need to be trained not only to be familiar with concepts such as communicative competence and sociolinguistic competence; dealing with social and cultural values, the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity, but also with what lies behind the new skills that students are expected to learn. For this, teachers are asked to teach for cultural/intercultural awareness which means that they need to have explicit training in this aspect.
10. Programmes need to take advantage of students' positive attitudes towards English language and English speaking people to introduce intercultural learning.
11. Intercultural programmes need to be incorporated into regular subject syllabi rather than remaining as optional.
12. English language courses need to take into account the students' own preferences in the learning process and build on these to provide opportunities for students to use English for real purposes.

Conclusion

This chapter gives an analysis and discussion of the empirical data collected through the teachers' as well the learners' questionnaires. The chapter provides empirical results regarding teachers' views on cultural and sociolinguistic competence teaching at the department of English at Khenchela University.

The obtained results indicated that although teachers perceive language and culture teaching objectives more in terms of a pragmatic oriented perspective, they are still not interested in possible ways of dealing with sociolinguistic competence such as including various registers and varieties of English to ensure appropriate communication as well as to teach English usage successfully.

It is worth noting that most teachers are interested in teaching culture and their attitudes towards intercultural education are positive. Yet, teachers consider students' lack of exposure of English language and culture in its authentic context as a major difficulty to address this aspect in the class successfully.

As far as students' questionnaire is concerned, the total number of 120 students has participated in the investigation about attitudes and current English language use.

The findings confirm the willingness of students to embrace the experience of intercultural learning as they showed a positive attitude towards the English language and the English speaking community, most importantly they revealed the need and interest to raise awareness to cultural differences existing between target culture and their own culture.

It is interesting to note that most of the participants agreed that they lack opportunities to compare and contrast cultural topics such as people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour, etc.

These results helped the researcher to draw implications for the next step of the research mainly in terms of the choice of the different topics and activities to deal with during the treatment phase.

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The Treatment Procedure

Introduction

The main aim of this study is to explore whether an experimental implementation of the intercultural activities could positively influence students' sociolinguistic competence. The purpose of the current chapter is to present the design of the empirical study and data collection procedure. This chapter is divided into four main sections. First, it provides a detailed overview of the experiment design, including the objectives, participants' background, and the preparation for the experiment. Second, procedure for data collection instruments in the pre-test is provided. The third section describes the design and implementation of the pedagogical intervention. The fourth and the last section gives a description of the post-test and scoring procedure.

1. The Quasi-Experimental Design

1.1. Objectives of the Experiment

By looking at the various frameworks dealing with sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes, it seems that although sociolinguistic competence is recognized as an important component of learners' communicative competence, it is still a concept difficult to grasp, to teach and to deal with through classroom instructions. Consequently, suggestions and strategies on how to foster the development of this particular competence are still lacking in language instruction and EFL curricula (Ritchie, 2009). Based on the literature review, many studies confirmed the fact that even advanced language learners still face challenges in using the appropriate forms while performing speech acts, and do not know how to handle cultural differences (Lazar et al., 2003). To make things worse, opportunities for EFL learners to interact with native speakers and to develop their sociolinguistic competence are limited (Rose, 1999). Consequently, this creates a need for including explicit classroom instruction on the sociocultural practices affecting language use in situations learners might encounter in real life communication.

This study investigates the effectiveness of in-class culture based activities on enhancing Algerian EFL university students' sociolinguistic competence. As stated previously in chapter II, this study adopts the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFRFL) that specifies assessing sociolinguistic competence in terms of the following components:

- Linguistic markers of social relations;
- Politeness conventions;
- Register differences;
- Expression of folk wisdom.

This study suggests the use of intercultural activities as an alternative way to address the issue of sociolinguistic competence in the foreign language classroom. The relative effectiveness of learning sociolinguistic competence through in-class culture based activities is compared to ordinary class discussions.

1.2. The Students' Educational Background

As a summary to students' background data obtained from the students' questionnaire presented in the previous chapter, the target population has very similar backgrounds. First the population is overwhelmed by female students (81.66%), and their age ranges from 21 to 22 (84.16%). The majority of students (84.16) has started learning English from middle school i.e., has been learning English for 10 years. It is also worth noting that (60%) of the students see the main objective for studying English to be directly related to job expectations. Despite the fact that the target population is third year classes, very few students (only 2.50%) perceived themselves as having an advanced level, while the majority of students (42.50%) and (39.16%) perceived themselves as being intermediate or elementary respectively. Only two students (01.66%) had experienced exposure to English native speakers for a real communicative experience; all in all only 7 students (05.83%) have been abroad, however, their experience was in non-English speaking countries.

In brief, the participants had very similar backgrounds; both in terms of their experience of language learning, as well as their limited interaction with English native speakers prior to their participation in the current study. There is no evidence in the personal data collected from the students that there are any major differences in the characteristics of the students that may affect their attitudes, knowledge and experience of intercultural learning before their participation in the experimental program. Therefore, the selected participants for the study are considered to be representative of the third year classes.

1.3. The Sample

The target population of the study is third year students of English at Khenchela University enrolled for the academic year 2014/2015; their total number is approximately 143 students. These students are grouped by the administration into 4 groups, which makes the average number of 30 to 40 students per group. To select the representative sample, the researcher opted for a random sampling technique.

It is quite obvious that it is impossible to deal with the whole population; therefore, the researcher chose randomly two groups (N=35) and (N=32) students in each group to participate in the study. The students were allocated into experimental group (N=32) and control group (N=35) by random assignment. The main purpose for using a random sampling technique here is that it gives research data that can be generalized to a larger population; it also helps to ensure that the sample is representative (Borg and Gall, 1989).

1.4. Evaluating the Students' Performance

As it was discussed earlier, the sociolinguistic component has been always present in the various testing frameworks of communicative competence (see Bachman, 1990; Bachman and Palmer, 1994; Celce-Murcia, et al., 1995, etc.). Yet, no explanation about how the different components of these frameworks interact with one another has been presented. Can someone be sociolinguistically competent without having first reached a certain level of grammatical ability? How much of sociolinguistic competence depends on discourse cohesion and organization? Moreover, where do alternate communication patterns such as intonation, gestures and facial expressions fit in? These are issues that need empirical attention before any language learner is considered sociolinguistically competent or not (Robin D, 1993).

These are issues which tests claiming to assess overall communicative competence cannot ignore. Shohamy (1984, p. 161) explains the urgency of developing this type of assessment tool:

Till today, sociolinguistic proficiency has rarely been tested. Most language tests still focus on linguistic aspects as the major criteria for test construction. Overlooking the state of the art in knowing what a language means today, implies the construction of tests which fail to tap the construct of language proficiency in its full and complete definition...The construction of such tests will involve imposing rigorous measurement criteria to convert this sociolinguistic information into tests of sociolinguistic proficiency (quoted in Robin. D, 1993).

The review of research studies on the evaluation of learners' sociolinguistic competence highlights issues related to the difficulties involved in the assessment of this competence. It is quite clear that the assessment of sociolinguistic competence is somehow particular since what matters most in the assessment procedure is the appropriateness of the expression rather than its correctness i.e., the learner's achievement is measured according to his ability to vary his style and to choose the appropriate forms for different situations of communication. For instance, a student is said to be successful when he is able to choose informal register instead of the formal one when interacting in an informal setting and vice versa. Theoretically, two main techniques have been identified as being useful as far the practice and the testing of sociolinguistic competence is concerned

Role plays and Discourse Completion Tests. Role-play is a classroom technique that has been used by researchers, textbook writers, and teachers in different ways. Harmer (2001) describes role-plays as activities in which students are asked to act upon an imaginary situation assuming a different identity. According to the same author, role plays are effective when are open-ended, however, participants should be given information about who they are, and what they think and feel. Littlewood (2002) defines role play as an activity in which “learners are asked to imagine themselves in a situation which could occur outside the classroom; to adopt a specific role in this situation; and to behave as if the situation really existed” (p. 49).

According to Celce-Murcia (1988), role plays facilitate a match between structure and social functions and can be used for both communicative and focused grammar practice. Related to the development of sociolinguistic competence, role-play is useful to teach cultural factors or etiquette (Maxwell, 1997). Teachers will find some familiar language functions which are included as speech acts on the teaching materials, such as invitations, excuses, or anything that might be cultural sensitive. Role playing is useful for this purpose because it will help illustrate an appropriate procedure. Besides, the students will be able to observe a model and practice for themselves. Maxwell (1997), also states that language learners can gain a deeper awareness of the target culture by means of experiences in which they role play authentic situations. However, discussion with learners before or after the role play about the situation, roles, social distance, politeness, or other factors can be an effective way to help develop awareness and improve pragmatic competency (Kasper, 1997).

According to Robin D, (1993), the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) elicits responses to problematic, contextually-specific prompts as participants, in writing or orally, role-plays their responses. The origin of this sociolinguistic instrument promotes a written interaction with often more than one rejoinder between the respondent and a hypothetical character in the

second person. In other words, the respondent of the DCT was originally meant to write at least two separate utterances. The DCT has evolved gradually into several different modified versions, including some using a third person perspective, many requiring only a one-utterance written response from subjects, some which allow for oral response and, more recently, an extended interaction nearing an oral interview-like character. Oral responses, furthermore, have been videotaped for later assessment or rated by trained NS judges immediately upon oral performance (Cohen & Olshtain 1991).

In written discourse completion test (WDCT), students are provided by a written questionnaire that includes a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under study. Students are asked to provide a response that they think is appropriate in the given context, for example:

You promised to return a textbook to your classmate within a day or two, after photocopying a chapter. You kept it for almost 2 weeks.

Classmate: I'm really upset about the book because I needed it to prepare for last week's class.

You: (Cohen, 1996)

Written discourse completion tests have evolved gradually into several modified versions which vary in their presentation forms, being written or oral, and existence of rejoinder.

WDCT can include a rejoinder as in the following example:

You arranged to meet a friend in order to study together for exam. You arrive half an hour late for the meeting.

Friend (annoyed): I've been waiting at least half an hour for you!

You:

Friend: well, I was standing here waiting. I could have been doing something else.

You:

Friend: still, it's pretty annoying. Try to come on time next time (Cohen, 1996).

Discourse completion tests can also be presented in the form of multiple choices; the questionnaire consists of test items where the test taker is required to choose the correct response from the several given options. Most commonly, multiple choice items include an instruction to the test taker and a stem (typically either a phrase or sentence to be complemented, or a question). The key and several distractors then follow in random order as in this example:

You are a student. You forgot to do the assignment for your human resources course. When your teacher whom you have known for some years asks for your assignment, you apologize to him.

- a. I'm sorry, but I forgot the deadline for the assignment. Can I bring it to you at the end of the day?
- b. Pardon me, sir, I forgot about that. Shall I do the assignment at once? So sorry! It's my fault.
- c. I've completed my assignment but forgot to bring it with me. I'll hand it in tomorrow (Davies et al., 1999 cited in Jianda, 2006)

Accordingly, the discussion above demonstrates that endeavours to assess communicative competence have more recently included a sociolinguistic component. As more and more curricula begin to include the various ingredients of linguistically realized politeness norms

(e.g., register variation as dictated by perceived status of interlocutors, by sensitivity to situational formality and the face needs of interlocutors) as well as other socio-context dependent linguistic phenomena, the development of a valid process of evaluation becomes imperative.

2. The Pre-test

2.1. Description of the Test

As the literature review has indicated, the discourse completion test is one useful technique to make students activate their sociolinguistic and pragmatic knowledge, and refine their production of speech acts by presenting them to situations where active, productive use of the language is necessary (Judd, 1999).

Based on the definition reviewed above, and taking into account the objectives of the study in this stage, the researcher opted for the use of an open ended discourse completion test as a data gathering tool. This test allows the researcher to test the students' sociolinguistic competence before and after the experimental treatment. Open ended DCT also allows the researcher to control the social and cultural variables under investigation, and helps to limit the study to the predefined components of sociolinguistic competence namely linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register differences, and expression of folk wisdom.

In this study, the open-ended DCT is made of four hypothetical scenarios each describing a particular situation. The students were asked to go through the hints and make conversation out of the suggested scenario, and then to act it out orally. The scenarios are either adopted from Rose, K (1994) or created by the researcher to meet the objectives of the study. The suggested scenarios in the test represented communicative situations with different sociolinguistic variables such as social status, forms of address, forms of greetings, register differences. The suggested scenarios are designed to fit the students', and the teaching/learning context. Most of the time, the events described are taking place in places or situations that learners are supposed to encounter in their real life such as the classroom, the library, the campus, or at home, as indicated in the following example:

Scenario:

You are graduating this semester and planning to apply for the Master's program in one of the foreign universities. You need to submit a recommendation letter with the application, and you want one of your professors to write it for you, he knows you. You go to the professor's office

You greet your professor

You explain why you came to see her

The professor accepts to help you

You ask her to set up a time to meet again

You express your gratitude, and you leave

2.2. Administering the Pre-Test

The researcher distributed the pre-test to the learners in both groups i.e., the control and experimental. She read the instructions on how to complete the test, emphasizing that students shouldn't give an ideal response but rather responses that reflect their natural use in everyday communication. The researcher read each scenario in the test and explained it. The students were given enough time to read the scenarios and ask any questions before proceeding with the test. The researcher emphasized that the focus of this test is on contextual appropriateness, and that students try to keep the context of the utterance and the people being addressed in mind while answering. After ensuring that all the learners have understood the task, they were instructed to work in pairs to complete the test. After completing the task, students were asked to role-play the scenarios.

2.3. Rating the Students' Performance

A rating scale is a framework that serves as a scale for evaluating the students' performance; it is a technique for measuring language proficiency in which aspects of a learners' language use are judged using scales that go from worst to best performance in a number of steps (Richards and Schmidt, 2003, p. 441).

As indicated earlier in the review of literature, the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFRL) is chosen as a reference in terms of identifying the components included in the sociolinguistic competence. Hence, this document served as a guide for constructing the pre/post -tests. The CEFRL is chosen for two main reasons; first it provides the most detailed and practical description of the elements included in the sociolinguistic competence compared to frameworks highlighted in chapter 3. Second this

framework is a key reference document and a useful tool for all who are involved in language education.

Given that view, the pre/post- tests are designed to assess the students' performance in terms of the four categories included in the sociolinguistic competence specified by CEFRL. The categories are:

Linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register differences, and expression of folk wisdom. These categories are evaluated based on a rating scale system which contains the following components:

- Ability to use appropriate linguistic markers for social relations: forms of greeting, and leave taking, forms of address
- Ability to use appropriate expressions in terms of its register or variation.
- Ability to use appropriate expressions in terms of politeness markers.
- Ability to use expressions of folk wisdom: proverbs and idiomatic expressions.

The students' performances were evaluated according to an evaluation grid that included the sociolinguistic competence elements as shown in table 11.

		Sociolinguistic Competence Components			
		Linguistic makers of social relations	Politeness conventions	Register variations	Expression of folk wisdom
Rating scale	5	The student's use and choice of linguistic markers of social relations such as greetings, address forms, and expletives is completely appropriate; he always expresses understanding of context in his conversations.	The student's choice of politeness conventions such as appropriate use of expressions like 'please' and 'thank you' is completely appropriate; he always shows understanding of context in his conversations.	The student varies the choice of register in his conversations; he always shows awareness concerning differences in level of formality.	The student always uses expressions of folk wisdom such as proverbs, idioms, familiar quotations, and expressions of belief, attitudes and values in his conversations. He shows understanding and interest to popular culture.
	4	The student's use and choice is almost appropriate; usually uses appropriate linguistic markers of social relations in his conversations.	The student's choice and use is almost appropriate; he usually shows understanding of context in his conversations.	The student usually shows awareness concerning differences in level of formality.	The student usually uses expressions of folk wisdom in his conversations.
	3	The student's use and choice is to some extent appropriate; he sometimes uses linguistic markers of social relations in his conversations	The student's choice and use is to some extent appropriate; he sometimes shows understanding of context in his conversations.	The student sometimes shows awareness concerning differences in level of formality.	The student sometimes uses expressions of folk wisdom in his conversations.
	2	The student's use and choice is almost inappropriate; he rarely uses linguistic markers of social relations in his conversations	The student's choice and use is almost inappropriate; he rarely shows understanding of context in his conversations	The student rarely shows awareness concerning differences in level of formality.	The student rarely uses expressions of folk wisdom in his conversations
	1	The student's use and choice is completely inappropriate; he never uses linguistic markers for social relations in his conversations.	The student's choice and use is completely inappropriate; he never shows understanding of context in his conversations	The student never shows awareness concerning differences in level of formality.	The student never uses expressions of folk wisdom in his conversations.

