# Understanding Intercultural Differences Through Sociolinguistic Knowledge

The Case of Third Year LMD Students of English at Batna 2 University

Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy for the Degree of 'Doctorate LMD' in Applied Linguistics

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**Dedication**

*To my parents for their wholehearted support,*

*devotion, love and prayers;*

*To my husband and to my son Amjed for their*

*patience, tolerance and understanding;*

*To my sister Soumia and to my brother Salah Eddine.*

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Abstract

Introducing the intercultural approach into foreign languages education has become one of the fertile areas of inquiry of the 21st century that seeks to establish theoretical and practical frameworks to develop learners' intercultural communicative competence. Nevertheless, in the department of English at Batna 2 University, such objective of promoting the intercultural abilities is not targeted in EFL classroom practices and instructions because the traditional approach of culture teaching that implies the transmission of factual information about the foreign culture is still prevailing. As sociolinguistics' courses offer useful insights about the bond between language and culture, the present study is concerned with the investigation of the role of sociolinguistics in developing third-year learners' intercultural competence. This research aims at transcending the traditional culture-teaching approach and bringing innovation to the teaching of sociolinguistics by introducing the intercultural dimension to help EFL learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences and to develop their skills to manage potential misunderstandings. To examine how and to what extent sociolinguistics' courses can be exploited to achieve this objective, an experiment is conducted on a sample of 64 students from the third-year level. In addition, a questionnaire is administered to teachers of sociolinguistics in the department of English at Batna 2 University to collect information about their perceptions of the integration of the intercultural dimension in sociolinguistics' courses. The analysis and the interpretation of the collected data confirm that the teaching of sociolinguistics is an important opportunity that should be exploited to improve learners' intercultural abilities, including knowledge, skills and attitudes as they stress the necessity to develop not only learners' but also teachers' intercultural competence.

*Keywords:* intercultural communicative approach, intercultural competence, sociolinguistic knowledge, teaching culture, Teaching English as a Foreign Language

## Résumé

L'intégration de l'approche interculturelle dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères est devenue en ce début du XXI $^{e}$ siècle une perspective féconde qui cherche à mettre en place des cadres théoriques et pratiques susceptible de développer les compétences communicatives interculturelles des apprenants. Nous constatons que l'approche suivie dans l'enseignement de la langue étrangère au département d' Anglais de l'université de Batna 2 ne prend pas suffisamment en considération le développent des compétences interculturelles. Cet état résulte essentiellement du choix de la conception traditionnelle de l'enseignement de la culture étrangère qui consiste à opérer le transfert d'un savoir supposé objectif et réaliste de la culture étrangère. En conformité avec la vacation de la sociolinguistique qui étudie le rapport entre la langue et la culture, la présente étude ambitionne d'examiner le rôle de l'enseignement de la sociolinguistique dans le développent de la compétence interculturelle des étudiants de troisième année. Cette recherche vise à dépasser la conception traditionnelle dans l'enseignement de la culture grâce à l'adoption de la dimension interculturelle dans le but d'aider les étudiants à comprendre et à apprécier les différences interculturelles afin d'améliorer leurs compétences dans la gestion et la résolution des problèmes communicationnels résultant de mauvaise compréhension. Pour examiner les possibilités et le ressourcer que peuvent offrir la sociolinguistique pour la réalisation de cet objectif, nous avons procédé à une expérimentation basée sur le choix d'un échantillon de 64 étudiants de troisième année. Parallèlement à cela, nous avons procédé également à l'organisation d'un questionnaire auprès des enseignants de la sociolinguistique au sein de ce même département pour la collecte des informations concernant leurs pratiques et leurs conceptions de la dimension interculturelle dans l'enseignement de la sociolinguistique. Les résultats de la recherche confirment l'importance de la sociolinguistique dans l'acquisition et le développement des compétences interculturelles des étudiants et ils soulignent la nécessité de développer la compétence interculturelle des apprenants et des enseignants.

**ملخص**

أصبح دمج مقاربة التفاعل بين الثقافات في مجال تدريس اللغات الأجنبية احد مجالات البحث الثرية في القرن الواحد والعشرين التي تسعي الي تأسيس أطر نظرية و عملية لتطوير كفاءة المتعلمين في تحقيق التواصل بين الثقافات. إلا ان تدريس اللغة الانجليزية بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة باتنة 2 لا يستهدف بشكل كاف تطوير كفاءة التفاعل بين الثقافات لاعتماد النهج التقليدي لتدريس الثقافة الذي ينحصر في نقل معلومات و وقائع عن الثقافة الأجنبية. ولان علم اللسانيات الاجتماعية يتناول العلاقة بين اللغة والثقافة، فان دراستنا الحالية تعنى بمعالجة دور تدريس علم اللغة الاجتماعي في تنمية القدرة التواصلية بين الثقافات لطلبة السنة الثالثة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تجاوز النهج التقليدي لتدريس الثقافة من خلال تبني البعد التواصلي بين الثقافات لمساعدة طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية على فهم وتقدير الاختلافات الثقافية وتطوير مهاراتهم في إدارة المشاكل التواصلية الناتجة عن سوء الفهم. لبحث كيفية و مدى امكانية استغلال تعليم اللسانيات الاجتماعية لتحقيق هذا الهدف المنشود فقد تم إجراء دراسة تجريبية على عينة من 64 طالبًا من مستوى السنة الثالثة. علاوة على ذلك اجرينا استبيان لأساتذة اللسانيات الاجتماعية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة باتنة 2 لجمع معلومات حول ممارساتهم التعليمية و تصورهم لدمج البعد التواصلي بين الثقافات في تدريس اللسانيات الاجتماعية. اكدت نتائج البحث أن تدريس اللسانيات الاجتماعية هي فرصة مهمة يجب استغلالها لتحسين القدرات و المهارات التواصلية بين الثقافات للمتعلمين كما خلصنا لضرورة تطوير مهارات الاساتذة التواصلية بين الثقافات لتحقيق المردودية القصوى من التدريس.

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**List of Abbreviations**

AAVE:  African American Vernacular English

C:  Culture

CA: Communicative Approach

CCL: Civilization and Culture of Language

Civ: Civilization

CLA:  Communicative Language Ability

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

IA:  Intercultural Approach

 ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

LMD: Licence-  Master- Doctorat

SAS: Self-Assessment Survey

TC: Target Culture

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# General Introduction

### I.1. Background of the Study

The link between language and culture has been the interest of many researchers such as Kramsch (1993, 1998), Risager (2007) and Brown (2000), who assert the need to understand culture in order to make sense of language. In the 21st century, the use of English as a lingua-Franca in an interconnected world is increasing as people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds find themselves in need to communicate with each other for different reasons like business, tourism, education, and migration. Yet, in intercultural and cross-cultural interactions, what an interlocutor may consider appropriate to say in his/ her culture, may be completely unacceptable in the cultural group of the other interlocutor since the appropriateness of the linguistic behavior is culturally bound (kramsch, 1993). Moreover, people often consider the different cultural practices and values as a deviation from the norms. Hence, problems of misunderstanding often emerge when speakers from different cultures communicate with one another. One of the examples of intercultural miscommunication was noticed when the former U.S. president complimented a French officer for the fine job he was doing during his visit to France. However, he was criticized in the French press as such behavior has been interpreted as an intervention in the domestic affairs of France (Chick, 2009). This situation illustrates how one must understand culture in order to operate appropriately in a given society.

Efforts to investigate the role of culture and cultural differences in intercultural and cross-cultural communication and interaction are intensifying. Worfson (1983) conducted a research on the performance of speech acts in cross-cultural communication, and he concluded that the unawareness of the differences in performing speech acts, mainly giving and responding to compliments in different communities leads to intercultural

miscommunication. Thereby, it is necessary for communicators to understand the intercultural differences.

In the field of foreign language teaching and learning, it is believed that the foreign language learner is also a foreign culture learner (Kramsch, 1993). The acquisition of the linguistic competence is not sufficient for EFL learners to be effective communicators (Krasner, 1999). They need to be acquainted with some intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes to be prepared to engage effectively in intercultural encounters. Thus, the need for intercultural education is stressed by many researchers like Byram (1997, 1998, 2001) Deardorff (2006, 2009),  Fantini (2006) and Kramsch (1993, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2013) to form intercultural speakers and mediators who are able to understand different worldviews.

Although the intercultural approach is widely recognized as the most popular trend in foreign language pedagogy in the 21st century, in the Algerian context, intercultural competence is relatively a new concept that both teachers and learners are not aware of. This fact is reinforced by the limited literature I found in this respect as only few  studies addressed this issue like the research of Atamna (2008) who confirmed in his exploration of culture teaching at the University of Constantine and the école normale supérieure that the cultural dimension is neglected, as he proposed some pedagogical recommendations to raise students' intercultural competence. Yassine (2012), in her evaluation of the cultural representations in Algerian EFL textbooks, found that culture is taught as a set of facts related to the American and British societies with the goal of the reproduction native speakerism. However, she contended that "New prospects" offers more opportunities for intercultural learning. Following the same line of thought, Ait Aissa (2016) analyzed the cultural content in EFL textbooks in the Algerian secondary schools and concluded that the cultural content is not sufficient to promote EFL learners' intercultural competence since its primary objective is the development of the linguistic competence. Another contribution to the intercultural research

in the Algerian context was conducted by Rezig (2015) who attributed learners' inability to judge and perceive the intercultural differences to the absence of practices and instructions that target the development of critical and analytical skills in EFL textbooks. Although these studies stress the importance of culture teaching in foreign language classroom, the gap between the research in intercultural education and the actual teaching of English in the Algerian universities is still persisting.