Table 11. Evaluation Grid

Accordingly, each student is given a score rated on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 to 5, and scores ranged from 5 to 20 for the four components using an evaluation grid (see appendix, E)

3. The Treatment Procedure

It is worth noting that during the experimental treatment, both the experimental and the control groups received instruction as part of their syllabus activity during regular class periods of the oral expression course. The students were taught for approximately nine weeks in a session lasting for 90 minutes during the second semester of the academic year 2014/2015.

3.1. The Control Group

During the treatment phase of this study, students in the control group had ordinary class discussions during their oral expression sessions. Every week, a group of students is asked to prepare a research paper about a given topic for discussion in the classroom. Students were free in their choice of topics, which ranged from social, cultural, historical to political ones. The lesson plan is designed in this way:

1. After dealing with classroom management routines, the teacher asks students a set of questions as a warm up activity.
2. A group of students presents the given topic to their classmates.
3. After the presentation, students interact with each other through questions and answers. Students practice using English through classroom conversation and discussions.

The method is communicative in its approach; the role of the teacher is mainly limited to be the guide and facilitator of communication.

3.2. Description of the Treatment Material: Experimental Group

Most scholars, referred to in the review of literature, agreed on the fact that one important way to develop sociolinguistic competence is knowledge of the target language culture, and an awareness of the intercultural differences existing between students' native culture and the target one. An obvious way for helping EFL students attain this knowledge is to teach them culture in the classroom. In this study, the researcher attempts to address the topics of culture and sociolinguistic competence through designing a teaching program that teaches these concepts explicitly to university EFL students. The program consists of a set of classroom activities meant for culture and sociolinguistic exploration. These activities are adopted by the researcher from two main sources namely

Fantini, A.E. (Ed.) (1997). *New Ways in Teaching Culture*. Alexandria, V A: TESOL.

Huber-Kriegler, M., Lázár, I. & Strange, J. (2003). *Mirrors and Windows – An Intercultural Communication Textbook*. ECML/Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

As it was discussed earlier, this study presents an investigation of in-class culture related activities as a possible way to promote EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence. The researcher has incorporated these activities into a lesson plan that is constructed to address topics related to cultural and sociolinguistic exploration; these topics are chosen carefully to meet the students' interest, as well as to meet the teaching /learning objectives. The topics dealt with highlight the different values, behaviours, and ways of thinking, and how the conceptualization of such values varies from one culture to another. These activities offer the students an opportunity to recognize and practice various conversation topics and factors that are considered to be essential to communicate both effectively and appropriately. The underlying hypothesis was that students' sociolinguistic competence would be developed naturally by providing them with opportunities to explore language expression and its

relationship with social context within an intercultural dimension in a classroom setting. Taking into account the difficulties involved in teaching culture, as well as the limitations of classroom instructions already mentioned in the review of literature, the suggested teaching programme is composed of five units; the units are organized in a way that the activities dealt with are designed for the purpose of sociolinguistic exploration. These activities are suggested by the authors of *New Ways in Teaching Culture* (1997, pp.93-116), and are also related to the themes proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001, pp. 48-49). This latter specifies the assessment of learners' sociolinguistic competence in terms of five main categories namely linguistic markers for social relations, politeness conventions, register variation, expression of folk wisdom, and dialect and accent. All the units have the following common aims:

- Explore the connection between social context and language expression and the variety of speech styles used by native speakers of English.
- Reflecting on the students' own culturally determined values, behaviours, and ways of thinking.
- Raising awareness of intercultural differences resulting in aspects of language use.
- Raising students' awareness towards social factors that affect language use in different situations of communication.
- Enabling students to understand the differences existing between the target culture and their own culture through comparison and contrast.

The lesson plan for each unit is designed in the following way:

1. Presentation of the topic: This step serves as a warm up activity where the purpose is to get the students' attention and motivate them focus on the activities. The teacher provides the students with examples that address miscommunication or inappropriate use of language in context due to mainly cultural differences in order to raise their awareness to the importance of culture in communication in one hand, and to focus their attention on the coming activities on the other hand.
2. Activities for sociolinguistic exploration: this phase contains activities where students explore the different social and cultural factors affecting language use in different situations of communication. They are provided with new vocabulary, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions. The activities in this phase are also planned to expose students to various registers (formal/ informal). This exposure is expected to develop their awareness to various registers, and might lead to the use of new linguistic forms in their discourse.
3. Communication practice: in this phase students are asked to work in pairs and create little dialogues illustrating the communicative situations with different sociolinguistic variables. Then, act them out and have the rest of the group discuss their choices.

The topics dealt with and the objectives of the activities are outlined in table (12)

Topic	Activity	Objectives
I. Language and the social context	A sociolinguistic matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn different styles of language expression appropriate for varying contexts - Explore social factors that determine the need for each style - Understand the connection between social context and language expression and the variety of speech styles used by native speakers of English
II. Linguistic markers for social relations	What shall I call you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn to recognize patterns in language use and realise the connection language use and cultural values. - to focus the students' attention on the cultural reasons guiding the use of address forms - -To observe how language use reflects a culturally determined view of the world.
III. Register variation	Exploring relationships in a conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase understanding of the different speaking styles English speakers use. - To examine how speakers adjust their speech style according to differing social situations
IV. Politeness conventions	What do you mean by polite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To introduce students to the notion of politeness and give them an opportunity to role play situations in which they will be providing positive as well as negative feedback to their subordinates
V. Expression of Folk Wisdom	Exploring culture through conversational expressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To discover and understand the cultural and linguistic implications of language used in everyday conversations. - To realize that conversation is a very different sort of language, and it has very different rules and conventions that vary from culture to another. - To learn some conversational expressions that are commonly used reflecting an informal speaking style that is idiomatic and dialectical in nature.

Table 12. Topics and the Objectives of the Activities

3.3. Experiment Implementation Lesson Plan

3.3.1. Topic 1: Language and social context

Course: Oral Expression	Class: Third Year	Week: two	Duration: 90 minutes
Topic: Language and the social context			
Activity: a sociocultural matrix			
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn different styles of language expression appropriate for varying contexts - Explore social factors that determine the need for each style - Understand the connection between social context and language expression and the variety of speech styles used by native speakers of English 			
Resources : a sociocultural matrix			
Procedure			
<p>1. Introduction and presentation of the topic</p> <p>The teacher introduces the topic by giving general information. Students in this stage are asked a set of questions that help them to reflect on their own culture (values, customs, and behaviour).</p> <p>The teacher gives general information about language expression and its relationship to social context, and then asks students to discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you react if your teacher uses vulgar words in the classroom? - How would your parents react if you use taboo words at home? - How would you react if one of you friends uses vulgar words on the street, or in a coffee shop? 			
<p>2. Description of the activity (a sociocultural matrix)</p> <p>1. Teacher asks students about situations in which they find themselves on a daily basis, for example, at the university, in the cafeteria, on the street, on a bus, etc.</p>			

Then asks them to identify some people they often encounter in these situations (e.g., waiter, police, teacher, bus driver, etc.) and aspects of those people (e.g., young, or old, friends, strangers, waiters).

2. Students use a photocopied matrix to list situations down the left-hand column and the people and/or their attributes across the top (appendix). Then have students create a list of tasks.
3. In pairs, students choose various items from the grid and role play the tasks.
4. After that, the students come back together to discuss some of the ways they changed their language expression and the reasons for this.
5. Discuss what some important sociocultural factors relevant to the target culture and how these affect styles of speech. Teacher asks students compare and contrast these with factors in their own culture.

3. Communication Practice

Teacher asks students to role play situations in front of the class, and the rest of the student note whether the language and interaction were appropriate for the situation and task

As homework, teacher asks students to collect other situations and variables for future use in their discourse.

Appendix: A Sample Sociocultural Matrix

Interlocutors :	friend	teacher	waiter	police	bus driver	brother
Variables :	older	stranger	male	female	authority	younger
Situations :						
classroom						
cafeteria						
street						
bus						
Shop						

Some possible tasks

1. Introduce a friend to a class
2. Ask the university nurse for some aspirin
3. Request directions from someone on the street
4. Return an unwanted item to a store with a receipt (or without a receipt)
5. You witnessed an accident and wish to inform the police
6. You bumped into an elderly woman on the bus and wish to apologize
7. You pick up clothes at the cleaner and discover that a shirt was torn
8. You have a reservation on a flight but are told the flight is oversold

3.3.2. Topic 2: Linguistic Markers for Social Relations

Course: Oral Expression	Class: Third Year	Week: three	Duration:90minutes
Topic: linguistic markers for social relations			
Activity: what shall I call you			
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn to recognize patterns in language use and realise the connection between language use and cultural values. - To raise awareness of what address forms exist and to explain their co-occurrence options and functions in communication. - To raise awareness of how native speakers vary greetings and address pronouns depending on whom they are talking to. - to focus the students' attention on the cultural reasons guiding the use of address forms - To observe how language use reflects a culturally determined view of the world. 			
Resources:			
Procedure			
<p>1. Presentation of the topic</p> <p>As a warm up activity, the teacher asks students to answer a set of questions and have them reflect on their own culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What would be your teachers' reaction if you call them by their first name? - What would be your friend's reaction if you don't greet him/her while meeting? - What would be you father's reaction if you address him by 'hey you'? <p>The teacher elicits the students' answers and asks students to compare the answers with each other.</p>			
<p>2. Description of the activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher asks students to divide a sheet of paper into four vertical columns and to number each column from 1 to 20 2. Teacher asks students to list in the first column the full names of 20 people they 			

know and encounter in their daily life.

3. Teacher asks students to identify each of these people by writing their relationship to the student in the second column
4. Teacher asks students to imagine each of the 20 people they have listed is walking one by one ahead of them in a shopping mall or on the street. In the third column, students are asked to write the form they would use to get the attention of each of these people.
5. In the fourth column, students are asked to write the form of greeting/ leave-taking they may use with each of these people
6. Teacher asks students to examine their four columns by looking for the pattern in their use of address forms, greetings, and leave-taking. With which people do they use the same forms?
7. Teacher asks students to identify the reasons for their choices of address forms, greeting, and leave-taking. Students may identify age, occupation, length of time in contact, and nature of relationship, among their reasons
8. Teacher ask students to consider whether their choices are unique or reflective of their culture
9. If their choices are culturally triggered, teacher asks students to discuss what the system reveals about their culture.

3. Communication practice

Teacher asks students to choose situations from the list they have created, and then write brief dialogues to act them in front of the class.

3.3.3. Topic 3: Register Variation

Course: Oral Expression	Class: Third Year	Week: four	Duration: 90minute
Topic: Register Variation			
Activity: Exploring Relationships in Conversations			
Objective:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase understanding of the different speaking styles English speakers use. - To examine how speakers adjust their speech style according to differing social situations 			
Resources: copies of a set of dialogues for analysis			
Procedure			
<p>1. Presentation of the topic</p> <p>Teacher introduces the topic by giving general information. As a war up activity, teacher asks students to answer the following questions:</p> <p>Go through the following topics/ideas and decide if they are acceptable for introduction into a conversation with a person of the same age whom you meet for the first time at a fairly informal social event like a party in your culture. Add any conditions you think are necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age: could you ask someone’s age? • Family relationships: could you talk about problems and conflicts in your family? • Could you ask if someone is married? • Relationships: could you talk about your private life? • Health: could you talk about any health problems? • National (party) politics: could you criticise or praise government or opposition policies or politicians? • International politics: could you talk about international relations? • Jokes: could you tell a joke? What topics would be taboo? • Professions: could you ask what others’ professions are? Could you talk about your own? • Money: could you ask what something has cost or what somebody earns? 			

2. Description of the Activity

1. Teacher distributes copies of prepared dialogues to each student. Then asks students to work in pairs to discuss them.
2. Teacher provides brief explanations for any unfamiliar phrasing or vocabulary; he may solicit students' explanations whenever possible.
3. Teacher checks for general comprehension of each dialogue without explaining the subtleties of the interactions between speakers.
4. Teacher asks students to discuss each dialogue and then asks them to:
 - Describe the relationship between the speakers in each dialogue
 - Explain the purpose of the exchange between each pair of speakers in Dialogues A and B
 - Tell how the relationship between the speakers changes the speech style of each speaker.
 - Describe the speech style of each set of speakers
 - Determine if the communication was successful
 - Identify the meaning of the underlined language expressions
 - In Dialogue A, lines 3, 7, 8, &10, and Dialogue B, lines 6, 8, 11, & 13, identify what is understood by both speakers in each dialogue but is not expressed.

3. Communication Practice

Teacher asks students to work in pairs to create two short dialogues, one between two friends, and a second between a student and a teacher.

As a home work students are asked to make a comparative table between features of formal and informal registers

Appendix


Dialogue A: Phil call José to make plans to see a movie

- J: Hello
- P: Hey, what's up? It's Phil
- J: What's doing? Just got back from working out
- P: That's outstanding. You're sure in shape. Wanna go to the movies with Jan and me? There's a new Mel Gibson movie
I wanna see. What do ya think
- J: Yeah, me too.
- P: Great! Let's catch the 3 o'clock show at the 86th street Quad. Okay?
- J: My brother wants to see it too. I'll get him
- P: Think there'll be a problem with 3 o'clock?
- J: Nah. He's just taking it easy today.
- P: Cool. We haven't seen Tomas in a while. See ya then?
- J: Terrific

Dialogue B: Rosita is speaking with Mrs. Balev of the lost and found department of Olympic Mall. Rosita is checking to see if her lost sweater turned up

- B: Hello, may I help you?
- R: Yes, thanks. I was shopping at the Gap yesterday and I lost my sweater.
- B: can you describe it?
- R: well, it's beige with small and large red flowers.
- B: wait a minute. I'll check what came last night.
- R: I hope you can find it. It's my favourite sweater
- B: (Mrs. Balev returns after a few minutes.) yes, I think we have something here.
What's your size?
- R: I'm a medium. (Pointing.) Yes that's my sweater. Terrific
- B: We just need you to sign for it
- R: Thanks. I couldn't sleep last night. I was so worried.
- B: Glad we could be of help to you! Have a nice day
- R: You too

3.3.4. Topic 4: Politeness Conventions

Course: Oral Expression	Class: Third Year	Week: five	Duration: 90minutes
Topic: Politeness conventions			
Activity: what do you mean by polite			
Objectives			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To introduce students to the notion of politeness conventions and give them an opportunity to role play situations in which they will be providing positive as well as negative feedback to their subordinates 			
Resources: copy of the role play and discussion questions hand-outs for each student			
Procedure			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of the topic 			
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher asks students to comment on the picture. - Teacher distributes copies of a prepared text that compares politeness conventions between American and Japanese culture. - Teacher asks students to discuss their comprehension of the text and to reflect on their own culture. 			