The interest in this topic comes from my experience as a foreign language learner, practitioner, and a part-time teacher. I noticed that some learners were making efforts to store some expressions they often hear in movies and songs and imitate native speakers' behaviors, although some of which were not acceptable in their culture because they conceive native speaker as a model. On the other hand, sociolinguistic transfer was also frequently observed in learners' oral and written performance. They were employing the rules of speaking of their speech community while using the foreign language because they were not aware of the intercultural differences. This situation urges me to question the adequacy of the cultural knowledge learners receive in the classroom where the intercultural differences are rarely, if never, highlighted.

As sociolinguistics examines how socio-cultural and contextual factors influence the use of language, Chick (2009) acknowledged the role of sociolinguistics including interactional sociolinguistics and speech act theory in answering questions related to the causes, the effects and the solutions of intercultural miscommunications. The present research is situated within the endeavors to guide learners and to help them develop intercultural competence through the exploitation of the sociolinguistics course.

### I.2. Statement of the Problem

Misunderstanding and communication breakdown often occur among speakers who have different linguistic and cultural affiliations because they do not understand the intercultural differences, and they are not aware of the different views of the world. The success of intercultural communications depends not only on the interlocutors' knowledge of the socio-cultural norms of the community where language is used, but also on their skills to engage in communication and manage intercultural clashes as well as their positive attitudes towards the culturally different others. In EFL classroom, the unawareness of the intercultural differences may impede both learners' success and teachers' efforts to help their students achieve a high level of language proficiency. Therefore, teachers should provide learners with a solid basis of intercultural competence to become intercultural speakers.

The undergraduate students of English at Batna 2 University are no exception. The teaching of culture is perceived as a secondary subject or a fifth skill that is limited to subjects such as civilization and culture of language whose primary objective is the transmission of factual information about history, geography, political system and economics. Moreover, I noticed that the B.A. courses do not yield any significant progress in learners' abilities to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural and cross-cultural situations. Learners do not receive any formal or informal instructions that may raise their awareness of the intercultural differences or withhold the misconceptions and the ethnocentric attitudes they have about the foreign culture.

The sociolinguistics course, which is taught during the third-year level in the department of English at Batna 2 university, aims to acquaint learners with the main concepts and develop their language proficiency. Although sociolinguistics is considered as a cultural subject, its teaching usually focuses only on the description of abstract items defined by sociolinguists rather than contextualizing and explaining them with reference to the native and

the target cultures. Consequently, learners are prevented from achieving a high level of intercultural awareness. To stand on the real situation, a pilot study has been conducted during the second semester of the academic year (2015-2016) on two samples, each was made of thirty students chosen randomly. The first sample was taken from second-year undergraduate students who were not introduced to sociolinguistics course yet. The second sample was selected from third-year undergraduate students who have already taken the course. The results of both groups revealed a considerable intercultural weakness and limited knowledge regarding some cultural concepts that should be of crucial importance in sociolinguistics courses.

In this regard, an investigation to find out how sociolinguistics can be exploited to help EFL students at Batna 2 University understand better the intercultural differences, develop their intercultural skills and offer them insights into the ways intercultural differences affect language and communication seems worth undertaking.

**I.3.    Research Questions**

From this problem, the following questions are raised:

1. To what extent can sociolinguistics courses help learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences?

2. How can sociolinguistics be taught in a way that develops learners' understanding of the intercultural differences?

3. How do sociolinguistics teachers perceive the integration of the intercultural dimension in their teaching practices?

4. Why do learners need to understand the intercultural differences?

**I.4.   Hypotheses**

On the basis of the previous research questions, and in order to find a remedy to our research problem,  the researcher hypothesizes that introducing the intercultural dimension through the comparison between the native and the foreign cultural practices and beliefs in sociolinguistics courses may help learners understand better and appreciate the intercultural differences. The second hypothesis in this research proposes that illustrating how to manage the intercultural differences in sociolinguistics class is likely to improve the learners' use of language in different communicative situations. In other words, they learn to behave appropriately in intercultural encounters by mediating between the self and the other as they compare between the cultural conventions of language use in both societies.

**I.5.   Objectives of the Study**

The present research is conducted in order to achieve the following underlined objectives:

- ✓ Examining the current situation of the teaching of culture and the intercultural dimension in sociolinguistics class;

- ✓ Bringing  innovation to the teaching of sociolinguistics and culture in the department of English at Batna 2 University by highlighting the need to transcend the traditional approach of culture teaching and demonstrating the importance of introducing the intercultural dimension within the teaching and the learning of the foreign language to promote learners' intercultural competence;

- ✓ Shedding light on the exploitation of sociolinguistics courses in order to improve learners' understanding of the intercultural differences and to suggest a practical framework related to the integration of the intercultural approach in sociolinguistics class through the use of effective teaching methods, materials and strategies that can provide learners with a solid intercultural understanding and develop their positive attitudes towards the others.

**I.6.  Rationale of the Study**

Sociolinguistics courses offered to third-year students in the department of English at Batna 2 University are often presented in the form of a set of abstract concepts defined by researchers and rarely related to the native or the foreign cultural norms. Such abstract information can barely be useful when learners are put in intercultural situations because of their limited intercultural understanding.

Along the lines of many researchers, I believe that sociolinguistics is the medium that can bridge the gap between cultures because the main concern of the discipline is the study of language use in society where culture is regarded as one of its distinctive parameters. Therefore, it will be more valuable to look for a new applicability and new practices related to the teaching of sociolinguistics including new methods, materials and activities that draw attention towards the different worldviews and the intercultural differences while teaching sociolinguistics.

The present study investigates this issue and attempts to demonstrate how teaching sociolinguistics in EFL classroom can result in valuable outcomes, including helping students understand and appreciate the differences between cultures by providing them with useful instances that exhibit the way culture shapes and influences language use. Thus, students will be aware that what is appropriate in their speech community may not be appropriate in the target speech community because of the cultural differences.

**I.7.  Significance of the Study**

As the pilot study's results revealed, the current situation of culture teaching in the department of English at Batna university does not attribute the necessary importance to the intercultural dimension. Therefore, EFL students are not able to use language and

communicate appropriately in different cultural contexts. This situation gives rise to a great demand for the integration of the intercultural aspect in EFL classes.

The present research which investigates the development of the intercultural competence in relation to sociolinguistics course will be significant for both sociolinguistics teachers and students because the applications of the recommendations derived from the results of the study will contribute to the enhancement of teaching materials and methods employed by sociolinguistics teachers, and consequently, it will help students perform better in different situations through the acquisition of intercultural abilities.

The study searches for a significant shift from the traditional methods and materials used in sociolinguistics classes in the department of English to the contextualization of sociolinguistic concepts within the intercultural approach to demonstrate how the teaching of sociolinguistics can be more effective and fruitful when the teacher emphasizes the teaching of socio-cultural patterns that reflect learners' native culture and the foreign cultural values.

## I.8.  Usefulness of the Study

The research findings will contribute to the body of knowledge that exists in the field by investigating important areas that other researchers may not explore in this context, as it will open up new perspectives and areas of study for future investigations that can expand the conception of intercultural competence by including other dimensions in different situations. The results of the study can be incorporated by curriculum designers and educationalists to plan for innovative teaching/learning programs and develop a practical model which sets the intercultural education and pedagogy as a major goal.

### I.9. Research Methodology

#### I.9.1. Choice of the method.

Since the study concerns the role of sociolinguistic knowledge in the understanding of the intercultural differences, we will investigate the cause/effect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The sociolinguistic knowledge, which is the independent variable, will be manipulated to measure its effect on learners' understanding of the intercultural differences, which is the dependent variable, through conducting a quasi-experiment.

To gain more insights into how sociolinguistics teachers conceive the issue under study, according to their teaching experiences, we need to collect data about their opinions and their attitudes. This type of information calls for gathering facts related to the description of the situation as it occurs in the department. Therefore, the researcher decides to include the descriptive method in this research.

It is worth noting that the present study is an action research since it is conducted by the teacher who seeks to improve the teaching process and its outcomes.

#### I.9.2. Population and sampling.

The target population in this research consists of 426 students who are regularly enrolled in the third-year level (B.A.) in the department of English at Batna 2 University during the academic year (2016-2017) as well as all teachers of sociolinguistics in the same department. Since it is practically difficult to test every member of the whole population, the investigation is conducted on a sample of 64 students who are chosen according to their administrative allocation based on the alphabetic order of their names. Thus, the selection of the sample is imposed by the administration as intact classes. The sample is randomly divided into two groups: the experimental group which consists of 32 students, is exposed to the innovative treatment, and the control group which is made of 32 students receives the traditions

instructions. Being the teacher of both groups, the researcher can assure the easy access to both groups as they exist in real life.

### I.9.3. Data gathering tools.

The choice of the data gathering instruments depends on the research method and the nature of the information required to fulfill the research objectives. Before initiating the experiment, the researcher uses a pretest to evaluate students' current intercultural competence and to make sure that students, in both groups, have nearly the same level of intercultural competence. As the experiment goes forward, the researcher uses two progress tests to assess learners' progress at the level of their intercultural knowledge and skills along with self-assessment surveys and continuous classroom observation which are employed to assess learners' attitudinal progress in the experimental group. At the end of the experiment, a posttest is employed in order to test and assess the extent to which the independent variable affects the dependent variable by comparing the scores obtained in both groups.

To collect factual data about teachers' attitudes and opinions regarding the integration of the intercultural dimension and the teaching of culture in sociolinguistics class, a questionnaire is administered to teachers of sociolinguistics in the department of English. This instrument includes open-ended questions, multiple-choice questions and yes/no questions.

## I.10. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

### I.10.1. Limitations.

Investigating such an issue requires the selection of individuals according to their social backgrounds as a major characteristic by highlighting, in advance, the areas where they are coming different since people from different social classes and backgrounds are likely to act and perform differently. However, given the status of social classes as a taboo in Algeria, we have deliberately avoided including it as a dimension within the stratified sampling

technique for this ethical reason. Therefore, the study involves a sample of students chosen without a deep analysis of their social background.