2. Description of the activity

1. Teacher passes out the role-play hand-outs. Divides students into pairs, and read through Role Play 1
2. Teacher goes over the hints. As a general rule students should remember to always sandwich a negative comment with two positive ones when giving feedback.
3. The pairs should then take turns being Cathy and the Japanese manger.
4. Once the pairs have had sufficient practice, teacher asks two pairs to combine with each other. One pair performs while the other watches. Then groups go through the discussion questions. Pairs should then switch roles

Role Play 1

You are a manager working at subsidiary in the United States. You are now meeting with your subordinate Cathy to work on the 3M project and have her complete it by May 3

Background information: Cathy does excellent work but often misses deadlines. You need this project completed on time or else your company may lose this contact

Hints:

- First, thank her for coming
- Ask her to sit down
- Make sure you praise Cathy for her good work
- Tell her how important this project is and that she was chosen because of her superior work
- Explain to her that if you do not meet the deadline, you may lose your client entirely.
- Ask her if you can do anything to help her meet the deadline.
- If you can, use jokes to soften the mood, especially when you are giving constructive criticism.
- Don't forget that in the United States, 'you and I are equals' and 'you and I are relaxed' are two prevalent polite fictions.

Role Play 2

You are a manager working at a subsidiary in the United States. You are now meeting with your subordinate John. John has been late to work for the past 2 weeks.

Your task: you need to find out what is wrong and make sure that John is no longer late.

Background information: John has worked for your company for the past 10 years. He has been a hard worker and has rarely been late. You, therefore, have reasons to believe that he might have some personal problems causing his tardiness. Although you would like to help him with his problem, you want to make sure you are not invading his privacy.

Hints:

- First thank John for coming.
- Ask him how he's doing.
- Tell him that you know that he has worked for the company for the past 10 years and has been doing an outstanding job.
- Tell him that you have noticed that he has been late for the past 2 weeks and you are concerned about it.
- Ask him if there is anything going on that you should know about.
- Ask him if you can help with anything.
- If you can, use jokes to soften the mood, especially when you are giving constructive criticism.
- Don't forget that in the United States, 'you and I are equals' and 'you and I are relaxed' are two prevalent polite fictions.

Discussion Questions:

Partner:

- How did it feel?
- Did you feel that your boss respects you?

Observers:

- Did the person come across as treating the subordinate fairly?
- Would you like to work under him or her?
- How were his or her nonverbal? Did he or she look the subordinate in the eye?
- Did he or she seem relaxed and confident or did he or she look tense and unsure?

Appendix

According to Sakamoto and Naotsuka (1982), “every culture has its own polite fictions. Whenever we want to be polite, we must act out certain fictions, regardless of the facts. For example, when you meet someone, you may or may not like him, but either way, you must politely pretend to like him” (p.3). There are many Japanese polite fictions that contrast with the corresponding U.S polite fictions. Some examples are:

1. The US polite fiction that ‘you and I are equals’ contrasts with the Japanese polite fiction that ‘you are my superior’. In the United States, the belief that ‘all men are created equal’ lies at the core of the social graces. Let us say that you are dining with the president of your company. You might call him Mr. Smith as opposed to Bob, but your actions as well as the language you speak would not differ too much from when you are speaking to a friend. Let us now say that dining with you and Mr. Smith is a much older man. Although he may make remarks about his age, you should politely not mention it. After all, the polite fiction in the United States is “you and I are equal.” Even when asking your subordinate to do something, or

when correcting his or her mistakes, you would have to treat him or her as equal by asking nicely rather than ordering or scolding them.

2. The US polite fiction that “you and I are relaxed” contrasts with the Japanese polite fiction “I’m busy on your behalf.” If you are on the way to take a difficult exam, a north American is likely to say “take it easy!” while a Japanese is likely to say “gambatte” (work hard)

If you go to a Japanese home for dinner, the hostess will often be running around cooking or bringing you food and drink. On the other hand, if you go to a European American home in the United States, the hostess would probably sit with you and pretend that she went to no trouble at all for you. She might have, however, spent the whole day cooking for you.

This same polite fiction can be seen at the workplace. For example, if you ask a Japanese subordinate to do something for you in a hurry, he or she will probably run around looking very busy. On the other hand, if you ask a US subordinate to do something in a hurry, he or she might walk calmly with confidence to his or her desk and work on it as fast as he or she can. Again, the polite fiction “I’m busy on your behalf” contrasts with “you and I are relaxed”

3.3.5. Topic 5: Expression of Folk Wisdom

Course: Oral Expression	Class: Third Year	Week: five	Duration:90minutes
Topic: Expression of Folk Wisdom			
Activity: Exploring Culture Through Conversational Expressions			
Objectives			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To discover and understand the cultural and linguistic implications of language used in everyday conversations. - To realize that conversation is a very different sort of language, and it has very different rules and conventions that vary from culture to another. - To learn some conversational expressions that are commonly used reflecting an informal speaking style that is idiomatic and dialectical in nature 			
Resources: List of conversational expressions. Index cards			
Procedure			
<p>1. Presentation of the topic</p> <p>Teacher presents the topic by reviewing the meaning of ‘idiomatic expressions, proverbs and conversational phrases’</p> <p>Teacher explains that one of the keys to sound like a native is the ability to use and understand casual expressions, or idioms. English like any other language is full of these expressions.</p>			
<p>2. Description of the activity</p> <p>1. Teacher provides students with a list of commonly used conversation expressions and asks students to guess their meaning. Match each conversation with its real meaning.</p>			
Expression		meaning	
To give one a ring		to be strong	
To keep a stiff upper lip		to be deceived by someone	
To get burned		to telephone someone	

To lighten up	that's very odd
What's up	to remove
Catch you later	to be relaxed about something
Quit pulling my leg	enter
That's really off the wall	how are you? What's new?
Come on in	see you later
Get rid of	stop kidding around

2. Teacher asks students to discuss the meaning of the expressions, their cultural significance, the identity of the speakers within the social context, and how the expressions are used
3. Teacher asks students to work in small groups to brainstorm at least four more such expressions. Students are asked to discuss their understanding of the expressions according to the criteria listed in step 2. They may write sentences illustrating their expressions.
4. In the meantime, teacher circulates to give groups any needed support to interpret the expressions
5. Teacher asks groups to join those from other groups to discuss and share their findings. Each small group should then make changes to their sentences based on class feedback to their contributions.
6. Teacher provides students with a listening tape of situation comedy entitled 'speak English like an American'.
7. Teacher asks students to listen for, and take notes on conversational expressions that are new to them.
8. Students make a list of these expressions, and then they work in pairs to brain storm a

list of corresponding conversational expressions from their own culture. These are to be added to the list compiled from the situation comedy.

3. Communication practice

- Teacher asks students in each group to use the expressions they have found to create short dialogues and act them out
- As a home work, Teacher asks each group to look for more expressions and to prepare a final version of the set of conversational expressions on index cards. Information on the card needs to include: the meaning, the cultural significance, speaker identity within the social context, and how each saying is used.

4. The post-test

4.1. Description of the Test and Scoring Procedure

To ensure that the pre and post-tests were equitable regarding their degree of difficulty, the situations presented on the post-test were comparable to those given on the pre-test. The post-test was also made of four hypothetical scenarios and students were asked how they would respond to each scenario within a context given on the DCT. The four scenarios for the open role plays contained a variety of contextual variables; the scenarios took place either in a formal or informal setting (at a university/ on the street), the topics of the conversations were also varied in terms of formality (school, work related/), and the level of familiarity between the interlocutors differs from one scenario to another (professor/ neighbour/ roommate). The scenarios differed in contextual variables to give students the opportunity to vary their discourse according to the situation of communication.

Something noteworthy is that in order to ensure equitability between the pre-test and the post-test; the same procedure of evaluation used in the pre-test was followed by the researcher for each of the five scenarios in the post- test.

4.2. Administering the Test

After 9 weeks of teaching culture related activities as a treatment process to the experimental group, the researcher administered the post-test during a normal duration of oral expression session. The same test was given for students in both control and experimental groups.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed description of the experiment implementation. It started with demonstrating the objectives of the study in its experimental stage, and this was followed by detailed information about participants and sampling procedure. Next, the data collection instrument was described, and this included information on administering the test and how the students' performance was rated, further, a detailed description of the evaluation grid was included. In addition, information concerning the treatment procedure was provided; this consists of a full description of the experiment teaching programme lesson plans. As a final step in the experiment implementation, information concerning constructing and administering the post-test was also presented.

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VII. Results of the Study

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings regarding the effects of intercultural activities on the students' sociolinguistic competence. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the research questions and hypotheses related to this problem. The mean scores of both experimental and control groups are reported and applied to verify or reject the research hypotheses. In addition, an independent sample t-test is used to see whether the differences were significant or not. The computer program called SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) is applied since it has been admitted by many researchers in the field as being one of the best programs used for the analysis of results.

1. The Pre-test Results

1.1. Restatement of the Research Questions and Hypotheses

To recall, the broad aim of this study is to explore the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in an EFL setting to university students from an intercultural perspective. Accordingly, the study aims to examine the effectiveness of the use of in-class culture based activities as a resource for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence, and how these activities may further assist students' intercultural communicative competence development as a whole. Based on this research aim, the following research questions were investigated:

1. How effective is the implementation of in-class culture based activities as a source for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence?
2. To what extent does the classroom serve for sociolinguistic and intercultural exploration, and how do students view the experience of learning sociolinguistic competence using in-class culture based activities?

These two main research questions correspond to the experimental procedure that is the second stage of the study. The first research question examines the effectiveness of introducing in-class culture based activities for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence; the researcher answers this question by implementing the new suggested teaching programme, and examined its effectiveness according to the learners' performances in the pre-test/ post-test discourse completion tests. The second research question investigates the learners' views towards this suggested programme, and their evaluation of the learning experience as whole. The researcher answers this question by conducting an interview with the students from the experimental group.

As discussed earlier in the introductory chapter, the current study is a classroom-based research that was conducted using a quasi-experimental design: pre-test → treatment → post-test. Discourse Completion Tests were used to collect data in the pre-test/ post-test sessions, the independent variable is the new teaching method(introducing culture based activities) and the dependent variable is the students' sociolinguistic competence development measured by the students' performance in the pre/post-tests. This research project is based on a case study method used to investigate a group of EFL university students at Khenchela University.

Subsequently, to answer the above stated research questions, the two following hypotheses are formulated:

1. Implementing in –class culture based activities in EFL classes would provide access to the social and cultural dimensions of language use, and would enhance the development of learners' sociolinguistic competence.
2. Students who receive instruction on the target societies' culture using an intercultural approach would show better communicative performance and intercultural understanding.

Hence, the results presented in this chapter aim at finding out if classroom instruction provides access to the social dimensions of language use and therefore supports the development of sociolinguistic competence. It is worth noting that the categories described under the sociolinguistic competence in the CEFRL were used to evaluate the students' sociolinguistic competence during their performance in the pre/post-tests.

Table (13) and table (14) report the descriptive statistical results of the DCT pre-test scores for the control and the experimental groups respectively. Each student received four scores based on his or her ability to use and choose appropriate linguistic forms in terms of: linguistic markers for social relations, politeness conventions, register variations, and

expressions of folk wisdom. The student, then, is given a total mark corresponding to his or her performance regarding sociolinguistic aspects. This latter is the sum of his scores in the aforementioned subcategories.

1.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Results of the Control Group in the Pre-Test

		Pre-Test (04 situations)															Score /20																						
		L.M.R.S					P.C					R.V						E.F.W																					
		5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1																	
STUDENTS	1		x					x						x					x																			14	
	2		x					x							x																							13	
	3			x																																		09	
	4			x																																		08	
	5			x																																		10	
	6			x																																		10	
	7				x																																	09	
	8				x																																	09	
	9					x																																06	
	10					x																																05	
	11				x																																	08	
	12				x																																	08	
	13			x																																		11	
	14				x																																	08	
	15			x																																		09	
	16			x																																		10	
	17		x																																			12	
	18			x																																		11	
	19					x																																x	06
	20					x																															x	06	
	21				x																																x	08	
	22				x																																x	07	
	23			x																																	x	09	
	24			x																																	x	10	
	25		x																																		x	14	
	26		x																																		x	13	
	27			x																																	x	10	
	28			x																																	x	08	
	29			x																																	x	11	
	30			x																																	x	11	
	31				x																															x		06	
	32				x																																x	08	
	33			x																																	x	10	
	34			x																																	x	08	
	35					x																															x	05	
Score/5	2.6					2.6					2.2					1.74					9.14																		
Mean/20=	9.14																																						

Table 13. Results of the Control Group in the Pre-Test

Table (13) displays the pre-test results of the control group students as far as the sociolinguistic aspects are concerned:

1. Linguistic markers of social relations: this category includes appropriate use and choice of elements such as forms of greetings, address forms, asking about well-being, expletives, and greetings of leave taking. According to the students' performance in the four situations of the DCT, the control group received a mean score of 2.6 /5. This, in fact, is expected since the majority of students are used to use these aspects in their daily speech as revealed in their answers for the questionnaire.
2. Politeness conventions: the second category includes appropriate use and choice of aspects related to positive politeness, negative politeness, appropriate use and choice of expressions such as "please" and "thank you", and impoliteness. The control group received a mean score of 2.6 /5 for this category.
3. Register variations: The CEFRL describes this category as the one dealing with differences in level of formality. The framework identifies six levels: frozen, formal, neutral, informal, familiar, and intimate. Compared to the previous categories, students received a lower mean score; 2.2 /5. Students did not vary their register for the four situations of the DCT; most of the time, their discourse was characterized by the use of the formal register.
4. Expression of folk wisdom: this category concerns appropriate use of expressions of folk wisdom which can be defined as expressions of fixed formulae that are described in the CEFRL as reinforcing common attitudes and contributing significantly to popular culture. They are found in proverbs, idioms, familiar quotations, and expressions of belief, attitudes and values. According to the students' performance in the four situations of DCT, very few of these expressions were used by students in

their discourse, in some cases none, therefore, the control group received a very low score for this category;1.74 /5

All in all, the control group achieved an overall score of 9.14 /20 as a result of the students' performance in the four situations of the pre-test.