The experiment duration is limited to one semester as the teaching of sociolinguistics lasts only one semester. We are aware that the investigation of such complicated topic requires more time to clarify all the aspects of the issue in question. Hence, we are convinced that further longitudinal studies can better explore the issue since developing intercultural competence is an ongoing process.

### I.10.2. Delimitations.

The population concerns only third-year LMD students of English at Batna 2 University because at this level, students are supposed to go more deeply in studying sociolinguistics as compared to the other levels (first and second years). Hence, culture as a vital component of society where language is used can be best taught and emphasized during this advanced level.

Among the tremendous number of socio-cultural subjects that can be taught in the sociolinguistics courses such as language variation, languages in contact and language planning and policies, the researcher has decided to focus mainly on euphemism, gender and non-verbal communication to attain the research objectives within the time plan by measuring the effectiveness of teaching these concepts in the development of learners' intercultural understanding.

### I.11. Structure of the Study

The present thesis is divided into eight chapters. In chapter one, a general introduction into the work is presented where the research plan and the most important methodological decisions are summarized. Chapters two, three and four are devoted to the literature review of the issue under study. Chapter two presents an overview of the cultural turn from the

communicative approach to the intercultural approach. Chapter three discusses issues related to culture and its integration in EFL classes, with a focus on the concept of intercultural competence and its different models. Chapter four is concerned with the theoretical framework of sociolinguistics, its scopes, its branches and its teaching.

Chapter five explains the methodology followed in this research. It describes in detail the research methods, the sampling technique and the instruments used in the collection of data. It also highlights the procedures to be followed in the analysis of the obtained data.

Chapter six deals with the analysis and the interpretations of results obtained from the tests to investigate the role of sociolinguistics in developing students' understanding of the intercultural differences. Chapter seven analyzes and discusses the data obtained from the questionnaire administered to sociolinguistics teachers. Chapter eight highlights some recommendations made in the light of the research results to promote learners intercultural competence.

# Cultural Turn: From the Communicative Language

# Teaching Approach to the Intercultural Approach

**Introduction**

To understand the context and the conditions under which the intercultural communicative approach has emerged, this chapter will offer a brief description of the shift from the communicative approach to the intercultural approach in foreign language teaching pedagogy. First, we will present some definitions of the concept of communicative competence, and we will expound the evolution of the concept of communicative competence and its components presented in the main theoretical models proposed by researchers. Then, the communicative language teaching approach and its principles will be discussed in order to clarify the status of culture teaching within this approach. At the end of the chapter, the intercultural communicative approach will be examined to highlight the need to transcend the traditional perspective of culture teaching and to focus on the development of learners' intercultural competence in order to reduce communication breakdowns and overcome misunderstandings whenever they communicate with people who are culturally and linguistically different.

**II.1.  Communicative Competence**

The concept of Communicative Competence has been introduced by Dell Hymes (1972) as a reaction against Chomsky's linguistic competence (1965). While Chomsky (1965) focused on the innate faculty and the abstract knowledge of the system of language, Hymes (1972) was interested in the concrete use of language in social interactions. His study of language was oriented towards the role of the socio-cultural factors that influence the use of language is communicative situations. He expressed his dissatisfaction towards Chomsky's

idealized linguistic theory because it cannot be applied in real social contexts. Hence, he expanded the concept of linguistic competence to the concept of communicative competence which includes, beside the linguistic competence, other types of competences that are necessary to use language appropriately in daily life communications. In this regard, Hymes (1971, p. 55) argues that "the term 'competence' promises more than it in fact contains. Restricted to the purely grammatical, it leaves other aspects of speakers' tacit knowledge and ability in confusion, thrown together under a largely unexamined concept of 'performance'."

Chomsky's linguistic competence is constrained to the speakers' innate ability to produce utterances that are grammatically correct. For Hymes, being competent in one language requires more than the mastery of the linguistic system. He (1972, p. 281) conceived a competent speaker as someone who is able to use language in relation to:

- ✓ Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
- ✓ Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;
- ✓ Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
- ✓ Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.

Many speakers may exhibit a great proficiency of grammatical, phonological and lexical rules of the language, but they fail to communicate since they do not master the appropriate use of language which is tied to "when to speak, when not… what to talk about, with whom, when, where, in what manner" (Hymes, 1972, p. 277). To select the appropriate speech acts from the existing repertoire in one context, speakers should be equipped with a kind of knowledge related to the socio-cultural norms and rules that govern the use of

language in a given situation. To account for his social perspective of language theory, Hymes (1972, p. 278) writes:

> There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar will be useless. Just as rules of syntax can control aspects of phonology, and just as rules of semantics perhaps control aspects of syntax, so rules of speech acts enter as a controlling factor for linguistic form as a whole.

Although Hymes was the first who provided a solid theoretical ground for the development of Communicative Competence theory in the fields of second/ foreign language teaching, learning and testing, this concept has been advocated by many scholars. Saville-Troike (1982) also highlighted the important role of the context in successful communications. For her, in each speech community, there are some skills and knowledge that the members must be aware of, beside their linguistic knowledge. Socio-cultural and interactional knowledge and interpersonal skills are necessary to accomplish and understand the communicative act. Similarly to Hymes view of communicative competence, Saville-Troike (1982, p. 21) explains that:

> Communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who may or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, whom one may speak to, how one may talk to persons of different statuses and roles, what appropriate nonverbal behaviours are in various contexts, what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands, how to enforce discipline, and the like.

Since communication in a particular speech community is shaped by socio-cultural and contextual factors like social status and age, understanding the socio-cultural context

where speech is produced helps to grasp the real meaning of the linguistic forms employed in a given situation. One linguistic form may have different interpretations depending on the context where it occurs. In the same vein, Widdowson (1990, p. 102) supported the influence of the context on our understanding of the intended meaning of the speech by stating that "understanding what people mean by what they say is not the same as understanding the linguistic expressions they use in saying it… [e] very linguistic expression contains the potential for a multiplicity of meanings and which one is realised on a particular occasion is determined by non-linguistic factors of context."

The occurrence of communication breakdowns and misunderstandings is very frequent among people who are not equipped with the socio-cultural and the contextual rules of language use. Therefore, we cannot say that language is free of its context, as we cannot extract it from its communicative framework. Our linguistic behaviors are deeply conditioned by the contextual demands.

### II.1.1. Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence.

Communicative competence is a central concept in Canale and Swain's (1980) study of language teaching. These applied linguists (1980, p. 20) define communicative competence as "a synthesis of knowledge of  basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse." They identified three components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competences. In 1983, Canale refined the model by dividing sociolinguistic competence to include discourse and sociolinguistic competences.

#### II.1.1.1. Grammatical competence.

Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar, semantics and phonology. It is equated with Chomsky's linguistic

competence because it is concerned with the mastery of the system of language and the ability to produce well-formed sentences like the use of subjects, verb tenses... etc. Although Chomsky has been criticized for his linguistic competence, this type of competence is very important for a competent communicator since "it is impossible to conceive of a person being communicatively competent without being linguistically competent" Faerch et al. (1984, p.168). The person who does master the grammatical, lexical, phonological and morphological rules cannot communicate appropriately and effectively in a given language because of his/her linguistic deficiency.

### II.1.1.2. *Sociolinguistic competence.*

It refers to knowledge of the social-cultural rules and the conventions that govern the use of language in a particular social context. This kind of competence is necessary to decide on the appropriateness of speech in different situations and to understand the real meaning of the message because it is responsible for the deep understanding of the social context of language use. Selecting the appropriate sentences and utterances that fit the communicative situation depends on contextual and social factors like age, social status, topic and relationship between speakers. For instance, the speaker who is sociolinguistically competent is able to select when and with whom to use the formal speech style and when not since his/ her sociolinguistic knowledge allows him/her to relate the speech patterns to the social and the contextual rules prevailing in a particular society to convey the intended meaning. This kind of knowledge is not universal, it differs from one situation to another, from one culture to another and from one speech community to another. In this regard, Cummins and Swain (1998, p. 168) write:

Sociolinguistic competence addresses the extent to which utterances are produced
and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts, depending on

contextual factors such as topic, status of participants, and purposes of the interactions. Appropriateness of utterances refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form.

### II.1.1.3. Strategic competence.

Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30) describe strategic competence as "the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence." In order to reach the communicative ends, speakers must be competent in using the adequate and the effective verbal and non-verbal strategies to avoid communication breakdowns and to repair communication problems and deficits related to their limited and imperfect knowledge of language like avoidance strategies, reduction strategies and achievement strategies.

### II.1.1.4. Discourse competence.

Discourse competence was added by Canale (1983) in the revised model. Unlike grammatical competence which is concerned with the production of sentences that are grammatically correct, discourse competence goes beyond the sentence level to focus on the intersentential relationship and the ability to arrange, organize and combine sentences in order to produce spoken or written texts and discourses that are unified in terms of cohesion and coherence. According to Brown (2003, pp. 219-220), discourse competence is "the ability we have to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances." For communicative ends, people's daily use of language exceeds the sentence formation to the production of meaningful and unified texts and discourses. The mastery of the formation of isolated sentences that are grammatically correct reduces the effectiveness and the success of communication. Therefore, knowledge of the combinational rules of grammatical forms and semantic meanings ensures the unity of texts that is

"achieved through cohesion in form and coherence in meaning" (Cummins & Swain, 1998, p. 168).

### II.1.2. Bachman model of communicative language ability.

An elaborated explanation of communicative competence was conceptualized by Bachman in his Communicative Language Ability model presented in 1990. The significant move in this theory was inspired by Hymes (1972), Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale's (1983) models of communicative competence. According to Bachman (1990, p. 840), Communicative Language Ability consists of "both knowledge, or competence, and the capacity for implementing, or executing that competence in appropriate contextualized communicative language use." This means that the proposed model is concerned with both competence and performance. The CLA framework includes three components which are: language competence, strategic competence and psycho-physiological mechanisms.

Language competence refers to "a set of specific knowledge components that are utilized in communication via language" (Bachman, 1990, p. 84). It comprises organizational competence and pragmatic competence. The organizational competence concerns the way sentences and texts are organized, and it is further divided into grammatical and textual competences. Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of vocabulary, phonology, syntax and morphology. Textual competence deals with knowledge of rules to join sentences and information together to form a well-organized text. The second component of language competence, pragmatic competence, which is concerned with the relationships between utterances and the acts or functions that speakers intend to perform through these utterances (Bachman, 1995) is also divided into illocutionary competence which is the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence which is the knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing acceptable language functions appropriately in a given context.

The second type of competence, strategic competence, is explained by Bachman (1990, p. 102) as follows:

The interpretation of discourse, in other words, requires the ability to utilize available language competences to assess the context for relevant information and then match this information to information in the discourse. It is the function of strategic competence to match the new information to be proceeded with relevant information that is available (including presuppositional and real-world knowledge) and map it onto the maximally efficient use of existing language abilities.

Unlike Canale and Swain (1980), for Bachman, strategic competence is not a part of language competence. In this model, it is viewed as "a general ability which enables an individual to make the most effective use of available abilities in carrying out a given task" (Bachman, 1990, p. 106). It is conceived as a general capacity rather than a specific knowledge of language. Therefore, it has been separated from language competence. Strategic competence includes assessment, planning and execution.

The last component of CLA is the psycho-physiological mechanisms that are related to the neurological and the physiological processes that intervene during the execution of language like the articulation of speech. It is important to point out that, although the model is complex to be applied in reality, it attempts to explain how the different components of CLA interact with each other and with the context where language is used.

### II.1.3. Celce-Murcia model of communicative competence.

Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrel (1995) viewed that the models of communicative competence of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) were based on the individual description and definition of each component of communicative competence. They also criticized Bachman 's (1990) model because it works more in the field of language assessment rather than

language teaching. Subsequently, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) refined Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale 's (1983) models by introducing some modifications in terminology, proposing a new type of competence, while strategic competence and discourse competence were maintained. Besides, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) proposed a functional-relational model of communicative competence that focused on the link and the interaction between its components and covered important aspects and components that are needed for successful communications. Therefore, it is believed that their contribution to the theory of communicative competence is more elaborated and more sophisticated.

Grammatical competence was substituted into linguistic competence to contend that this type of competence does not only include grammar, but also phonology and lexicon. Furthermore, sociolinguistic competence became socio-cultural competence which is defined as "the cultural background knowledge needed to interpret and use a language effectively" (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 42). More interestingly, in this model, they added a fifth type of competence, actional competence, which refers to the competence in " conveying and understanding communicative intent, that is matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force (speech acts and speech act sets)" (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p. 17). It is worth noting that this pragmatic ability was integrated within the sociolinguistic competence of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) models. Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) placed discourse competence at the center of the model as a core competence because it shapes and also is shaped by linguistic, sociolinguistic and actional competence. They (1995, P. 9) explain this relationship as follows:

Our construct places the discourse component in a position where lexico-

grammatical building blocks [i.e. linguistic competence], the actional

organizational skills of communicative intent, and the sociocultural context come

together and shape the discourse, which, in turn, also shapes each of the other

three components.

Within the same theoretical framework, strategic competence links all the

competences together as " an ever-present, potentially usable inventory of skills"

(Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p. 9). This competence is important for speakers to cope

with communication problems, compensate for deficiencies and negotiate meanings.

This relational model has been further revised and updated by Celce-Murcia

(2007) who introduced Interactional Competence which encompasses actional,

conversational and formulaic competence, beside socio-cultural, discourse, linguistic

and strategic competences.
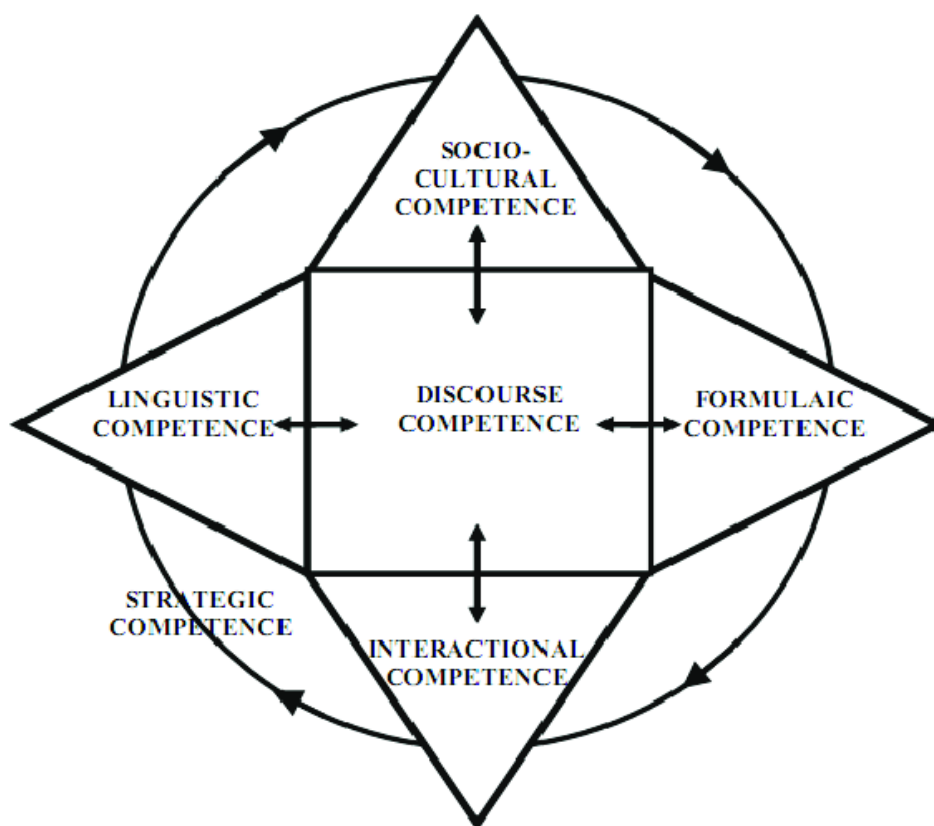


Figure 1. Schematic representation of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007).

### II.1.3.1. Sociocultural competence.

Sociocultural competence refers to "the speaker's pragmatic knowledge, i.e. how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication" (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 45). That is to say, this kind of competence deals with knowledge of the sociocultural norms and the contextual rules that are related to language variation and use. Celce-Murcia (2007, p. 45) identifies three important sociocultural variables within this competence:

- ✓ *Social contextual factors*: the participants' age, gender, status, social distance and their relations to each other, power and effect;

- ✓ *Stylistic appropriateness*: politeness strategies, a sense of genres and registers;

- ✓ *Cultural factors*: background knowledge of the target language group, major dialects/regional differences, and cross-cultural awareness;

Celce-Murcia contends that cultural and social blunders can be far more serious that linguistic errors. Thus, foreign language teachers should raise learners' awareness of the important role of the socio-cultural factors to use language appropriately by teaching them about the target community traditions, literature and history as well as exposing them to the target speech community where language is used as a native one.

### II.1.3.2. Discourse competence.

Discourse competence refers to the organization and the arrangement of words and utterances to produce a unified and a coherent text. In this model, it represents the intersection between linguistic competence, socio-cultural competence, formulaic competence and interactional competence. To clarify better how this competence can be achieved, Celce-Murcia (2007, p. 47) mentions four elements that are essential in discourse competence:

- ✓ *Cohesion*: conventions regarding use of reference (anaphora/cataphora), substitution/ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical chains;

- ✓ *Deixis*: situational grounding achieved through use of personal pronouns, spatial terms (*here/there; this/that*), temporal terms (*now/then; before/after*), and textual reference (e.g. *the following table, the figure above*);

- ✓ *Coherence*: expressing purpose/intent through appropriate content schemata, managing old and new information, maintaining temporal continuity and other organizational schemata through conventionally recognized means;

- ✓ *Generic structure*: formal schemata that allow the user to identify an oral discourse segment as a conversation, narrative, interview, service encounter, report, lecture, sermon, etc.

### II.1.3.3. Linguistic competence.

Linguistic Competence refers to phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic knowledge of language. Celce-Murcia's conception of this competence is identical to Canale and Swain's (1980) grammatical competence (for more explanation, see pages 17-18).

### II.1.3.4. Formulaic competence.

In her revised model, Celce-Murcia (2007) highlighted the importance of formulaic competence along with knowledge of the linguistic system for language fluency. It is meant by formulaic competence the mastery of "those fixed and pre-fabricated chunks of language that speakers use heavily in everyday interaction" (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 48). To clarify better, she lists some formulaic expressions that fluent speakers often use in everyday communications:

- ✓ Routines: fixed phrases like *of course, all of a sudden* and formulaic chunks like *How do you do? I'm fine, thanks; how are you?*

✓ Collocations: verb-object: *spend money, play the piano,* adverb, adjective: *statistically significant, mutually intelligible,* adjective-noun: *tall building, legible handwriting;*

✓ Idioms: e.g. *to kick the bucket = to die; to get the ax = to be fired/terminated;*

✓ Lexical frames: e.g. *I'm looking for                        . See you (later/tomorrow/ next week,* etc.).

### II.1.3.5. Interactional competence.

Celce Murcia (2007) introduced the concept of interactional competence in the refined model to refer to speakers' knowledge of interactional rules that are needed to communicate effectively in socio-cultural settings. In her elaboration on this competence, she divided it into three subcomponents: Actional competence, conversational competence and non-verbal (paralinguistic) competence.