1.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Results of the Experimental Group in the Pre-Test

		Pre-Test (04 situations)																				Score /20
		L.M.R.S					P.C					R.V					E.F.W					
		5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	
STUDENTS	1		x					x					x						x		12	
	2		x					x					x						x		12	
	3			X					x					x						x	08	
	4			x					x					x						x	08	
	5				X				x					x						x	08	
	6				X			x						x						x	10	
	7				X			x							x					x	08	
	8				X				x						x					x	08	
	9					x				x					x					x	06	
	10			x						x					x					x	08	
	11				X					x					x					x	06	
	12				X					x					x					x	07	
	13				X				x					x						x	10	
	14				X				x					x						x	10	
	15				X					x					x					x	08	
	16				X					x					x					x	07	
	17		x							x					x					x	12	
	18		x							x					x					x	13	
	19				X					x					x					x	10	
	20				x					x					x					x	10	
	21			x						x					x					x	09	
	22		x							x					x					x	11	
	23			x						x					x					x	12	
	24			x						x					x					x	09	
	25				x					x					x					x	06	
	26				x					x					x					x	09	
	27				x					x					x					x	10	
	28			x						x					x					x	11	
	29					x				x					x					x	06	
	30				x					x					x					x	08	
	31				x					x					x					x	08	
	32			x						x					x					x	08	
Score/5	2.50					2.75					2.00					1.75					9.00	
	Mean/20= 9.00																					

Table 14. Results of the Experimental Group in the Pre-Test

As shown in table 14, the same categories related to sociolinguistic competence are used to account for the experimental group performance in the pre-test. Concerning linguistic markers of social relations, the EG achieved a mean score of 2.50 /5. The mean score for the second category of politeness conventions is 2.75/ 5. It is estimated at 2.00/5 as far as the third category of register variation is concerned. In terms of the fourth and the last category which is expression of folk wisdom, the EG achieved a mean score of 1.75 /5. The results obtained in the pre-test show that the overall mean score achieved by the experimental group is 9.00/20

1.4. Comparison of the Results between the Control and the Experimental Groups in the Pre-Test

	Pre-test				Mean difference
	Control group		Experimental group		
	Mean	S. deviation	Mean	S. deviation	
L.M.S.R	2.60	.914	2.50	.842	0.10
P.C	2.60	.651	2.75	.672	0.15
R.V	2.20	.677	2.00	.762	0.20
E.F.W	1.74	.657	1.75	.622	0.01
Average	9.14		9.00		0.14

Table 15. Comparison between the control and the experimental groups overall results in the pre-test

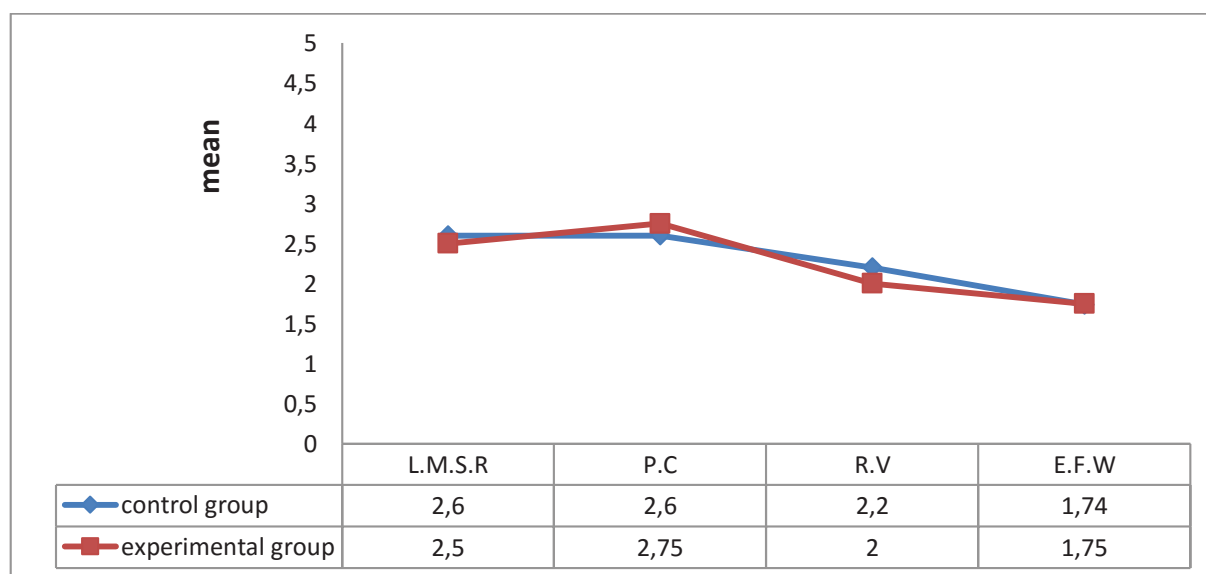


Figure 26. Comparison between the control and the experimental groups overall results in the pre-test

Table 15 and graph (26) display the mean scores and standard deviations for both groups i.e., Control and Experimental in the pre-test. It shows that the control group received a pre-test score of 9.14/20. The control group received 2.60/5 (SD =.914) in linguistic markers for social relations, 2.60/5 (SD=.651) in politeness conventions, 2.20/5 (SD = .677) in register variations, and 1.74/5.(SD = .657) in Expression of folk wisdom. The experimental group yielded mean scores of 9.00/20. The experimental group received 2.50/5(SD = .842) in linguistic markers for social relations, 2.75/5(SD = .672) in politeness conventions, 2.00/5(SD = .762) in register variation, and 1.75(SD = .622) in expression of folk wisdom.

As Figure (26) illustrates,

- The pre-test scores reflect similar abilities between the control group and the experimental group; in linguistic markers of social relations a tiny difference of (0.10) is recorded in favour of the control group, on the other hand, a small difference in favour of the experimental group is noticed in the component of politeness conventions estimated at (0.15). A difference of (0.20) is noticed in favour of the control group this time concerning the component of register variation. As far as the components of expression of folk wisdom, the results obtained indicate no difference in the mean scores recorded for both groups (0.01 difference)
- According to these quantitative data, a very slight difference in means between the two groups is recorded; this has no other significance than students in both groups have relatively the same level concerning their sociolinguistic competence.
- The results displayed in table (14) and figure (26) summarize the results obtained in the pre-test, it is quite apparent through the mean scores recorded for both groups (CG: mean=9.14/20, and EG: mean= 9.00/20) that the level of students in both groups is insufficient; therefore, a treatment is necessary to improve the students' level as far as their sociolinguistic competence is concerned.

- Regarding the results obtained from the pre-test, students failed to vary their registers in their productions according to the context of communication, they did not use variety of address forms or forms of greeting and farewell, and they also failed to use any kind of idiomatic expressions in their speech. Students tend to use the formal register most of the time for all the situations. This, in fact, reflects a weakness in this area of competence that needs a treatment.
- Among the four components of sociolinguistic competence, it seems noticeable from the results obtained that the components of register variation and expression of folk wisdom received the lowest scores. It seems, then, fair to assume that students need to have opportunities for pedagogical intervention that foster different registers to extend students' sociolinguistic competence and thereby develop their capacity to recognize and produce socially appropriate speech in context.

2. The Post-test Results

2.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Results of the Control Group in the Post-Test

		Post-Test (04 situations)															Score /20																					
		L.M.R.S					P.C					R.V						E.F.W																				
		5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1																
STUDENTS	1		x							x				X					X																		12	
	2			x						x				X							x																11	
	3			x						x					X						x																10	
	4			x						x					x						x																10	
	5				x					x					x						x																09	
	6				x					x					x						x																09	
	7			x						x					X						x																11	
	8			x						x					x																			x			09	
	9				x						x				x																			x			07	
	10				x						x				x																			x			07	
	11			x							x				X							x															11	
	12			x							x				x							x															09	
	13				x						x				X						X																11	
	14			x							x				x						X																11	
	15			x						x					x																				x		10	
	16			x							x				x																				x		09	
	17			x						x					X							x															11	
	18			x							x				X							x															11	
	19				x						x				X							x															10	
	20				x						x				x																					x	07	
	21		x								x				x						X																13	
	22			x							x				x																						11	
	23			x							x				x																							11
	24		x								x				x						X																12	
	25			x							x				x																						09	
	26				x						x				x																					X	08	
	27			x							x				x						X																12	
	28			x							x				x																						11	
	29			x							x				x																						10	
	30			x							x				x																						11	
	31			x							x				x						X																11	
	32				x						x				x																					X	07	
	33			x							x				x																						X	11
	34			x							x				x																						X	11
	35				x						x				x																						X	08
Score/5	2.80					2.80					2.49					1.94					10.03																	
	Mean/20= 10.03																																					

Table 16. Results of the Control Group in the Post-Test

Table (16) shows the mean scores obtained by each learner in the control group for the post-test. The control group received an overall score of 10.03/20. The control group had 2.80/5 in linguistic markers for social relations, 2.80/5 in politeness conventions, 2.49/5 in register variations, and 1.94/5 in Expression of folk wisdom.

2.2. Comparison of Control Group Results in the Pre/post Tests

	Control Group				
	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean difference
	Mean	S. deviation	Mean	S. deviation	
L.M.S.R	2.60	.914	2.80	.584	0.20
P.C	2.60	.651	2.80	.531	0.20
R.V	2.20	.677	2.49	.507	0.29
E.F.W	1.74	.657	1.94	.684	0.20
Average	9.14		10.03		0.89

Table 17. Comparison of Control Group Results in the Pre/post tests

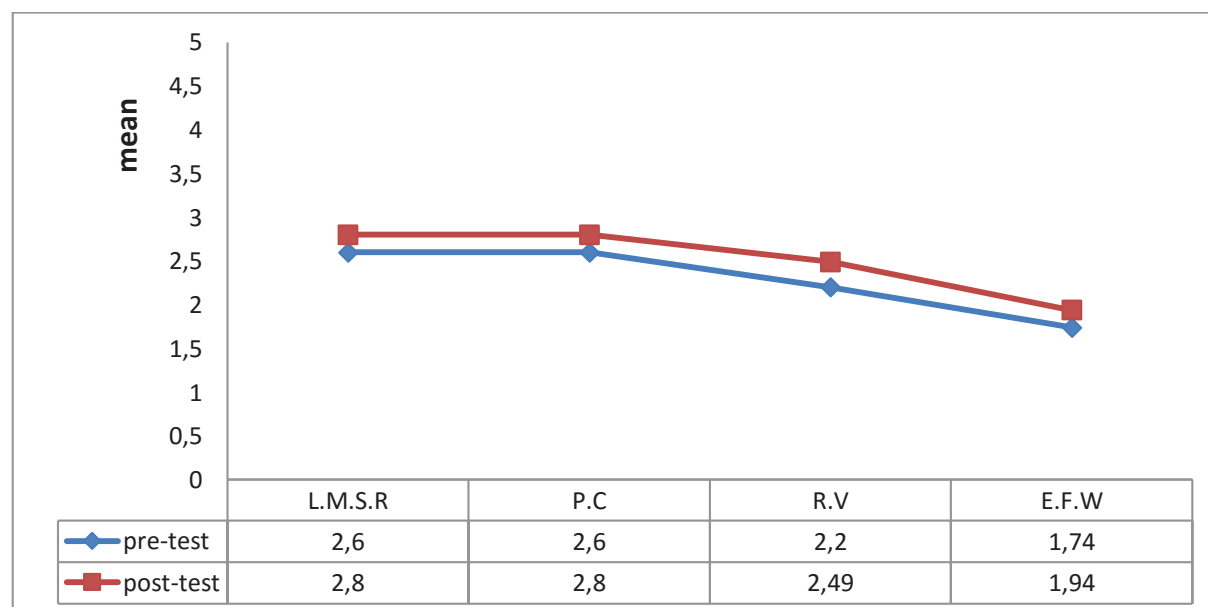


Figure 27. Comparison of Control Group Results in the Pre/post tests

Table (17) and graph (27) display the mean scores and standard deviations for the Control group in both the pre-test and the post-test.

- The results presented in the table indicate that the control group received an overall mean score of 9.14/20 in the pre-test, and an overall score of 10.03/20 in the post-test; the difference between the pre-test and the post-test is estimated at 0.89. This value is not quite significant as the students' level remained nearly the same after the six sessions of ordinary classes.
- The results demonstrated in figure (27) and table (17) show clearly that there is not a noticeable, distinctive increase in terms of the control group total achievement in the mean scores of the pre-test and the post-test in terms of the four components.

In linguistic markers of social relations, the control group scored 2.60/5(S.D. = 0.914) in the pre-test, and 2.80/5 (S.D.=.584) in the post test; the difference is estimated at 0.20

In politeness conventions, the mean score was 2.60/5 (S.D.=.651) in the pre-test, it has been recorded to be 2.80/5 (S.D.=.531) in the post-test and the difference is 0.20

In register variation, the mean score was 2.20/5 (S.D. = .677) in the pre-test, it is estimated at 2.49/5 (S.D.=.507) in the post-test; the difference is 0.29

For the final component which is expression of folk wisdom, the mean score of the pre-test was 1.74/5 (S.D.= .657), it has been recorded to be 1.94/5(S.D.=.684) in the post-test, with a difference of 0.20

- The results discussed above indicate that students in the control group are still unable to show stylistic variation in their productions. They are generally reluctant to use forms of familiar English; they still use one standard form of language for most of the

situations which may limit their opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations with English native speakers of their age.

- As a conclusion, comparing the CG results obtained in the pre-test and the post-test, the ordinary class discussions seem to only provide students with a variety of English that is appropriate for formal functions such as studying or workplace, but does not expose them to socio-stylistic variation of the target language.

2.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Results of the Experimental Group in the Post-test

		Test (04 situations)															Score /20						
		L.M.R.S					P.C					R.V						E.F.W					
		5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1	
STUDENTS	1	x						x					x							X			15
	2	x						x					x							X			16
	3		x						x				x							x			14
	4		x						x				x							X			14
	5			x						x				X						X			12
	6			x						x				X						X			12
	7			x							x					x				x			10
	8		x								x					x				X			11
	9			x						x					X					X			12
	10			x						x						x				X			11
	11		x							x					X						x		12
	12			x						x						x					x		10
	13		x							x					X						x		12
	14		x							x					X						x		12
	15			x						x					X					X			12
	16			x						x					X					X			12
	17			x						x				x						X			13
	18		x							x				x						x			14
	19		x							x				x						x			15
	20	x								x					X				x				15
	21		X							X					X					X			15
	22		X							X					X					X			14
	23	X								X					X						X		15
	24			X						X					X					X			12
	25		X							X					X					X			14
	26		X							X					X					X			14
	27		X							X					X					X			13
	28	X								X					X						X		14
	29			X							X				X					X			11
	30		X							X					X				X				14
	31			X						X					X					X			12
	32			X						X					X					X			12
Score/5	3.75					3.09					3.25					2.84					12.93		
	Mean /20=					12.93																	

Table 18. Results of the Experimental Group in the Post-test

Table (18) demonstrates the mean scores obtained by each learner in the experimental group for the post-test. The experimental group received an overall score of 12.93/20. The experimental group achieved 3.75/5 in linguistic markers for social relations, 3.09/5 in politeness conventions, 3.25/5 in register variations, and 2.84/5 in Expression of folk wisdom

2.4. Comparison of the Experimental Group Results in the Pre/Post Test

	Experimental Group				Mean difference
	Pre-test		Post-test		
	mean	S. deviation	mean	S. deviation	
L.M.S.R	2.50	.842	3.75	.718	1.25
P.C	2.75	.672	3.09	.530	0.34
R.V	2.00	.662	3.25	.672	1.25
E.F.W	1.75	.622	2.84	.515	1.09
Average	9.00		12.93		3.93

Table 19. Comparison of the Experimental Group Results in the Pre/Post Test

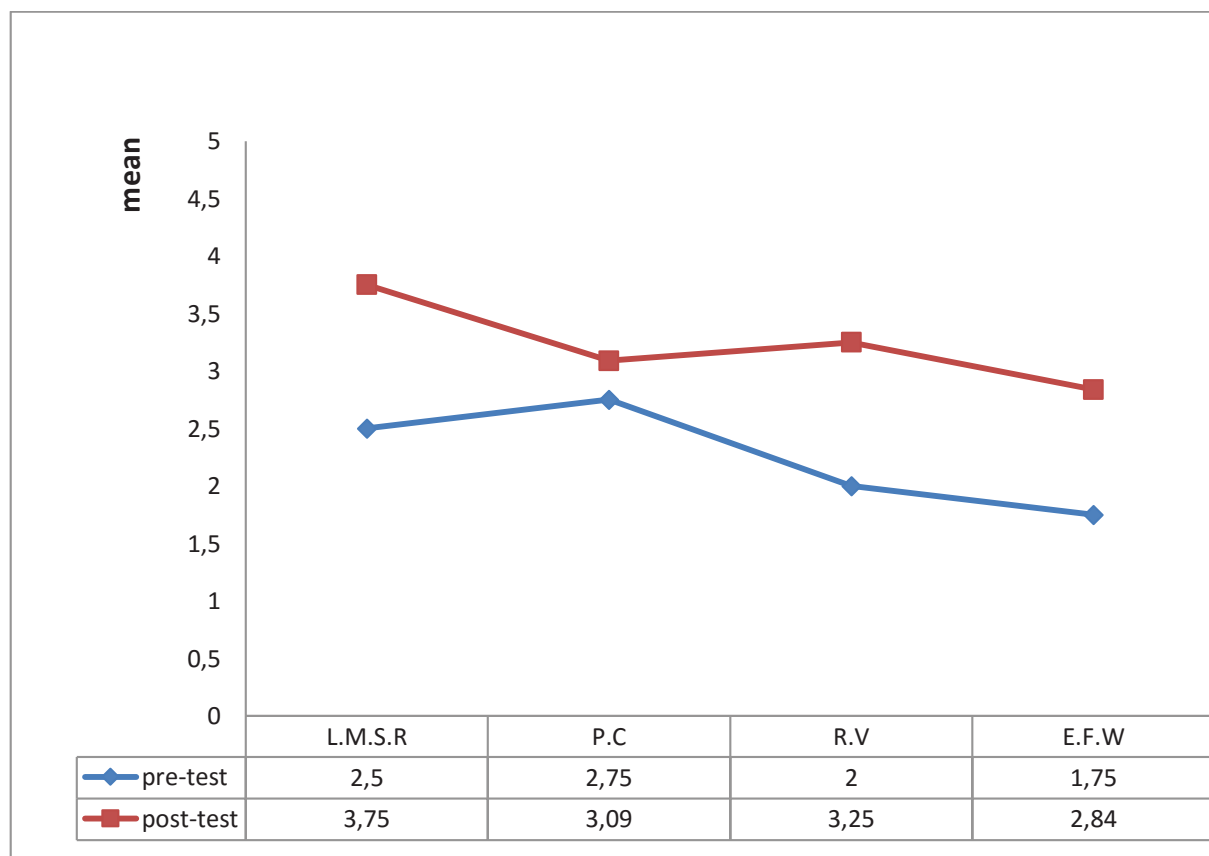


Figure 28. Comparison of the Experimental Group Results in the Pre/Post Test

Table (19) presents the mean scores and standard deviations for the experimental group in both the pre-test and the post-test.