### II.1.3.5.1. Actional competence.

Actional competence is defined by Celce-Murica (2007) as knowledge of how to perform and interpret common speech acts and speech act sets in the target language during interactions such as information exchanges, interpersonal exchanges, expression of opinions and feelings, problems (complaining, blaming, regretting, apologizing, etc.) and future scenarios (hopes, goals, promises, predictions, etc.). This pragmatic ability is a very important component of communicative competence since it allows to create a natural and a smooth interaction among communicators.

In second/foreign language teaching and learning context, developing actional competence is a prerequisite to ensure the successful use of language because the performance of speech acts like request, compliment and apology differs from one language to another, and from one social group to another. Therefore, second/foreign language learners need to acquire actional competence as a part of communicative competence in order to function appropriately when performing and interpreting different speech acts.

*II.1.3.5.2. Conversational competence.*

Conversational competence requires knowledge of conversational rules such as:

- ✓ How to open and close conversations;

- ✓ How to establish and change topics;

- ✓ How to get, hold, and relinquish the floor;

- ✓ How to interrupt;

- ✓ How to collaborate and backchannel.

The conversational norms that usually intervene in social interactions like turn-taking, opening and closing a conversation and interruption also differ not only from one language to another, but also from one speech community to another. Rules for closing a conversation that are perceived as normal and appropriate in one culture may be completely offensive in another cultural group. For this reason, Celce-Murcia (2007, p. 49) claims that "awareness of the conversation norms of the target language community and of the important differences between L1 and L2 norms is very important for conversational competence."

*II.1.3.5.3. Non-verbal/paralinguistic competence.*

When people interact with each other, they usually move some parts of their body along with their speech to effectively achieve their communicative ends. Celce-Murcia (2007) claims that issues like eye contact, proxemics, kinesics, greetings, gestures, postures, Haptic behavior, silence and pauses should be addressed in foreign language classes because they are central to oral communication and communicative competence. According to her, foreign language learners need to acquire paralinguistic knowledge to adapt their non-verbal behaviors according to the communicative situation where language is used and to understand the real significance of the different postures and gestures that people display during their interactions.

*II.1.3.5.4.  Strategic competence.*

In the refined model, Celce-Murcia (2007) emphasizes both, the learning strategies and the communication strategies. Concerning the learning strategies, she makes the distinction between cognitive strategies (the use of outlining, note-taking and summarizing that rely on logical and analytical methods), metacognitive strategies (self-evaluation, guessing the meaning of words from the context and other monitoring functions), and memory-related strategies (the use of acronyms, images and sounds to memorize words). On the other hand, five strategies are specified within communication strategies:

- ✓ *Achievement strategies*: strategies of approximation, circumlocution, codes-witching, miming, etc.;
- ✓ *Stalling* or time gaining strategies: using phrases like *Where was I? Could you repeat that?*
- ✓ *Self-monitoring strategies*: using phrases that allow for self repair like *I mean….;*
- ✓ *Interacting strategies*: these are strategies that include appeals for help/clarification, that involve meaning negotiation, or that involve comprehension and confirmation checks, etc.;
- ✓ *Social strategies*: these strategies involve seeking out native speakers to practice with, actively looking for opportunities to use the target language.

After reviewing the different models of communicative competence, the refined model of Celce-Muricia (2007) seems to be the most comprehensive one because she identified the most important aspects that contribute to the success of communication such as interactional competence as she highlighted how these components interact with each other.  However, her

model took the target speech community as the standard to be imitated by second/foreign language learners.

## II.2. Communicative Language Teaching Approach

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach has emerged during the early seventies as a reaction against the structural approaches like the grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual method that focused on the mastery of the linguistic rules and the grammatical accuracy through the passive use of memorization of dialogues, translation drills and other forms of rote and mechanical learning where the teacher played the role of the controller in the classroom. The drawbacks in these traditional methods were clearly manifested in learners' inability to use language effectively after being exposed to language teaching instructions for several years. As language's primary function is communication, from this token, the Communicative Language Teaching Approach gained its popularity during the 1970s when applied linguists felt to need to change the way language teaching was approached by placing the communicative ends as a primary objective, rather than the sole mastery of the linguistic system as the previous approaches did. The shift in goals was also manifested in the use of teaching materials and the design of syllabi. This approach in which communicative competence was considered as a key concept was advocated by many applied linguists and researchers in the field of language teaching and learning who viewed language as a form and a meaning. With the growing interest in learners' needs, the concept of communicative competence suggested by Hymes (1972), Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) and Celce-Murcia (2007) became the underpinning of the communicative approach of language teaching and learning.

### II.2.1. Defining communicative language teaching.

Many definitions have been proposed by applied linguists to the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. Richards (2006, p. 2) defines it as "a set of principles about

the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom." This means that this approach is built upon some classroom decisions like teaching materials, activities and roles assigned to teachers and learners in order to achieve the teaching goal which is not mentioned in this definition. Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 99) define communicative language teaching as "an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language teaching is COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE and which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities." In this definition, the goal of second/foreign language teaching within this approach is the development of learners' ability to use language and to communicate appropriately. Harmer (2007, p. 70) also emphasizes the importance of the communicative abilities in this approach by defining it as "a generalized "umbrella" term to describe learning sequences which aim to improve the students' ability to communicate in contrast to 'teaching which is aimed more at learning bits of language just because they exist – without focusing on their use in communication.'" Following the same line of thought, Savignon (2005, p. 637) stresses the correlation between particular teaching programs and materials and the aim of the development of the communicative abilities in this approach by stating that:

> CLT can be seen to derive from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes at least, linguistic, psychology, philosophy, sociology and educational research. The focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learners participation in communicative events.

Widdowson (1990, p. 159) describes the goal of the  Communicative Approach as follows:

> [I]t concentrates on getting learners to do things with language, to express concepts and to carry out communicative acts of various kinds. The content of a language course is now defined not in terms of forms, words and sentence patterns, but in terms of concepts, or notions, which such forms are used to express, and the communicative functions which they are used to perform.

In a second/foreign language classroom, where the communicative approach is adopted, a whole unit can be devoted to teaching learners different linguistic forms that are used to express a particular speech act like apology in different communicative situations through the use of different materials like videos and authentic texts.

From these definitions, we come to the conclusion that the communicative approach is based on the assumption that the aim of foreign language teaching is communication. Since it is oriented towards learners' needs and interests, the sole focus on the linguistic system cannot serve the communicative purposes of interaction. Hence, the ultimate goal of this approach is the development of learners' communicative competence which allows them to use language in natural situations.

The winds of change in linguistic theory and sociolinguistics have influenced language teaching pedagogy. While the aforementioned models of communicative competence are based on theoretical conceptualizations, communicative language teaching is based on the practical aspect of communicative competence. Many educators and applied linguists designed syllabi and introduced materials that fit the communicative function of language. For instance,  As an alternative to the structural (grammatical) syllabus which emphasized the teaching of linguistic structures (grammar, phonology and Lexis) within the traditional

approaches, the functional-notional syllabus has been proposed by Van Ek (1976) and Wilkins (1976) in which the teaching materials used in the classroom stem from concrete, natural and authentic communicative situations to reach the communicative goal to use language.

### II.2.2. Principles of Communicative Language Teaching Approach

Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 99) summarize the main principles of this approach as follows:

- ✓ Learners use a language through using it to communicate;
- ✓ Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities;
- ✓ Fluency and accuracy are both important goals in language learning;
- ✓ Communication involves the integration of different language skills;
- ✓ Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and errors;

Berns (1990, p. 104) identifies eight principles of CLT:

- ✓ Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing;
- ✓ Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users;
- ✓ A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms;
- ✓ More than one variety of the language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching;

✓ Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speaker's communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages;

✓ No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed;

✓ Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learner's competence in each;

✓ It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language – that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning.

Richards and Rogers (2001, p. 161) claim that the CLT has the following features:

✓ Language is a system for the expression of meaning;

✓ The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication;

✓ The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses;

✓ The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

Nunan (1991, p. 279) lists five features of CLT:

✓ An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language;

✓ The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation;

✓ The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself;

✓ An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning;

✓ An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

In addition to the above-stated principles, this approach is also based on the use of pair and group-work activities like role-plays, interviews, dialogues, information gap and projects because such activities offer opportunities to use language, and create communicative situations where learners can practice language use, negotiate meaning and engage in meaningful communication. Errors are tolerated because they are considered as a part of the learning process. Furthermore, as the Communicative Language Teaching Approach is more learner-centered, the traditional roles of teachers and learners have changed. Learners become more responsible for their own learning while teachers become facilitators of language learning. In this regard, Larsen- Freeman (1986, p. 131) states that "in strong versions of CLT the teacher is required to take a less dominant role and the learners are encouraged to be more responsible managers of their own learning." Thus, learners are no more passive receivers of knowledge because they are actively involved in the learning process.

### II.2.3. Culture in communicative language teaching.

In tandem with the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach, whose aim is the development of communicative skills and abilities to use language and negotiate meaning according to the socio-cultural norms of the target speech community, the need to integrate culture in second/foreign language classroom has been acknowledged through placing language teaching and learning within its socio-cultural context. Communicative competence theories and approach played an important role in highlighting the influence of culture on language use. Unlike the traditional approaches that sought to teach linguistic structures apart from their social functions and cultural usages, the new approach has introduced the cultural aspect into the second/foreign language classroom to help learners achieve the natural use of language in real-life situations. However, "in a 'general' communicative language curriculum, cultural competence has traditionally been considered as knowledge about the 'life and institutions' of the target culture" (Corbett, 2003,

p. 31). The teaching of culture in this approach has been based on the transmission of facts related to the foreign community's way of life, including history, geography, political and educational systems, tradition and customs. Moreover, this approach has emphasized the native speaker's model by teaching foreign language learners how people from the foreign culture are expected to behave in different situations, and encouraging them to imitate the foreign cultural behaviors to generate a native-like competent speaker. On the other hand, learners' native culture has been totally ignored in the classroom.

In the second half of the 1990s, researchers such as Kramsch (1996) and Byram (1997) indicated that, although the communicative approach has been based on the use of authentic communicative situations, learners have been unable to communicate effectively in cross and intercultural encounters. Corbett (2003, p. 6) also criticized the way the communicative language teaching has approached the teaching of culture by stating that "although it might be supposed that interaction with authentic texts might encourage cultural exploration, the communicative approach focused instead on the transfer of information as the core of the language-learning task." In a similar manner, Kramsch (1996, p. 23) states that "the teaching of culture within the communicative approach has been limited to facts over meanings and has not enabled learners to understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets." This means that cultural competence in this approach is restricted to the acquisition of some cultural knowledge about the target speech community. The same view is expressed by Byram (1997, p. 3) who claims that "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." Thus, we can say that the communicative approach is more prescriptive as it teaches learners how to use the foreign language without urging them to analyze and criticize different worldviews. In other words, the communication between native

speakers and non-native speakers is perceived in this approach as a communication in the foreign language rather than an intercultural communication (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999).

Byram (1997) claims that the acquisition of cultural knowledge about the target speech community and the imitation of native speakers' behaviors without stimulating cultural exploration cannot be enough to guarantee the success of intercultural communication. He asserts that the teaching of the foreign culture should not result in the adoption of the foreign cultural identity at the expense of their own, and suggests that foreign language pedagogy should aim to develop learners' critical and analytical skills to train them to value and reflect on the native and the foreign cultural practices in order to behave in an acceptable manner. In the same vein, Corbett (2003, p. 34) states that "by encouraging learners to be active analysts and interpreters of culture (including their own), we help them along the road to independent intercultural analysis and interpretation in a range of situations where they might otherwise be at a loss, and where authoritative guidance is unavailable." This means that training learners to behave in an acceptable manner and manage intercultural misunderstandings is more important than the focus on the native-speaker's fluency. Kramsch (1996) also points out that foreign language learners need to learn how to decentre and how to mediate between cultures to be competent. Consequently, the intercultural approach whose aim is to guide learners to find their place between the native and the foreign cultures has been proposed in the 1990s as an alternative to the communicative approach. In the new approach, the comparison between cultures is important to raise learners' awareness of the self and the others since "understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one's own" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 206). The perception of the role of culture in foreign language teaching and learning has changed from the native-speaker model to the intercultural model which will be discussed in the next chapter.

**II.3. Intercultural Communicative Approach**

As mentioned before, declarative knowledge of the foreign culture is not enough to prepare learners to intercultural communications because this kind of knowledge cannot train them to manage and solve misunderstandings and conflicts that are often caused by cultural differences. They need to develop skills and attitudes that allow them to behave appropriately in intercultural contacts. The new perception of culture teaching as a bi-dimensional process urges researchers such as Byram (1997) to emphasize the necessity to transcend the concept of communicative competence by expanding this notion to intercultural competence. The proponents of the new approach do not totally reject the communicative approach because they overlap in some areas. Byram (1997), for instance, points out that the intercultural communicative competence includes linguistic competence, socio-cultural competence, discourse competence and strategic competence, which are the components of the communicative model in addition to the intercultural competence. Unlike the communicative approach whose goal is the development of native-like speakers, the desired outcome of the integration of the intercultural approach in the foreign language classroom is to train learners to reflect on the similarities and the differences between cultures in order to promote their intercultural understanding. Jedynak (2011, p. 68) summarizes the main differences between the communicative approach and the intercultural approach as follows:

✓ The main aim of the CA is communication while in the IA maintaining contact, expressing identity, building a bond with own and foreign culture;

✓ In the CA the information about L2 culture is provided to the learners, but priority is given to four skills development. In the IA there is an integration of culture teaching and L2 teaching;

✓ The CA is interested in the target language culture, but it is the IA that stresses the importance of reflection on comparison of L1 and L2 cultures leading to the development of the learner's identity;

✓ As to the content of teaching, in the CA it was frequently trivial or unimportant since the main aim was to develop the four skills. In the IA teaching through integrated content from various disciplines is emphasized;

✓ The effect of the CA is communicative competence and in the IA it is intercultural communicative competence. While the former is based on linguistic competence of a native speaker the latter characterizes an educated intercultural mediator and not necessarily a native speaker.

In the intercultural approach, learners' ability to communicate with people from the foreign culture does not depend only on their cultural knowledge, but also on their ability to cope with the intercultural differences. Therefore, this approach targets three important aspects: cognitive (knowledge), Behavioral (skills) and affective (attitudes) domains to be promoted. Sercu (2000, p. 31) identifies the following basic premises of the intercultural communicative approach:

✓ In teaching for intercultural communicative competence, language -and- culture need to be taught in an integrated way;

✓ The objectives of teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence can be defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes;

✓ The model on which the teaching of intercultural communicative competence is based is that of dialogue, not a monologue;

✓ Teaching of intercultural communicative competence involves identity formation and is directed towards empowerment and independent learning.

The native culture is a central element in this approach because one of its primary goals is the development of self-cultural awareness. Intercultural competent speakers should first be encouraged to reflect on their culture to understand how their behaviors and worldviews are shaped by it as they need to respect and value their cultural identity. In this regard, Corbett (2003, p. 4) states that:

> The intercultural element of this kind of second language education also requires teachers and learners to pay attention to and respect the home culture and the home language. Learning materials have to incorporate aspects of the home culture, and non-native teachers become particularly valued for their own ability to move between the home and target cultures.

Unlike the communicative approach that focused on the cultural context of the foreign language to help learners communicate effectively, in an interculturally oriented classroom, the native culture and the foreign one are put side by side to help learners understand the similarities and the differences between them. "In the intercultural approach, the goal of FL teaching is 'to accommodate the two worlds in the learner's mind…, to sharpen the learners' awareness of similarities and differences and help them to come to terms and deal with divergent experiences" (Neuner, 1997, p. 273), this is because the cultural differences are proved to be the main cause of the serious misunderstandings that occur among speakers of different languages. Further details about this approach will be presented in the next chapter.

**Conclusion**

An overview of the communicative competence and the communicative language teaching approach has been presented in this chapter. The most important contributions to the

theory of communicative competence have been highlighted to demonstrate how the appropriate use of language in communicative situations is also as important as the linguistic competence. In addition, the  main principles of the communicative language teaching have also been explained to demonstrate how the teaching of culture in this approach was limited to the transmission of factual information about the foreign culture, while the native culture remained unexplored. Finally, the researcher introduced the intercultural communicative approach as an alternative to the model of  native-like speaker to develop learners' intercultural competence. In the next chapter, the researcher  will discuss the conception of the term culture,  its relation to language and the historical background of its teaching in foreign language contexts. Then, she will elaborate on the concept of intercultural competence, its components and the main models proposed by researchers.

# Teaching Culture in EFL Classroom: A Focus on Intercultural Competence

**Introduction**

      The present chapter endeavors to set forth the main issues that are related to the teaching of culture in foreign language education in general and the integration of the intercultural dimension in particular. First, some definitions of the concept of culture will be expounded in addition to the iceberg allegory to illustrate the different layers of culture. In order to highlight the interrelationship between language and culture, the views of some scholars who support this link will be discussed. Then, the historical background of the teaching of culture will be outlined to elucidate the different turns in the conception of culture and its teaching in second/foreign language classroom. Moreover, the key concept of intercultural communicative competence will be defined and demystified through the examination of some models proposed by researchers such as Byram (1997), Deardorff (2006) and Bennett (1993). Finally, this chapter will also shed light on the necessity to create a third place between the native culture and the foreign in intercultural communication as it will demonstrate how culture shock should be labeled as a constructive experience to develop learners' intercultural awareness.

## III.1. What is Culture?

      Culture is considered as a dynamic and a complex concept. Therefore, it has been defined in different ways and explored from different perspectives. Scollon and Jones (2012, p. 3) define culture as "a way of dividing people up into groups according to some features of these people which helps us to understand something about them and how they are different

from or similar to other people." According to this definition, culture is not universally shared, it is viewed as a set of markers that characterize a group of people (norms, values, beliefs, etc.) and distinguish them from other cultures. In this sense, cultures may diverge as they may converge with each other in some aspects. Similarly, Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, Kohler, and Wood (2003, p. 45) define culture as "a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals and lifestyles of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artifacts they produce and the institutions they create." This definition also asserts that the cultural system is shared by the members of the same cultural group. It is reflected in their behaviors, their ways of interaction and their artifacts. What is taken for granted in one cultural group can be totally odd in another group. Ting-Toomey (1999, pp. 12-15)  attempts to clarify the concept by setting five functions of culture:

1.  Culture serves identity meaning function. Cultural values, norms and beliefs constitute an essential component that determines who we are because they attribute meaning to our identity. For Instance, the meaning of the concepts of being "successful", "competent" or "worthwhile" depends on the values of a particular culture.

2.  Culture serves a group inclusion function satisfying our needs for membership affiliation. It constitutes what is known as "a comfort zone" where people feel accepted and safe. Hence, they are not often required to explain and justify their actions and behaviors like the language, the dialect or the non-verbal behaviors they use. On the other hand, people who do not belong to the same group experience awkwardness, exclusion, anxiety and uncertainty.