- The results show that the experimental group achieved an overall mean score of 9.00/20 in the pre-test, and an overall score of 12.93 in the Post-test; the difference between the pre-test and the post-test is estimated at 3.93; this value is significant as the students' level improved considerably at the time of the post-test compared to the pre-test.
- The results in figure (28) and table (19) indicate clearly that there is a noticeable, distinctive increase in terms of the experimental group overall achievement in the mean scores of the post-test in terms of the four components:
 - Linguistic markers of social relations: the experimental group scored 2.50/5(S.D. = .842) in the pre-test, and 3.75/5(S.D.=.718) in the post test; the difference is estimated at 1.25. This result reveals an increased awareness of the experimental group learners for the use and choice of appropriate forms of address, forms of greetings and leave-taking, and the use of expletives as required by different situations of communications.
 - Politeness conventions: the mean score was 2.75/5 (S.D.= .672) in the pre-test, it has been recorded to be 3.09/5 (S.D.=.530) in the post-test and the difference is 0.34. The findings obtained for this category did not show a great amount of significance in terms of improvement.
 - Register variation, the mean score was 2.00/5 (S.D.=.762) in the pre-test, it is estimated at 3.25/5 (S.D.=.672) in the post-test; the difference is 1.25. The findings of the post-test indicate that members of the experimental group significantly increased their ability to use the informal register appropriately in informal situations, as well as their ability to use contextually appropriate English. Students in the experimental group succeeded to vary their registers.

- For the final component which is expression of folk wisdom, the mean score of the pre-test was 1.75/5 (S.D. = .622), it has been recorded to be 2.84/5 (S.D.=.515) in the post-test; the value of difference is 1.09. This means that the experimental group achieved significantly better results for the uses of expressions of folk wisdom, especially idiomatic expression in their discourse. They were able to show a greater amount of contextually appropriate idiomatic expressions.

2.5. The Post-test Comparison of the Results between the Control and the Experimental Group

2.5.1. Comparison between the Control and the Experimental Groups Overall Results in the Post-Test

	Post-test				Mean difference
	Control group		Experimental group		
	mean	S. deviation	mean	S. deviation	
L.M.S.R	2.80	.584	3.75	.718	0.95
P.C	2.80	.531	3.09	.530	0.29
R.V	2.49	.507	3.25	.672	0.76
E.F.W	1.94	.684	2.84	.515	0.90
Average	10.03		12.93		2.90

Table 20. Comparison between the control and the experimental groups overall results in the post-test

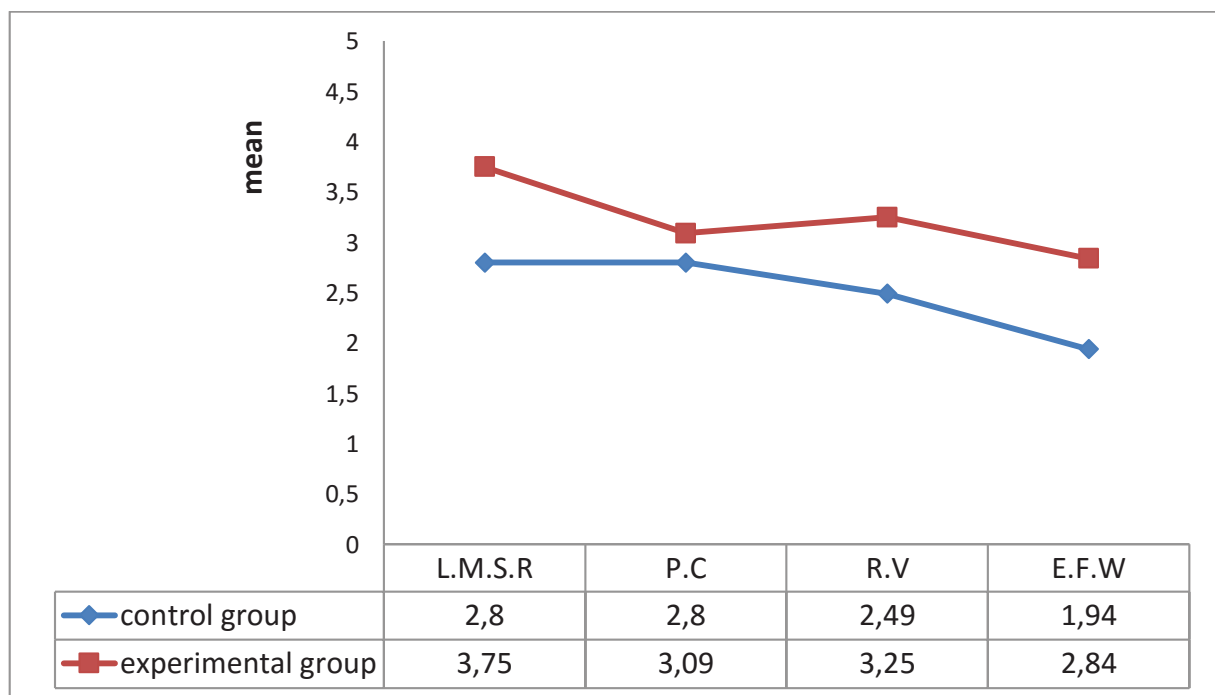


Figure 29. Comparison between the control and the experimental groups overall results in the post-test

Table (20) displays the mean scores and standard deviations for both groups i.e., Control and Experimental in the post-test. It shows that the control group received a post-test score of 10.03/20. The control group received 2.80/5 (SD = .584) in linguistic markers for social relations, 2.80/5 (SD=.531) in politeness conventions, 2.49/5 (SD =.507) in register variations, and 1.94/5 (SD = .684) in Expression of folk wisdom.

The experimental group yielded mean scores of 12.90/20 in the post-test . The experimental group received 3.75/5 (SD = .718) in linguistic markers for social relations, 3.09/5 (SD = .530) in politeness conventions, 3.25/5 (SD = .772) in register variation, and 2.84/5 (SD = .515) in expression of folk wisdom.

As figure (29) illustrates, when comparing the mean scores yield from both groups in the post-test, the following findings are noticeable:

- The post-test scores reflect a noticeable improvement of the experimental group for the overall achievement mean score of 12.93/20 recording a difference of 2.90 compared to the control group with a mean score of 10.03/20.
- Identical to the observations made for the overall achievement mean score; the post-test scores for the component of linguistic markers of social relations demonstrate a degree of development in favour of the experimental group. This latter has clearly improved with a difference estimated at 0.95. As indicated in table (19) the control group reached a post-test score of 2.80 (SD = .584) whereas the experimental group achieved post-test score of 3.75(SD = .718).
- Concerning politeness conventions, the control group scored a mean of 2.80 (S.D. =.531), the experimental group achieved a mean score of 3.09 (S.D. =.530), and their post-test scores reflected a certain distance from the control group. (Difference= 0.29).

- The post-test score of the control for the component of register variation is 2.49 (SD =.507), the score for the experimental group is (mean= 3.25 S.D. = .672), it outperformed the control group with 0.76.
- The post-test score of the control group for the last component of expression of folk wisdom is 1.94 (SD = .684); the experimental group received a score of 2.84 (SD = .515). The mean scores for post-tests again reflected differences between the two groups in favour of the experimental group.(difference = 0.90)

2.5.2. Comparison of the Results of Control and Experimental Groups in the Pre/Post Tests

	Control group					Experimental group				
	Pre-test		Post-test		D	Pre-test		Post-test		D
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
L.M.S.R	2.60	.914	2.80	.584	0.20	2.50	.842	3.75	.718	1.25
P.C	2.60	.651	2.80	.531	0.20	2.75	.672	3.09	.530	0.34
R.V.	2.20	.677	2.49	.507	0.29	2.00	.662	3.25	.672	1.25
E.F.W.	1.74	.657	1.94	.684	0.20	1.75	.622	2.84	.515	1.09
Average	9.14		10.03		0.89	9.00		12.93		3.93

Table 21. Comparison of pre/post test scores of the experimental and control group

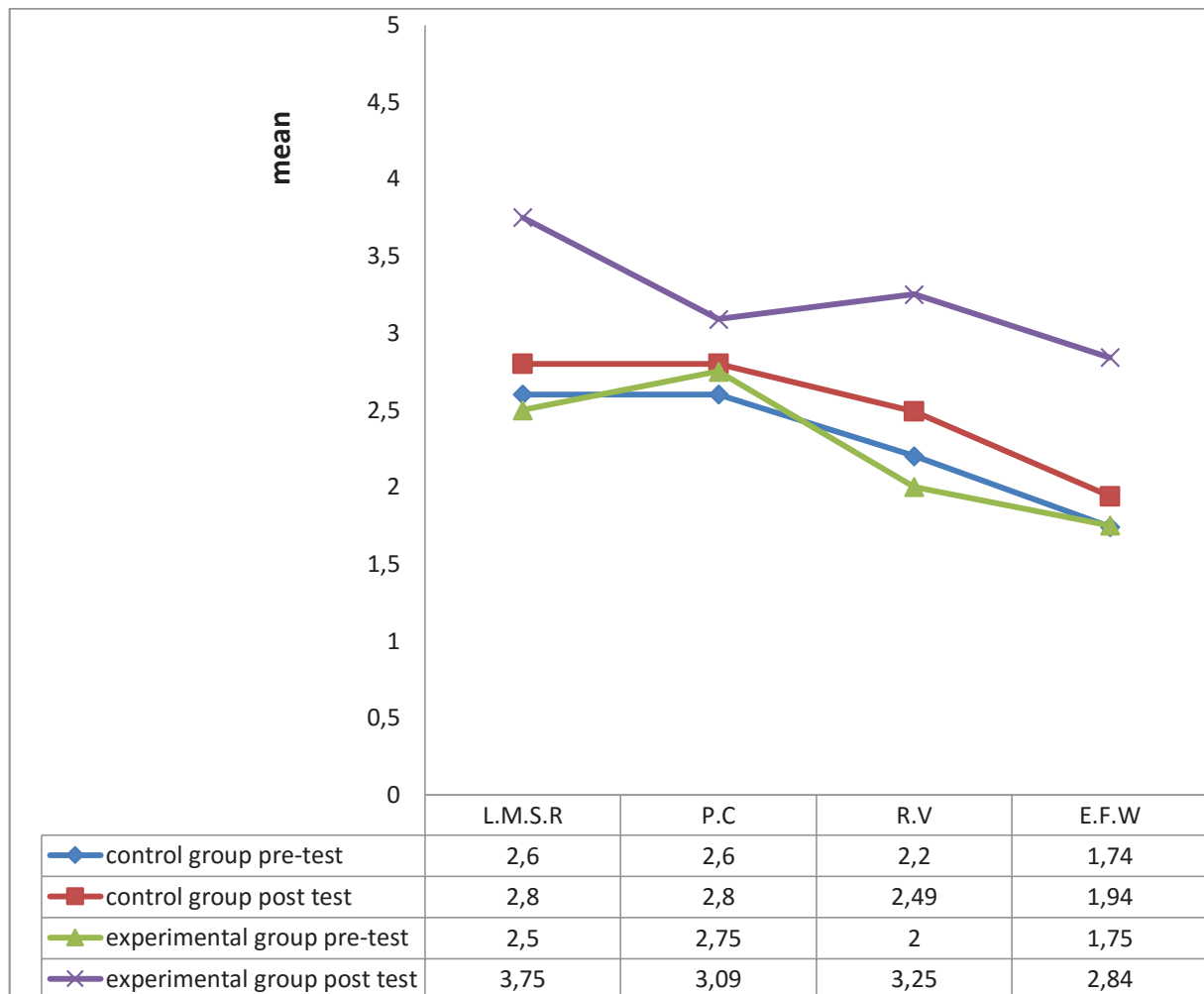


Figure 30. Comparison of pre/post-tests scores of the experimental and control group

Table (21) sums up the pre- and post-test scores obtained by the CG and the EG learners. As figure (30) illustrates, when comparing the mean scores yield from both groups in the pre-test/post-test, the following findings are noticeable:

- The pre-test scores reflect similar abilities between the control group (mean =9.14) and the experimental group (mean =9.00) in terms of their overall mean scores where a tiny difference of 0.14) is recorded in favour of the control group. Scores on the post-test, however, reflect a noticeable improvement of the experimental group (mean=12.93) compared to the control group (mean=10.03) recording a difference of 2.90, whereas the performance of the control group remains almost static.

- Identical to the observations made for the overall achievement mean score, the pre-test scores for the component of linguistic markers of social relations reflected similar abilities between the two groups at the time of the pre-test, but a different degree of development can be seen in their post-test scores, with the control group barely changing and the experimental group clearly developing. This difference is clearly shown in table (21); the control group reached a pre-test score of 2.60 (SD = 0.914) and a post-test score of 2.80 (SD = .584). The pre-test score for the experimental group was 2.50 (SD = .842) and the post-test score 3.75 (SD = .718).
- Concerning politeness conventions, the control group (mean=2.60 SD=.651) started out with lower test scores than the experimental group (mean= 2.75, S.D. = .672), and their post-test scores (mean =2.80 SD= .531) reflected an even greater distance from the experimental group (mean=3.09 S.D.=.530). In contrast, the experimental group again had clearly developed with a mean score. This can be seen in Figure (30)
- For the component of register variation, looking at the scores for the control group, it can be seen that in this category, the control group starts out with a considerably higher pre-test score than the experimental group. However, as their score remains almost static from the pre-test (mean= 2.20; SD = .677) to the post-test (mean = 2.49; SD = .507), the experimental group had improved with a mean score of 2.00 (SD = .662) at the time of the pre-test and a mean score of 3.25 at the time of the post-test (SD = .672). A graphic representation of this development is provided in Figure (30)
- Although both groups received almost the same score for the last component of expression of folk wisdom in the pre-test which was 1.74/1.75; the post-test received a greater development in favour of the experimental group. The experimental group's scores improved from 1.75 (SD = .622) to 2.84 (SD = .515) in the post-test, whereas

the control group had a score of 1.94(SD = .684). The mean scores for both tests again reflected differences between the two groups.

- As a conclusion, although the control group performed better at the time of pre-test, it remained almost static and showed only slight development during the post-test. The experimental group, on the other hand, received a score of only 9.00 in the pre-test, their post-test score indicated a significant development (mean= 12.93), which reflects a greater improvement than the control group. This is illustrated in Figure (30)

3. Inferential statistics: Hypothesis Testing

Statistics can be divided into two main areas, 'descriptive statistics' and 'inferential statistics'. Descriptive statistics help to summarize findings by describing the overall spread of the scores (i.e. how varied the scores are). Such statistics are indispensable to describe the participants and they also form the basis of further inferential statistics. The important thing, however, is to note that these statistics do not allow drawing any general conclusions that would go beyond the sample. According to Dornyei (2011), 'If we want to say something about possible general lessons that may be drawn from our study-which is what we usually do when we conduct research-we need to compute inferential statistics" p.209

The main concern of inferential statistics is the testing of 'statistical significance'. Statistical significance denotes whether a particular result observed in a sample is 'true' for the whole population and is therefore generalizable. If a result is not-significant, this means that it can be occurred in the particular sample only because of chance (ibid.).

Significance is measured by a probability coefficient (p), which can range from 0 to +1. In social sciences a result is typically considered significant if $p < 0.05$, that is, if the probability of the result not being real but-only due to chance is less than 5 per cent (Borg and Gall, 1989). Therefore, it is worthwhile to mention that statistical significance is used to make a decision about rejecting the null hypothesis

Comparing Group Scores (t-tests): statistical tests are the basic frequently used procedure to compare the results of groups in applied linguistic research. In statistics there are different methods available for such comparisons depending on the number of groups to analyse. Calculating the 't-test' is the inferential statistical procedure used to compare between two groups; whereas, the procedure to be applied with more than two groups is the 'analysis of variance' 'ANOVA' (Larson-Hall, 2012)

Concerning t-test statistics, which is the case of the current study, two main types are identified:

- *Independent-samples t-tests* are for research designs that compare the results of groups that are independent of each other (for example, Class I and Class 2)
- *Paired-samples t-tests* (also known as 'matched t-tests', 'matched-pairs t-tests' or 'pairs t-tests') are for research designs that compare two sets of scores (i.e. two variables) obtained from the same group; that is, this procedure examines different results obtained from the same group. (Dornyei, 2011).

Both types are similar in that they test whether the difference between two sets of scores is big enough to reach statistical significance. However, because the present study involves two separate groups of participants i.e., the experimental group and the control group, it is suitable to select the first type i.e., *Independent-samples t-tests* procedure which is more relevant.

As far as the current study is concerned, the aim is to prove that the null hypothesis is rejected whereas the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. To do so, the following steps are followed:

1. First the researcher set the null and the alternative hypotheses:

- The null hypothesis (**H0**): it is assumed that there are no significant differences between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental and the control groups
- The alternative hypothesis (**H1**): it is assumed that there are significant differences between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental and the control groups.

The aim is confirm that the implementation of the independent variable (IV) i.e., introducing culture related activities enhanced students' sociolinguistic competence (DV) in terms of the four components i.e.

- Linguistic markers for social relations
- Politeness conventions
- Register variation
- Expression of folk wisdom

This can explained as follows:

Null hypothesis: $H_0: \mu_{\text{control group}} = \mu_{\text{experimental group}}$, i.e., the means for C.G. and E.G. are equal

Alternative hypothesis: $H_1: \mu_{\text{control group}} \neq \mu_{\text{experimental group}}$, i.e., the means for C.G. and E.G. are not equal OR

Null hypothesis: $H_0: \mu_{\text{E.G.}} - \mu_{\text{C.G.}} = 0$ i.e., the difference between the E.G. and C.G. population means is 0

Alternative hypothesis: $H_1: \mu_{\text{E.G.}} - \mu_{\text{C.G.}} \neq 0$ i.e., the difference between the E.G. and C.G. population means is not 0

2. Second, the researcher specified the α level: $\alpha = .05$ i.e., $p < 0.05$

As previously stated in the introduction, to run the Independent *t test*, the computer program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) is used. And the results are shown in the following tables:

3.1. Calculating the T-test for Linguistic Markers for Social Relations

	Groups Comparaison	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
L.M.R.S	Control Group	35	2,80	,584	,099
	Experimental group	32	3,75	,718	,127

Table 22. Group Statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower
L.M.R.S	Equal variances assumed	2,997	,088	-5,961	65	,000	-,950	,159	-1,268	-,632
	Equal variances not assumed			-5,906	59,859	,000	-,950	,161	-1,272	-,628

Table 23. Independent Samples Test for Linguistic Markers for Social Relations

Interpretation of Data

First, descriptive statistics: as stated earlier in this chapter, the first table gives the descriptive statistics for each of the two groups (as defined by the grouping variable.). There are 35 students in the CG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=2.80) in linguistic markers for social relations, with a standard deviation of (SD=.584) There are 32 students in the EG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=3.75), with a standard deviation of (SD=.718) The last column gives the standard error of the mean for each of the two groups.

Second, inferential statistics: The columns labeled "Levene's Test for Equality of Variances" tell us whether an assumption of the t-test has been met. The t-test assumes that the variability of each group is approximately equal. If that assumption isn't met, then a special form of the t-test should be used. The column labeled "Sig." under the heading "Levene's Test for Equality of Variances". In this table, the significance (p value) of Levene's test is (P=.088) If this value is less than or equal to α level for the test which is .05, then we can reject the null hypothesis that the variability of the two groups is equal, implying that the variances are unequal. If the p value is less than or equal to the α level, then we should use the bottom row of the output (the row labeled "Equal variances not assumed.") If the p value is greater than α level, then we should use the first row of the output (the row labelled "Equal variances assumed.")

Accordingly, as it is shown in the table, the value in the Sig. Column is (.088) which is greater than $\alpha = .05$, so we will assume that the variances are equal and we will read from the first row of the output.

The column labelled «t» gives the observed or calculates t value. In this example, assuming equal variances, the t value is 5.961. (We can ignore the sign of t for a two tailed t-test.) The

column labelled "df" gives the degrees of freedom associated with the t test. In this example, there are 65 degrees of freedom.

The column labelled "Sig. (2-tailed)" gives the two-tailed p value associated with the test. As can be seen, the p value is (P=.000) this value is less than .05; therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of CG and the EG in the first component of linguistic markers of social relations. This means that the differences between conditions Means are not likely due to chance and are probably due to the IV manipulation.

To Decide if we can reject H_0 : As before, the decision rule is given by: If $p \leq \alpha$, then reject H_0 . In this test, .000 is less than .05, so we succeed to reject H_0 . That implies that we succeeded to observe a difference in the means between the EG and CG for LMSR

3.2. Calculating the t-test for Politeness Conventions

	Groups Comparaison	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
P.C	Control Group	35	2,80	,531	,090
	Experimental group	32	3,09	,530	,094

Table 25. Group Statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower
P.C	Equal variances assumed	,640	,427	-2,262	65	,027	-,294	,130	-,553	-,034
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,263	64,488	,027	-,294	,130	-,553	-,034

Table 25. Independent Samples Test for Politeness Conventions

Interpretation of Data

As far as the second component of politeness conventions, the results shown in the tables above reveal that:

First, descriptive statistics: there are 35 students in the CG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=2.80) in politeness conventions, with a standard deviation of (SD=.531) There are 32 students in the EG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=3.09), with a standard deviation of (.530) The last column gives the standard error of the mean for each of the two groups.

Second, inferential statistics: as it is shown in the table, the value in the Sig. Column is .427 Which is greater than $\alpha = .05$, so we will assume that the variances are equal and we will read from the first row of the output.

As can be seen, the p value is .027, this value is less than .05; therefore, we can conclude we succeed to reject H0. That implies that we can observe a statistically significant difference between the means of CG and the EG in the second component of politeness conventions.

A *t* test succeeded to reveal a statistically reliable difference between the mean of the EG (M =3.09.SD= .530) and that the CG (M =2.80 SD =.531), $p = .027$, $\alpha = .05$.

3.3. Calculating the t-test for Register Variation

	Groups Comparaison	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
R.V	Control Group	35	2,49	,507	,086
	Experimental group	32	3,25	,672	,119

Table 26. Group Statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower
R.V	Equal variances assumed	1,108	,296	-5,283	65	,000	-,764	,145	-1,053	-,475
	Equal variances not assumed			-5,217	57,475	,000	-,764	,146	-1,058	-,471

Table 27. Independent Samples Test for Register Variation

Interpretation of Data

Concerning the component of Register Variation, the results displayed in the table show that:

First, descriptive statistics: there are 35 students in the CG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=2.49) in register variation, with a standard deviation of (SD=.507) There are 32 students in the EG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=3.25), with a standard deviation of (.672). The last column gives the standard error of the mean for each of the two groups.

Second, inferential statistics: as it is shown in the table, the value in the Sig. Column is .296 which is greater than $\alpha = .05$, so we will assume that the variances are equal and we will read from the first row of the output.

As can be seen, the p value (Sig.2 tailed) is .000. This value is less than .05; therefore, this implies that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of CG and the EG in the third component of register variation. This means that the differences between conditions Means are not likely due to chance and are probably due to the IV manipulation

A *t* test succeeded to reveal a statistically reliable difference between the mean score of EG (M =3.25, SD =.672) and that of the CG (M =2.49, SD =.507), $p = .000$, $\alpha = .05$.

3.4. Calculating the t-test for Expression of Folk Wisdom

	Groups Comparaison	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
E.F.W	Control Group	35	1,94	,684	,116
	Experimental group	32	2,84	,515	,091

Table 28. Group Statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower
E.F.W	Equal variances assumed	1,264	,265	-6,049	65	,000	-,901	,149	-1,198	-,603
	Equal variances not assumed			-6,125	62,778	,000	-,901	,147	-1,195	-,607

Table 29. Independent Samples Test Expression of Folk Wisdom

Interpretation of Data

Coming up to the last component of Expression of Folk Wisdom, the results displayed in the table show that:

First, descriptive statistics: there are 35 students in the CG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=1.94) in expression of folk wisdom, with a standard deviation of (SD=.684) There are 32 students in the EG (N), and they have, on average, (mean=2.84), with a standard deviation of (SD=.515) The last column gives the standard error of the mean for each of the two groups.

Second, inferential statistics: as it is shown in the table, the value in the Sig. column is (.265) Which is greater than $\alpha = .05$, so we will assume that the variances are equal and we will read from the first row of the output.

As can be seen, the p value (Sig.(2 tailed)) is (.000). This value is less than .05; therefore, this implies that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of CG and the EG in the fourth component of expression of folk wisdom. This means that the differences between conditions Means are not likely due to chance and are probably due to the IV manipulation.

A *t* test succeeded to reveal a statistically reliable difference between the mean score of the EG (M =2.84, SD =.515) and that of the CG (M =1.94, SD =.684), $p = .151$, $\alpha = .05$.

4. The Post Study Interview

4.1. *Description of the Interview*

Broadly speaking, an interview is a qualitative method of inquiry; it can be described as the elicitation of data by a person from another through person-to-person encounter (Nunan, 1992). According to Dornyei (2011), the interview is a well-known communicating method that works well as versatile research-instrument; it is considered to be the most often used method in qualitative inquiries. Interviews come in various forms; they range from unstructured, semi-structured to structured interviews. The choice of a given type is determined by the nature of the research and the degree of control the interviewer wishes to exert. The structured interview consists of a list of set questions in a predetermined order prepared by the researcher to be covered with every interviewee (Nunan, 1992).

Accordingly, in this study, the researcher has opted for a structured interview, as a data gathering tool. One of the main advantages of a structured interview is that misunderstanding can be immediately sorted out during the exchange (Wallace, 2001). It also gives the interviewer a degree of power and control over the course of the interview. The structured interview ensures that the interviewee focuses on the target topic area and that the interview covers a well-defined domain, which makes the answers comparable across different respondents. (Dornyei, 2011).

As previously stated in the introductory chapter, the researcher used the interview to understand how the learners perceived the suggested programme, and to get insight into how they viewed the learning experience and classroom activities. It also allowed the researcher to have feedback concerning strengths' and weaknesses of this teaching method. The interview consisted of four open-ended questions. It was conducted during an oral expression session, students were free to express their opinions.

During the interview, the researcher reformulated some questions so as to ensure a full understanding and clear description. The fact of using a structured interview helped the researcher in taking notes. This was just as filling in a questionnaire. The four questions were:

Question 1: Did you learn new vocabulary and new expressions? Did you improve your language skills?

Question 2: To what extent did the program help you develop your stylistic variation and communicative competence?

Question 3: Do you think you increased your confidence to interact with English native speakers in the future?

Question 4: Overall, what do you have to say about what this project brought to your experience as an EFL learner?

4.2. Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

The students' answers to each of these questions were analysed, and the results are presented by putting them into three main aspects as follows:

The Linguistic Aspect: The purpose of the first question is to demonstrate the usefulness of the suggested program on developing the students' linguistic competence by asking them whether they have gained new vocabulary and expressions. Most of the students were very positive about how classroom culture related activities had helped them to learn new words and expressions in English. Students spontaneously expressed their agreement that these activities were effective in promoting the linguistic competence.

The Sociolinguistic and the Communicative Aspects. In the second question, the students were asked about their perceptions regarding the communicative aspect of the programme. According to their answers, most of the students expressed their agreement that culture related activities had enhanced their sociolinguistic competence in various ways. First, they had learnt the usage of English i.e., forms of greeting and leave-taking, forms of address, idiomatic expressions, and above all formal and informal language for everyday life situations. Consequently, students agreed on the usefulness of such activities to know the appropriate use of the language. Further, some students expressed the impression that the language that they were being taught in all the modules is formal and most of the teachers focussed on the correctness of grammar, through this programme, they were introduced to rather informal language letting them explore strong and weak points in their communication during the pre-test performance, and then working on improving during the post-test performance.

The Intercultural Aspect. Question 3: Do you think you increased your confidence to interact with English native speakers in the future?

Throughout the students' answers, it is also clear that they strongly agree that culture based activities could improve their communicative competence in English in various ways. These activities provided the opportunity for the study of English in real life and they had more understanding of language and culture as they could compare and contrast some cultural aspects from the target culture with their own culture.

Most students in the experimental group viewed culture based activities as a valuable way to use their linguistic resources in situations that are 'nearly' real. Further they perceived the language that they learnt from this programme as useful to gain more self-confidence to speak with native speakers in real situations. Yet, there were some students who still find it difficult

for them to initiate communication with native speakers. Some students realised that the suggested activities provided them with the opportunity to make a comparison between Algerian and English culture, and in doing so; it enhanced their understanding of communication with native speakers. Most students expressed their agreement that the activities they dealt with during the semester gave them an advantage in learning skills for intercultural communication. It also motivated them to practice and improve their ability to communicate in English with native speakers outside the classroom

As far as the last question is concerned, students were asked to give a final impression about how they benefited from the programme and to provide any further suggestions. Students were very positive in their answers about how these culture -based activities had significantly improved their knowledge of intercultural communication and English cultures, and they realised that when speaking with native speakers, it is not only important to focus on correct grammar, but they should also pay attention to their choice of the most appropriate linguistic forms to context, and that their choice of these forms should be based on sociolinguistic and cultural factors. Most students suggested that they would benefit from having more opportunities to practice their language with native speakers in various contexts and more often. However, they mentioned that the actual events that would happen in the real world might be different from the role play that they practised in the classroom, and they were not sure about their ability to adapt to a range of real life contexts.

Significantly, most students said that doing such activities just in one semester and without any contact with native speakers was not enough to improve their sociolinguistic and intercultural skills. They suggested at least having online communication with native speakers to learn more about English cultures and intercultural communication to gain more self-confidence to communicate with native speakers, and of course to enhance their capacity for intercultural communication in the real world. Students in the experimental group all agreed

that learning English and intercultural communication throughout this semester had been advantageous for them. They explained that it was interesting and entertaining for them to learn English cultures and intercultural communication through these activities.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the data obtained from the empirical study in two sections. The first section reported the results pertaining to answer the research questions from the quantitative perspective; specifically, it included a statistical comparison of the participants' performances on the pre/post-tests. The second section presented the data using a qualitative analysis of the results of the interview about the students' perceptions of learning sociolinguistic competence. Data from the interview provided in-depth information on how the students viewed their learning experience on sociolinguistic competence through culture based activities.