3.  Culture has an intergroup boundary regulation function that shapes our in-group and out-group attitudes in dealing with people who are culturally dissimilar. As a natural human reaction towards the foreign culture, people develop ethnocentric attitudes and behaviors towards people who are culturally different. This means that they think that their cultural

practices and beliefs are superior while the others' cultural practice and beliefs are inferior because they see the world through the lenses of their culture. Thus, they judge all what is part of their culture as being correct, and they do not accept any violation of their cultural norms.

4. Culture serves the ecological adaptation function. Because of its dynamic nature, culture changes and evolves according to the realities of the environment. The surface-level of culture (fashion, food...) tend to change at a faster pace than the deep-level of culture (beliefs, values and norms). In sum, culture reinforces the cultural behaviors that are compatible with its ecology and sanctions other cultural behaviors that are mismatched with its ecology.

5. Culture serves the cultural communication function, which basically means the coordination between culture and communication. There is a reciprocal relationship between culture and communication. In one way, cultural norms, values and beliefs are modified and transmitted from one generation to another through communication. Thus, any change in the cultural system is reflected in communication. Furthermore, the way people interact with each other and communicate in a given socio-cultural context is shaped by their culture. They share some patterns of communication that are influenced by the cultural norms of the speech community.

Culture plays a central role in communication and social interaction. The way we address people, the use of titles, the selection of words and the use of body language such as proxemics and eye contact massively depend on the culture of the participants in the interaction. For example, one culture may consider the long eye as a sign of respect and focus while this may be seen the opposite in another culture. In this regard, Samovar, Jain and Porter (1981, p. 24) write:

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to

determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted... Culture... is the foundation of communication.

### III.1.1. Iceberg model of culture.

In order to better expound what culture means, researchers used some metaphors and allegories such as the iceberg which was proposed by Hall (1976), Weaver (1986) and Ting-Toomey (1999). In this model, culture is represented in an iceberg in which the visible aspect of culture is located above the waterline and includes cultural artifacts such as music, dresses, fashion, religion, rituals, food, drink and verbal and non-verbal symbols. It is also called Overt Culture because it can easily be observed and described. The cultural aspect which is hidden beneath the surface of water includes norms, beliefs, traditions, customs, values, symbolic meanings and hidden assumptions. Since this cultural side is difficult to be observed at first sight, it is known as the covert culture or the deep culture. In sum, the cultural aspects that people can observe and perceive through the five senses are located in the top of the iceberg while the aspects that cannot be perceived by the five senses are located in the bottom of the iceberg. Cushner, McClelland and Safford (1996, p. 50) describe these two parts as follows:

[O]nly 10% of the whole is seen above the surface of the water. It is the 90% percent of the iceberg that is hidden beneath the surface of the water that most concerns the ship's captain who must navigate the water. Like an iceberg, the most meaningful (and potentially dangerous) part of culture is the invisible or subjective part that is continually operating on the unconscious level to shape our perceptions and our responses to these perceptions. It is this aspect of culture that leads to the most intercultural misunderstandings.

Some people may limit culture to its observable form. However, a deep understanding of the observable cultural aspects can only be achieved if we succeed to understand the bottom of the iceberg. This means that the awareness of the hidden aspect of culture helps us understand how and why people behave and act in different ways since it is that aspect of culture that constructs people's perceptions and attitudes. If we fail to grasp the values of a given culture, we subsequently fail to interpret people's behaviors.

### III.2. Language and Culture

The nature of the link between language and culture has been a major concern of researchers in many disciplines such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropology, ethnography, sociology and psychology for many years. They have attempted to explain how culture and language, as human phenomena, are either interrelated or separated. This interest is expressed in the extensive literature concerning the intriguing relationship between language and culture. Risager (2007, p. 166) summaries these views as follows:

> Understanding the link between language and culture can be put between two opposite poles: on the one hand, it is feasible to view language as being intimately intertwined with culture; on the other hand, it can be regarded as a tool for communication that has no relation to culture, for example, when English is considered as a lingua-franca.

The proponents of the view that rejects the link between language and culture are often influenced by Chomsky and de Saussure 's structural ideas of language. They perceive language as an independent entity that is learned or acquired apart from its culture. Because the main focus of the present research is the relationship between language and culture, we seek to highlight the views which advocate the idea that culture is clearly manifested through language. According to Duranti (1997, p. 24), culture is "something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next through human actions, often in the form of face

to face interaction, and, of course, through linguistic communication." Culture, as a set of behaviors, beliefs, values, customs, traditions and practices that distinguish one group from another, is passed down from one generation to another through language. Children acquire the cultural patterns prevailing in the environment where they are raised via the medium of language which helps them to become members of a particular cultural group.

The interest in this relationship went back to Sapir (1921) who claims that language shapes people's worldviews. He states that "the fact of the matter is that the 'real' world is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group" (cited in Shaules, 2007, p. 42). Sapir and his student Whorf developed the theory of linguistic relativity which holds that language structure influences our worldviews. This means that people who speak different languages have different visions of the world. They argue that linguistic categories of concepts such as snow, colors or camels that exist in one language either determine (in the strong version) or influence (the weak version) the way speakers of that language perceive these concepts. They support their view with the illustration of some grammatical categories from the Hopi language that shape people's perception of the world. Although Sapir and Whorf's hypothesis has been subject to critics, we cannot deny that their contribution is considered as a significant turning point in the studies of language and culture.

Another view that supports the link between language and culture was presented by Kramsch (1998, p. 3) who states that "language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways." She further explains her conception of this relationship by identifying three ways in which language and culture are linked:

✓ First, language expresses cultural reality. People use words to express experience, to communicate facts, events and ideas about the world that other people share and to reflect attitudes, beliefs and opinions that belong to the common reality;

✓ Second, language embodies cultural reality through its verbal and non-verbal aspects. The way people use verbal and nonverbal mediums to communicate with one another creates experience and gives it meaning that members of the same cultural group can understand;

✓ Third, language symbolizes cultural reality. When people use their language, they also mark their social identity. As its use can distinguish one social group from another, language is considered as a symbol of social identity.

Hence, language is not only an instrument for communication among human beings, it is also the medium through which culture is created, expressed and symbolized. Brown is another scholar who advocates the strong relationship between language and culture to the extent that they cannot be separated. In this regard, he (2000, p. 177) states that "a language is a part of culture, and a culture is a part of culture, the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture." In this sense, language and culture influence each other. The effective use of language in communicative situations cannot be achieved if it is separated from culture because each cultural group has its own norms and rules that control the choice or the rejection of linguistic forms in a socio-cultural context. Furthermore, cultural values can hardly be expressed, developed, maintained and transmitted without the mediation of language. Examining the link between these two social phenomena leads to the discussion of how the issue of the inclusion of culture in foreign language syllabus has been viewed.

### III.3. Historical Background of Culture Teaching in Foreign Language Classroom

Before addressing the issue of intercultural communication, which is a crucial concept in our study, we attempt to summarize how different methodologies and approaches to language teaching handle the issue of culture teaching in foreign language classroom.

Highlighting the most important approaches to foreign language teaching helps us understand the circumstances under which culture has become an integral part of language teaching.

Starting with the traditional Grammar Translation Method whose main objective of language teaching was related the reading and the appreciation of great literary works written in classical languages such as Greek and Latin, the humanistic conception of culture that includes literature, history and fine arts of a nation or a country was prevailing and acknowledged at that time as the only equivalent of the term 'culture'. Thus, when learners were translating literary works, they were also translating culture. In this approach, grammar and vocabulary were seen as central elements. However, learners' ability to function linguistically and interact in a natural and authentic way in communication was neglected, and little attention was attributed to their communicative skills. In addition, this approach focused only on writing and reading skills.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Direct Method has emerged as a reaction against the Grammar Translation Method. In this approach, learners were directly exposed to the foreign language without the mediation of the native one. Besides, it also emphasized the oral communicative skills, including fluency, correct pronunciation, vocabulary and spontaneous use of language. As people's needs and means to travel to another country where the learned language is spoken, and international encounters increased, the aim of this approach was the promotion of learners' ability to communicate using the foreign language in real situations. In fact, the teaching of culture was closely present in this approach by introducing some cultural themes related to the country where the foreign language is spoken, its geography, history, traditions and everyday life of people of the target country. However, this approach failed to satisfy learners' needs because teachers could not predict all the situations as its conception of culture was limited.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the teaching of culture in Europe was associated with the teaching of history, geography, literature and fine arts of the country where the foreign language is spoken. This way of approaching culture has been known as the Landeskunde approach or Civilization. On the other side, the growing interest in the relationship between language and culture and the development of cultural studies in anthropology have greatly affected the conception of culture in America, especially during the 1960s and the 1970s when the Audio-lingual method has dominated.

The Audio-lingual method that was grounded in the principles of behaviorism in psychology and structuralism in linguistics admitted the link between the linguistic structures and cultural patterns. This influence is clearly manifested in the definition of culture proposed by Lado (1957), one of the advocates of the audio-lingual method, who views culture as "a structured system of patterned behaviour" (p. 111). With the advent of the audio-lingual method, the humanistic conception of culture has been transcended by giving birth to a new anthropological orientation. Teaching the cultural rules of the daily-life interaction were prioritized and taught implicitly along with language. In this approach, learners were able to develop some cultural patterns and behaviors that were present in authentic language through the memorization of dialogues and linguistic forms like colloquial expressions and idioms as well as the imitation of daily speech patterns.

Brooks (1968), who also supports the anthropological conception of culture, proposesa dual interpretation of this term: formal culture and deep culture. While the formal culture, which is also known as the big C, refers to the humanistic facet that covers fine arts, literature, folklore, sociology, history, geography and civilization, the deep culture, known as the small c, concerns the anthropological sense that includes everyday patterns of living. In other words, it refers to "the individual's role in the unending kaleidoscope of life situations of every kind and the rules and models for attitude and conduct in them " (Brooks, 1968, p. 91).