The descriptive statistical results of the pre-test scores of the two groups are reported, which showed that there was no significant difference for the pre-test scores; the two groups did not differ in their sociolinguistic performance relative to these four components (LMSR, PC, RV, or EFW) prior to the treatment.

On the other hand, the statistical results of the post-test scores of the two groups reflected a noticeable improvement of the experimental group (mean=12.93) compared to the control group (mean=10.03) recording a difference of (2.90), whereas the performance of the control group remained almost static.

A .05 level of significance was used in all of the inferential statistical analyses where an independent-sample t-test succeeded to reveal a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups in their sociolinguistic performance relative to these four components (LMSR, PC, RV, and EFW).

Qualitative data supported the quantitative findings and also indicated that students in the experimental group had achieved a deeper and more explicit understanding of the role of sociolinguistic variables in communicating in English, they also demonstrated an understanding of what is considered be acceptable and appropriate in an English language context with English native speakers.

Chapter VIII: General Conclusion

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Introduction

The aim of this final chapter is to provide a summary and interpretation of the main findings of the empirical study. The limitations and future directions of the study are also considered. Likewise the implications of the empirical research findings for the fields of EFL in Algeria and EFL Teacher Education are highlighted. Based on theoretical background and empirical research findings, the last section provides a set of suggestions on how to practice a sociolinguistic perspective in a language classroom.

1. Discussion of the Findings

This study has explored aspects of the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence in the in an EFL setting to university students from an intercultural perspective. Four features of sociolinguistic competence were researched: linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register variation, and expression of folk wisdom. The study used culture related activities and role plays to enhance EFL students' sociolinguistic competence. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied in analysing and interpreting the study's findings.

The present study was guided by the following four major research questions:

1. How do EFL teachers at Khenchela University perceive the importance of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural teaching, and what are the difficulties involved in teaching students this important aspect of English language knowledge?
2. How do EFL learners at Khenchela University perceive the learning of English and its culture, and to what extent are they exposed to English language in their daily life?
3. How effective is the implementation of in-class culture based activities as a source for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence?
4. To what extent does the classroom serve for sociolinguistic and intercultural exploration, and how do students view the experience of learning sociolinguistic competence using in-class culture based activities?

The first and the second research questions concern the first stage of the study; they aimed to explore teaching/ learning context from both teachers' and students' perspectives. The researcher answered them by administering two questionnaires one for teachers and another for students.

The third and the fourth questions correspond to the experimental design that is the second stage of the study. The third research question examines the effectiveness of introducing in – class culture based activities for teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence. The researcher answered this question by implementing the new suggested teaching programme, and examined its effectiveness according to the learners' performances in the pre-test/ post-tests. The fourth and last research question investigates the learners' views towards this suggested programme, and their evaluation of the learning experience as whole. The researcher answered this question by conducting an interview with the students of the experimental group.

Accordingly, the research design was carried out in three main phases; the pre-teaching phase, the teaching phase, and the post-teaching phase. In the pre teaching phase, data was collected using two questionnaires; the teachers' questionnaire aimed at exploring the teachers' understanding of culture and sociolinguistic competence teaching, and to get insight into the difficulties involved in presenting such abstract knowledge to their students. The students' questionnaire aimed at dealing with data related to their background information, attitudes towards learning English and its culture, and finally the students' current uses of English both inside and outside the classroom.

During the teaching phase, learners had a pre-test to evaluate their sociolinguistic competence prior involving them in any kind of explicit instructions related to sociolinguistic competence. After that learners were exposed to one of two teaching approaches: one involving explicit teaching of sociolinguistic instruction combining explicit instruction about English native

speakers' culture, practice role plays and exploring sociolinguistic variables affecting language use for the experimental group. On the other hand, a traditional teaching approach including classroom discussions but without any explicit focus on sociolinguistic competence was used for the control group.

In the final phase of the research, data was collected about students' sociolinguistic performance using a post-test. In addition to this, individual interviews were conducted with all participants in the experimental group to collect their views about the experience of participating in the research, and to know about their attitudes and understanding of target culture and sociolinguistic competence.

Data collected from the questionnaires were analysed to test and answer hypotheses and research questions 1 and 2. As far as the teachers' questionnaire is concerned, the obtained results indicated that although teachers confirmed the fact that learners' communicative competence should be complemented by an understanding of the target culture to enable them maintain communicative tasks with people of English speaking countries, the sociolinguistic component of communicative competence seems to be deemphasised particularly in one of its essential aspects which is stylistic variation. These results, in fact, came to confirm the set hypothesis that the current ways used to deal with culture and sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes depend on the teachers' understandings, interests, and available resources.

On the other hand, the results obtained from the students' questionnaire confirmed the students' willingness to embrace the experience of intercultural learning as they show a positive attitude towards the English language and the English speaking community, most importantly they showed the need and interest to raise awareness to cultural differences existing between target culture and their own culture. It is interesting to note that 84.16% of the participants agreed that they lack opportunities to compare and contrast cultural topics.

However, the findings revealed a serious lack of exposure to English language in its authentic context, most importantly; the data indicate a serious weakness concerning the productive skills of the language for university students. Actually, students are still reluctant in using the English language for variety contexts of communication especially in the many situations encountered in everyday life and in familiar contexts. Accordingly, a number of implications have been drawn from this stage of the research for designing a programme that is intended to exploit the potentials of intercultural learning on the development of sociolinguistic competence.

Phase two of the study is essentially meant to investigate the effectiveness of the newly suggested programme on enhancing learners' sociolinguistic competence. This study tested whether an intercultural perspective makes learners notice aspects of the target language variation and leads to greater language acquisition. Data were collected and analysed to determine if explicit classroom instruction significantly affected learners' sociolinguistic competence development. The specific research focus was on the development of receptive and productive skills as demonstrated by the learners' ability to recognize and produce contextually appropriate language, and to employ the information that they had received during instruction to enhance their stylistic variation.

It is worth noting that the main theoretical framework adopted for this study was *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001), According to this latter "Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with the knowledge and skills required to deal with the social dimension of language use" p. 118. The CERFL presents a practical and helpful framework for the competences necessary for communication, and it provides a good description of elements involved in the sociolinguistic competence.

The study results indicated that there are significant differences between the students in the experimental group mean scores of the post-test and those in the control group. Students in the experimental group were able to use most of the sociolinguistic elements effectively and were able to show variation in their speech. This means that hypothesis 3 was confirmed with the difference between the two groups being in linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register variation, and expressions of folk wisdom in favour of the experimental group. This latter demonstrated more improvement in understanding and use of contextually appropriate language than the control group. The result that the experimental group learners performed at a statistically significant level reveals that when learners are given the opportunity to “observe” and “practice” the target language’s sociolinguistic features, they become more conscious of the appropriate forms of the language use.

Further, in the third stage of the research, the qualitative findings from experimental group interview revealed that most learners had positive perceptions of learning culture based activities and became more aware of certain linguistic forms and appropriate language use in contexts. Students recognized that the programme was helpful in the learning of new vocabulary and expressions. Most students agreed that these activities had enhanced their language learning.

2. Limitations and Future Directions

This study draws from an intercultural English language teaching perspective focusing on the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence, and attempted to test various aspects of this acquisition. This study showed that classroom culture based activities offer conditions that may contribute positively to the development of university EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence. Although all four research questions have been answered through the quantitative and qualitative approaches adopted, there is scope for further research both recognising the limited nature of this study and identifying areas that this research has highlighted as being in need for further investigation.

1. This study has considered that introducing explicit sociolinguistic instruction and culture based activities into the classroom in an EFL setting, such as Algeria, can significantly enhance students' acquisition of sociolinguistic competence as well as increase their understanding of native speaker norms in various aspects of conversations. One area for future research is to investigate in greater depth the most suitable ways to provide conditions in EFL settings for enhancing students' intercultural competence as a whole.
2. One important limitation of this study is in terms of the sociolinguistic competence components investigated; in fact, the current study investigated four main components. However one important area that needs to be dealt with in further studies is the component of dialects and accents by exposing students to different English varieties, dialects and accents to make students aware of the differences existing between them.

3. As this study involved classroom-based research with students who were in the third year of their university studies in English in a particular context, it would be valuable to explore how online interactions with native speaker compare to classroom instructions regarding the development of sociolinguistic competence of EFL learners. It would also be instructive to further research on how online experience of contact with English native speakers would affect Algerian students' attitudes and ability to produce intercultural acceptable communication.
4. Another aspect that needs further consideration as far as intercultural communication is concerned is the 'nonverbal communication'. There is a need to deepen EFL learners' understanding of intercultural communication through investigating aspects of nonverbal communication practices and attitudes.

3. Implications of Research Findings for ELT in Algeria

Based on the results of this study some key implications can be drawn about aspects of the teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence and intercultural communication in EFL contexts.

3.1. The Value of Explicit Teaching of Sociolinguistic Competence in EFL Classes

- The results of the current research suggested the value of explicit teaching of sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes. This can be achieved as a part of the curriculum within existing subjects. In the case of this study, it was included as a component in oral expression sessions and this seemed to be an appropriate area of the curriculum to include such an aspect. Further, this study suggested that it is beneficial to contextualise explicit learning about sociolinguistic competence as part of intercultural communicative competence, and broader understanding of cultural differences in communication styles and practices.
- To reinforce the students' understanding and practice of their sociolinguistic competence, it is recommended to encourage EFL students to vary their use of other registers rather than the neutral and the formal register, including asking them purposely to use sociolinguistic norms the way they would do in their own culture so that they can directly observe how differences between usage in their culture and in the target culture can lead to communication breakdown. When sociolinguistic norms are recognised as a source of confusion to them or others, they can then discuss these misunderstandings with their classmates, and find solutions to avoid such problems.
- Role plays have also been demonstrated within this study to have a valuable effect in the explicit teaching and learning of sociolinguistic competence. The opportunity to experiment and practice different aspects of sociolinguistic competence as a learning activity was reported by the students to develop their confidence and it was effective in

enhancing experimental group's acquisition of sociolinguistic competence. It is recommended for teachers of English to give their students sufficient opportunities to practice role plays in order to promote their adaptation of their sociolinguistic competence towards native speaker norms after they have learned about it explicitly.

- Finally, further work is needed to develop reliable and practical tests to assess communicative competence in a comprehensive manner. Although ways of assessing linguistic competence (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, etc.) are well established, this is not the case for the other components of the model especially the sociolinguistic one.

3.2. The Need for Exposure to Native Speaker in Various Contexts

- This study suggests that it is possible to compensate for a lack of exposure to native speakers in their real life contexts through the use of authentic material, role plays and explicit teaching that raise students' awareness to aspects of the differences existing between the native culture and their culture in conversational norms. Audio-visual and visual aids, can lead to significant improvement in understanding the native speakers' interactional norms. However, it would also be interesting to provide students with opportunities for online interactions with native speakers for the development of EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence.

3.3. The Value and Need for Incorporating Sociolinguistic Competence and Intercultural Communication in University Level English Courses, and Teacher Education

- Given the increasing requirement for English language graduates to be able to communicate effectively in different contexts and international encounters, the value and need for EFL learners to be fluent speakers as well as competent intercultural communicators in their verbal and nonverbal communication is crucial. To achieve this aim, it is suggested that final year students of English would benefit greatly from having the opportunity to participate in teaching programmes, including practical workshops, dealing with intercultural communication. Eventually, such activities would consolidate students' acquired knowledge and would foster their practice through speaking and listening classes. With such activities included in their course, students would decrease their difficulties to communicate with English native speakers if they are going to work or study abroad or even deal with international business communication in their own country.
- Finally, as it was pointed out in this study, teachers of English at university level are not generally teaching about intercultural communication and sociolinguistic competence; therefore, consideration needs to be given to developing intercultural communicative competence as part of English teacher education. A starting point in addressing this deficit is to raise awareness among teachers of English and teacher educators at the University about the importance of intercultural communication and sociolinguistic competence, and to figure out the best ways to integrate this into the curriculum. Consequently, it will be necessary to provide training for teachers of English at school and university levels about sociolinguistic competence within the broader context of intercultural language teaching, so that they can bring this knowledge and applications of intercultural communication into their classes.

4. Suggestions for Implementing Sociolinguistic Perspective in EFL

Classes

1. Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with the social dimension of the language; therefore, it is important to stress the role of context in teaching language functions, and to provide information about it. For instance, providing information about participants and their relationships, the formality or informality of the situation, the place of interaction, the topic of the conversation, and how this can affect the use of the language.

2. Variation of style is one important part of sociolinguistic competence; therefore, teachers should make students aware of standard and nonstandard varieties, different styles and registers of American English or British English. This can be achieved through the following:

a. Expand students' style of speaking English. For example, teach students no less than two ways of saying something – formally (equal/ unequal relationship) and informally (equal/ unequal relationship). Teach students long and short answers, according to situations.

b. Raise students' awareness of register, jargons (specialized and technical language) of different occupations, and the language which reflects class membership and makes communication in the discourse community efficient and exclusive.

c. Point out that language use changes depending on the degree of formality as influenced by location, occasion, relationship with others, etc.

d. Finally, testing students' sociolinguistic competence should be part of the language assessment process.

3. In addition to style variation, teachers are supposed to deal with language variation too. It is thus imperative for successful language instruction to introduce learning opportunities that raise learners' awareness of the different varieties of English. It is not enough to provide

students with only one variety of English; students should be exposed to different varieties of English; American, British, Australian, Canadian.

4. Introducing culture into EFL classes is vitally important for the development of sociolinguistic competence; this latter is quite difficult to acquire especially for learner who have never been in the target culture because what is appropriate to say in one culture may be completely different in another. Therefore, learners should be aware of these differences in order to develop communicative competence. It is thus necessary for learners to study culture and cross-cultural differences so that they can understand the target culture and its differences from their native culture. Despite the fact that integrating culture training into EFL classes seems to be rather challenging, and the everlasting debate about how to teach culture has not been concluded yet, developing EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence has to be one of the main aims of language teaching in order to help learners practice using appropriate language in social contexts and to be able to communicate appropriately in target culture.

To conclude, it is important to emphasize that for many language learners, the ultimate goal for learning a FL is to be able to communicate successfully with NS in natural contexts. As already discussed, a successful communication requires not only knowledge of linguistic competence represented by vocabulary, rules of pronunciation and grammar but also knowledge of what to say, when, how, where, and to whom (Dubin and Olshtain, 2000). This requires the development of the sociolinguistic competence that can be improved through exposition to the various registers available in written and spoken forms of the target language, and most importantly with authentic use of the language with NS (Dewaele, 2004). This study proposes one way of approaching the question of how to teach sociolinguistic competence in the FL classroom. In more general terms, the study aimed to emphasize the importance of exposure to the target language and culture in the development of language learners' sociolinguistic competence and communicative skills in general.

In summary, the central notion to this study is to focus on the idea of appropriateness in language usage. It goes in line with the view that a speaker who uses only standard written English for all communication purposes is just as wrong as one who uses non-standard for all purposes or one who refuses to use any variety except his or her professional jargon; choosing the appropriate variety to the situation is the mark of a skilled language learner and user, and those who cite the rules of 'good' usage for all occasions are often hiding behind a mask of inflexibility and/or limited language resources (Preston, & Shuy, 1988).

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Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Title of the research project: Enhancing EFL Learners' Sociolinguistic Competence through Culture-Based Activities: The case of third year students of English at Khenchela University.

Name of researcher: Messerhi Mahbouba

Name of Supervisor: Pr. Daghbouche Nadia

Dear teachers of English,

This questionnaire is part of a Ph.D. thesis project; the research project is designed to study the effect of culture-based activities on the development of EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence. This latter can roughly be defined as: 'learners' comprehension and awareness of social and cultural factors affecting language use in real-life communication.'

This questionnaire is intended to help the researcher gain insights into your perceptions of the importance attributed to the teaching of culture and sociolinguistic competence, as well as identifying the difficulties you might face in teaching this important aspect of language knowledge. You are kindly requested to respond to the following questionnaire.

Part I. Background Information

1. Your gender:

- a. male
 b. female

3. How long have you been teaching English:years

4. Your highest degree?

- a. bachelor of art (BA),
 b. master of art (MA),
 c. magister,
 d. Doctorate degree (PH.D),

5. Have you ever visited a foreign country or an English speaking country?

- a. yes
 b. no

6. Have you ever participated in any kind of program such as workshops, special training programs devoted to intercultural communication?

- a. yes
 b. no

7. If yes, please specify for how long and how did you benefit from it?

.....
.....

Part II: please respond to these statements by ticking () in the column you find most appropriate.

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree
1. One of the major aims of teaching English is to enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately, as well as to enable them establish and maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of English speaking countries.				
2. To prepare learners to communicate effectively and appropriately, topics have to be related to real-life situations; teachers have to design activities that help students draw their attention to the different ways of performing speech acts in different situations.				
3. English is learnt most effectively when it is used as a vehicle for doing something, such as greeting, requesting, giving, apologizing, etc.				
4. Effective English learning necessitates teaching varieties and registers of English (e.g., formal/informal language that are appropriate to a variety of situations and purposes).				
5. English can be taught successfully by focussing only on the formal register or variety that is suitable to for mastering English for all situations and purposes.				
6. Learners should develop their knowledge and use of expressions related to the target culture's folk wisdom such as idioms to enhance their communicative competence				
7. The concept of intercultural learning is about enhancing language learning through understanding the target cultures and reflecting on the native culture in the target language.				
8. Teachers have to design activities that help students raise their awareness to cultural differences existing between the target language and their own.				
9. Teachers have little time to develop material and activities for intercultural communication				
10. Students have a difficulty to understand the English community culture and social behaviour.				
11. Both teachers and students lack exposure to uses of English in natural situations outside the classroom.				

12. There are few opportunities for teachers to get training about English cultural norms of communication.				
13. Algerian EFL teachers should benefit from summer intercultural courses in English speaking countries.				
14. Educational policy makers can launch prospects for establishing active cooperation with English speaking counterparts (e.g., establishing online communications between Algerian EFL students and English counterparts)				

Thank you for your cooperation

The researcher

Appendix B

Students' Questionnaire

Title of the research project: Enhancing EFL Learners' Sociolinguistic Competence through Culture-Based Activities: The case of third year students of English at Khenchela University.

Name of researcher: Messerhi Mahbouba

Name of Supervisor: Pr. Daghbouche Nadia

Dear student of English,

This questionnaire is part of a Ph.D. dissertation project investigating sociolinguistic competence in EFL classes at Khenchela University. The research project is designed to study the effect of culture-based activities on the development of EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence. Sociolinguistic competence can roughly be defined as 'the learners' understanding and awareness of social and cultural factors affecting language use in real-life communication'. This questionnaire aims at gathering information related to your motivation to learn the English language and its culture as well as your current use of English language outside the classroom.

You are kindly requested to respond to the following question:

Part I. Background Information

1. Your gender:

- c. male
 d. female

2. Your age:years old

3. How long have you been studying English:years

4. Why are you studying English?

- e. to get a good 'better' job,
 f. to go abroad,
 g. to communicate in English,
 h. to read English publications,
 i. interested in the English culture,

5. How do you rate your English proficiency?

- a. beginner
 b. elementary
 c. intermediate
 d. advanced

6. Have you ever visited a foreign country or an English speaking country?

- yes
 no

If yes, please specify:

Part II: Please respond to these statements by ticking () in the column you find most appropriate.

Statement	Level of agreement			
	S. Agree	Agree	Disagree	S. disagree
1.Learning English is interesting				
2.I feel excited when I communicate using English				
3.I wish I will be able to communicate in English the way the native speakers do				
4.I am highly interested in everything related to English language				
5.I admire people who can speak English fluently				
6.I think English will have a great impact on my job				
7.Using English indicates prestige and civilizations				
8.Using English facilitates communication with international institutions and foreign friends				
9.Learning English would help me to travel abroad				
10.Frankly, I study English just to have a diploma				
11.I cannot apply my knowledge of English to my real-life				
12.Learning English is important to understand English movies, TV shows, music...etc.				
13.It is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries products and great achievements in history, literature, politics, economy, geography...etc.				
14.It is very important for me to know more about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour...etc.				

15.I am able to speak about English speaking countries products and great achievements in history, literature, politics, economy, geography...etc.				
16.I am able to speak about English speaking countries people lifestyle, cultural patterns, social behaviour...etc.				
17.I find it difficult to understand members of English speaking countries cultural and social 18.behaviour				
19.There are not enough classroom activities that help me to raise awareness to cultural differences existing between English culture and my own culture				

Type of activity	Frequency			
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Never
Communicating in English with your friends (for brief exchange, e.g. greetings and farewells)				
Communicating in English with your friends (for long exchange, e.g. discussions and chatting)				
Communicating in English with your teachers for class related work				
Communicating in English with your family members				
Chatting or communicating with friends online in English (Facebook, skype)				
Writing homework assignments and research papers in English				
Writing personal notes and letters (messages) in English				
Writing e-mails and comments on social networks in English				
Reading textbooks in English				
Reading English novels and poems				
Reading English newspapers and magazines				
Watching English movies and series, and TV programs				
Listening to English songs (MP3 or mobile)				
Surfing English websites on the net				

Appendix C

Pre-test

Scenario 1:

You are a university student, you attended a class of British Literature, your professor asked you to prepare a presentation for next week (it's a pair work). After the lecture, you approach one of your classmates to ask him/her if he/she would like to work with you for the upcoming presentation. You are close friends and you used to work together.

Hints:

You greet your friend

You ask her if she would like to work with you

She refuses because she has another presentation and she can't work the two in the same time

You offer to help her in her presentation in return that she works with you

She accepts, so you agree to meet next day morning.

You thank her and you leave

If you can, use a proverb or an idiomatic expression to convince her to work with you.

Scenario 2:

You are a university student; you go to see professor during her office hour. You have some questions about an upcoming presentation that you have to give in your professor's class on British literature. You have been in the professor's class for six weeks but you have never talked to her in private.

Hints:

You enter the professor's office, you greet her, you introduce yourself (name, which class you are taking at the moment).

Then you tell the professor why you came to see her.

The professor asks you to sit down, and then gives you some advice.

Finally, you thank her and you leave the office. (if you can, use idioms that fit the context)

Scenario 3:

You are a university professor. You have a department meeting and you have to cancel one of today's classes. You want the secretary to post an announcement about cancelling today's class at the announcement board.

Hints:

You go to her office, you find that she is busy; you greet her and apologize for interruption

You ask her to post the announcement for you

You thank her and you leave

Scenario 4:

You are living in a campus. You have an exam tomorrow and you are trying to study. You can't focus because your neighbours' next doors are playing loud music and their window is open. You have been neighbours for more than a year now. You want to ask them to put the music down and close the window so you can focus on your studies. You go to see them

Hints:

You greet them

You tell them that they are disturbing you because the music is loud

You ask them to put it down because you can't focus on your studies, and you leave

If you can, use any proverb or idiom that fits the context.

Appendix D

Post-test:

Scenario 1:

You are a newly graduate who has applied for a teaching position of English language institute. You go to see the interviewer, but you have to talk to the receptionist first.

Hints:

You approach the reception desk, you greet her, tell the receptionist your name, and that you have an appointment for an interview.

The receptionist then tells you that the interviewer is still in a meeting and asks you to wait in the lounge.

You thank her and you ask her where the lounge is.

Scenario 2:

You have just arrived to Algiers. You went there to take a very important exam. You are at the bus station. Your parents wanted you to call them when you arrive at the bus station. However, the battery of your mobile is low. You are sure that your parents are worried about you. You sit on a bench next to an old lady. After some hesitation, although you don't know the lady, you decide to ask for her cell phone to call your parents.

Hints:

You greet the lady

You explain for her that you are here to take a very important exam, unfortunately you mobile's battery went down

You ask her to lend you her mobile to talk to your parents because they must be worried

You thank her

Scenario 3:

You are graduating this semester and planning to apply for the Master's program in one of the foreign universities. You need to submit a recommendation letter with the application, and you want one of your professors to write it for you, he knows you. You go to the professor's office

You greet your professor

You explain why you came to see her

The professor accepts to help you

You ask her to set up a time to meet again

You express your gratitude, and you leave

Scenario 4:

You are spending your summer holiday in London at an English language course. At the moment you are at the mall with your best friend in London. You have just tried on a nice bag that you really want, but unfortunately you don't have the money to buy it yourself. You decide to ask Lucy if she can lend you the money.

Appendix E

Pre-Test /Post-Test Evaluation Grid

		TEST (04 SITUATIONS)			
Component Rating scale	L.M.R.S	P.C	R.V	E.F.W	
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					
SCORE					
Mean/20	20/20				

Appendix F

Post-study Interview

Question 1: Did you learn new vocabulary and new expressions? Did you improve your language skills?

Question 2: To what extent did the programme help you develop your stylistic variation and communicative competence?

Question 3: Do you think you increased your confidence to interact with English native speakers in the future?

Question 4: Overall, what do you have to say about what this project brought to your experience as an EFL learner?

Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est de rechercher l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la compétence sociolinguistique chez les étudiants du département d'Anglais à l'Université de Khenchela d'une perspective interculturelle. La compétence sociolinguistique renvoie à la capacité de l'apprenant à comprendre et à utiliser la langue cible appropriée dans différents contextes communicatifs sociaux. Cette recherche se concentre sur les quatre principales composantes de la compétence sociolinguistique : marqueurs linguistiques des relations sociales, les conventions de politesse, les variations de registre et les expressions de la sagesse populaire.

L'étude se fonde sur les deux approches quantitatives et qualitatives dans l'analyse et l'interprétation des résultats. Après avoir élaboré la conception méthodologique, la méthode quasi-expérimental a été effectuée en trois phases principales ; la phase pré-enseignement, la phase d'enseignement, et la phase post-enseignement.

Dans la première phase, le chercheur a exploré les opinions des enseignants et des étudiants sur l'importance attribuée à la compétence sociolinguistique et la culture cible à travers deux questionnaires. A partir desquels il a été conclu que malgré le manque d'activités relatives à l'enseignement de la compétence sociolinguistique, tous les enseignants et les étudiants ont exprimé leur approbation de l'importance de celle-ci dans le développement de la compétence communicative.

Pendant la phase d'enseignement, soixante-sept étudiants d'Anglais dans leur troisième année ont été assignés au hasard à participer à l'étude. Ces étudiants ont eu un pré-test pour évaluer leur compétence sociolinguistique avant les impliquer dans tout type d'instructions explicites liées à la compétence sociolinguistique. Les apprenants du groupe expérimental (trente-deux étudiants) ont été exposés à un enseignement explicite sur la culture de langue anglaise y compris la pratique des jeux de rôles et l'exploration des variables sociales affectant l'utilisation de la langue. Pendant ce temps, les apprenants du groupe témoin (trente-cinq étudiants) ont été enseignés à l'aide des discussions en classe, mais sans instruction explicite sur la compétence sociolinguistique. A la fin de cette phase, un post-test a été utilisé pour évaluer la compétence sociolinguistique des apprenants dans les deux groupes.

Les résultats de l'étude ont indiqué qu'il y avait des différences significatives entre les moyennes du post-test des étudiants du groupe expérimental et celles du groupe témoin. Le groupe expérimental a réalisé à un niveau statistiquement significatif dans les quatre principaux aspects de la compétence sociolinguistique: marqueurs linguistiques des relations sociales, des conventions de politesse, les variations de registre et les expressions de la sagesse populaire.

En outre, au cours de la dernière étape de la recherche, les résultats qualitatifs de l'interview avec le groupe expérimental ont démontré que la plupart des apprenants ont une perception positive des activités relatives à la compétence sociolinguistique et sont devenus plus conscients de l'importance de la variation stylistique dans les différents contextes de communication. Les étudiants ont reconnu que le programme a été bénéfique pour l'apprentissage de nouvelles expressions et l'amélioration de leur compétence communicative.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إبراز أهمية تعزيز الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية لدى طلبة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بجامعة خنشلة من منظور ثقافي . حيث يمكن تعريف الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية بقدرة المتعلمين على فهم واستخدام التعبيرات اللغوية المناسبة في مختلف السياقات الاجتماعية، وركزت الدراسة على أربعة عناصر رئيسية ضمن الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية و المتمثلة في : تعابير خاصة بالعلاقات الاجتماعية ، الإصلاحات التهذيبية ، تنوع مستويات الخطاب، و العبارات الاصطلاحية الخاصة بالحكمة الشعبية. واعتمدت الدراسة على كل من المنهج الكمي والنوعي في تحليل وتفسير النتائج، بعد اختيار التصميم تم إتباع المنهج التجريبي في ثلاث مراحل رئيسية: مرحلة ما قبل التدريس، مرحلة التدريس، ومرحلة ما بعد التدريس.

في مرحلة ما قبل التدريس استطلع الباحث آراء الأساتذة و الطلبة فيما يخص أهمية تدريس الثقافة الإنجليزية و الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية من خلال استبيانين خلص من خلالهما الباحث إلى أنه بالرغم من نقص النشاطات المتعلقة بتدريس الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية إلا أن كل من الأساتذة و الطلبة أبدوا موافقتهم على أهمية هذه الأخيرة في تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية.

خلال مرحلة التدريس، تم تعيين سبعة وستون طالب من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في السنة الثالثة بشكل عشوائي للمشاركة في الدراسة، تم تقييم مستوى الكفاءة الاجتماعية اللغوية لدى الطلبة قبل إشراكهم في أي نوع من تعليمات صريحة تتعلق بالكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية و بعد ذلك تم تقديم دروس للمجموعة التجريبية (اثنين وثلاثين طالبا) تتمحور حول الثقافة الإنجليزية وممارسة أنشطة لعب الأدوار لاستكشاف المتغيرات اللغوية الاجتماعية التي تؤثر على استخدام اللغة. وفي الوقت نفسه تم تدريس الطلاب في المجموعة الضابطة (خمسة وثلاثين طالبا) باستخدام عروض مختلفة ولكن من دون أي تركيز واضح على الكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية. بعد انتهاء مرحلة التدريس، تم تقييم مستوى الكفاءة الاجتماعية اللغوية لدى الطلبة في كلا المجموعتين.

أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الطلاب في المجموعة التجريبية وتلك الموجودة في المجموعة الضابطة في الجوانب الأربعة الرئيسية للكفاءة اللغوية الاجتماعية أي في تعابير خاصة بالعلاقات الاجتماعية ، الإصلاحات التهذيبية ، تنوع مستويات الخطاب، و العبارات الاصطلاحية الخاصة بالحكمة الشعبية و ذلك بتفوق المجموعة التجريبية .

بالإضافة إلى ذلك، خلال المرحلة الأخيرة من البحث، أظهرت النتائج النوعية من خلال إجراء مقابلة مع المجموعة التجريبية أن معظم المتعلمين أبدوا إعجابهم بمختلف النشاطات التعليمية كما أكد الطلاب أن البرنامج كان مفيدا لهم سواء من حيث اكتسابهم لتعابير جديدة وتعزيز كفاءتهم التواصلية.