In addition, unlike the European humanistic conception of culture prevailing at that time, Brooks emphasizes the necessity to focus on the anthropological facet in foreign language teaching classroom.

As mentioned before, advances in the field of anthropology during the 1960s laid the foundation to the shift from the humanistic sense of culture (big C) to the anthropological sense (small c) in foreign language classroom. In the 1970s, as language started to be viewed as a means for communication, the goal of foreign language teaching and learning overshot the mastery of the grammatical and the linguistic structures to focus on learners' communicative competence. Learners' ability to use language appropriately in different contexts has been the main concern of educationalists and instructors. Consequently, language learning has been related to the society where it is used. In other words, teaching the socio-cultural rules of language use has also become as significant as the teaching of the grammatical rules. Thus, more importance has been attributed to culture in the communicative approach to teach learners how to interact with people from the target community and negotiate meaning. In this regard, Kramsch (2013, p. 64) reports that "in the 70s and 80s, following the communicative turn in language pedagogy, culture became synonymous with the way of life and everyday behaviors of members of speech communities, bound together by common experiences, memories and aspirations." Because of the influence of studies in speech act theory (Austen, 1962 & Searle, 1969) and anthropology (Hymes, 1971), the concept of culture as 'a way of life' gained a pragmatic orientation in this approach. However, this way of approaching the teaching of culture has had its limitations. As stated by Corbett (2003, p. 6), "although it might be supposed that interaction with authentic texts might encourage cultural exploration, the communicative approach focused instead on the transfer of information as the core of the language-learning task." Culture was only presented as a set of factual knowledge related to daily-life events in authentic texts, which resulted in

the formation of over-generalizations and misconceptions about people from the foreign culture, in case learners were not encouraged to explore, analyze, criticize and reflect on the cultural knowledge.

As it is practically impossible to teach learners everything about the target culture and make them familiar with all the contexts of the interaction, Kramsch (2003, p. 32) asserts that "an individual's ability to display indexical knowledge about the target culture is no measure of his/her ability to manipulate the symbolic meanings of language in interaction with various interlocutors in a variety of social contexts." Thus, in the era of Globalization where English is used as a lingua-Franca, the integration of culture in foreign language teaching classroom has taken another dimension. The interest in the teaching of factual information about the foreign nation's culture has been put an end. The inclusion of culture in the 21st century classroom starts to build a bond between the self and the others. Furthermore, the teaching of culture in this era has become a cognitive and a constructive process in which learners construct their own meaning and their understanding of themselves as well as the world around them through the exploration and the reflection on both cultures. In this new approach of culture teaching, which is known as the intercultural communicative approach, the perception of culture becomes more dynamic since it involves the development of analytical and critical skills and attitudes rather than the accumulation of factual information, which promotes learners' sensitivity towards the invalidity of stereotypes. According to Kramsch (2003 p. 32), the objective of the intercultural pedagogy is "to make learners understand why the speakers of two different languages act and react the way they do, whether in fictional texts or in social encounters, and what the consequences of these insights may mean for the learner."

Similarly, Corbett (2003, p. 20) describes the need to go beyond the transmission of cultural information and to implement an intercultural approach in foreign language classroom as follows:

> Foreign language learners are in the position of someone who is outside the target
> language group, looking in. Learners may not wish to adopt the practices or
> beliefs of the target culture, but they should be in a position to understand these
> practices and beliefs if they wish fully to comprehend the language that members
> of the target culture produce. It is this recognition that language is more than the
> transfer of information – it is the assertion, negotiation, construction and
> maintenance of individual and group identities – that has led to the development
> of an intercultural approach to language education.

Practically speaking, the goal of the intercultural approach is to train learners to act appropriately in intercultural contacts and to enhance their abilities to manage conflicts and intercultural shocks by developing their intercultural competence. Therefore, the reflection on the similarities and differences between the native culture and the foreign one is essential in this approach to promote learners' intercultural understanding.

### III.4. Intercultural Communicative Competence

#### III.4.1. Defining intercultural communicative competence.

Whenever individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds encounter, they need to be equipped with some abilities, in addition to their linguistic proficiency, in order to function effectively and to avoid any potential misunderstandings or conflicts that may arise because of the cultural differences. This set of abilities is termed 'intercultural communicative competence. Fantini (2006, p. 12) defines this new concept as "a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are

linguistically and culturally different from oneself." For successful communication, speakers must develop high intercultural knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and awareness that allow them to cope with the cultural differences and reach a mutual understanding. Similarly, Marinet Meyer (1991, p. 137) refers to intercultural competence as "the speaker's ability to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes, and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures." Thus, developing intercultural communicative competence in foreign language classroom leads to an important change in learners' behaviors and perception of the different others, and widens up their conceptions by overcoming prejudices and stereotypes. Foreign language students learn how to adapt their behaviors and tolerate the differences to avoid cultural clashes without losing their cultural identity. To put it in another way, an intercultural trainer needs to acquire " abilities to understand different modes 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" (Byram and Fleming, 1998, p. 12). Unlike the communicative approach, learners are not expected to assimilate everything about the target culture, nor are they required to behave like a native speaker to be effective communicators. They are rather encouraged to mediate between different experiences and different worldviews and, subsequently, behave appropriately in intercultural communication. Thus, the focus on the abstract cultural knowledge is not enough, learners' intercultural skills and attitudes must also be targeted in an intercultural oriented classroom. In the same vein, UNESCO (2013, p. 16) depicts what an intercultural speaker must have as follows:

> Having adequate relevant knowledge about particular cultures, as well as general
> knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures
> interact, holding receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining
> contact with diverse others, as well as having the skills required to draw upon
> both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures.

Bridging the gap between the self and the other is a challenging task in intercultural communication. For Byram, Nichols, & Stevens (2001, p. 5), the interculturally competent speakers possesse the following abilities:

[They have] a willingness to relativise 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 the perspective of an outsider who has a different set of values, beliefs and behaviours.

To be interculturally competent speakers, learners must overcome their ethnocentric attitudes which lead to the failure of intercultural communications as they must promote their ability to decentre by accepting, respecting and tolerating the cultural differences and displaying empathetic attitudes in order to not offend the culturally different others. To attain a successful intercultural contact, as Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002, p. 5) explain, the abilities to "ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and ... to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" are as important as the linguistic competence. Speakers who are interculturally competent are always ready to cooperate with the others who are socially and culturally different to reach a mutual understanding by mediating between cultures, which helps them solve cultural problems and reduces misunderstandings. In sum, we can define intercultural competence as the coexistence among people from different cultural backgrounds with the preservation of the native identities and the acceptance of the others. To understand better what intercultural abilities are needed for foreign language learners, we will present some models of intercultural competence proposed by the specialized in the field.

### III.4.2. Theoretical models of intercultural competence.

When reviewing the recorded literature in the field of intercultural education and intercultural communication, we found many theoretical models for the development of intercultural competence that have proposed by researchers to explain what is meant by intercultural competence, what is needed for intercultural understanding and how intercultural competence can be developed. These models depict the concept of intercultural competence by highlighting the different dimensions such as the components of intercultural competence, the relationship between them and the process of the development of intercultural competence. On the basis of these different aspects, models of intercultural competence are classified into five types (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009): co-orientational model, compositional model, developmental model, adaptational model, and causal process model.

First, the co-orientational models are concerned with the conceptualization of meanings of intercultural interactions and understandings. Thus, these models are applied to understand and solve misunderstandings and ambiguities that occur in intercultural situations. Yet, they do not focus on the process of the development of intercultural competence through time. In this category, we mention Fantini's (1995) model of intercultural interlocutor competence and Byram's (1997, 2003) model of intercultural competence.

Second, the compositional models list the elements that constitute intercultural competence such as knowledge, skills and attitudes. These models are important because they help to understand what intercultural competence is, but they do not explain the relationship and the interaction between the different components. The pyramid model of intercultural competence produced by Deardorff (2006, 2011) falls under this category.

Third, the causal process models highlight the causal relationship between the different components and the different variables that affect and/or are affected by other variables in intercultural competence. The best-known models in this type are Deardorff (2006) process model

of intercultural competence and Ting-Toomey (1999) multicultural process change model of intercultural competence.

Fourth, adaptational models are based on the mutual adjustments of attitudes and behaviors in intercultural interactions. The adaptation is perceived as a crucial element for intercultural competence because it allows the shift from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Berry's (1998) attitudes acculturation model is an example of this category.

Finally, developmental models of intercultural competence are concerned with the different stages of the acquisition of intercultural competence that trainees go through. These models perceive intercultural competence as a process that progresses and develops over time. They can be used to facilitate the evaluation of learners' intercultural competence. Bennett's (1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) is one of the best known developmental models.

### III.4.2.1.          *Byram's model of intercultural competence.*

As stated before, it is inappropriate to say that someone who has a broad knowledge of the target culture is an interculturally competent speaker. Cultural knowledge alone cannot be a benchmark of the speaker's intercultural communicative competence because what is also needed is the ability to interact with people from the target culture and to mediate between cultures, exhibiting stands such as acceptance, openness and tolerance that are necessary to maintain contact with others. For  successful intercultural communication, Byram (1997) proposes an elaborated and a comprehensive model of intercultural competence which consists of five kinds of 'savoirs' that speakers must have in order to mediate between cultures: savoir, savoir être, savoir comprendre, savoir apprendre/ faire, savoir s'engager. These components are classified into cognitive, behavioral and affective domains.

*III.4.2.1.1.    Savoir / Knowledge.*

For Byram (1997), any interculturally competent speaker should be equipped with declarative knowledge about the native and the foreign cultural worlds, including knowledge of beliefs, norms, values, practices and products as well as an abstract knowledge about how the general process of interaction takes place among members of different cultural groups. Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001, p. 06) explain this component as follows:

> Knowledge (savoirs): of social groups and their products and practices in one's
>
> own and in one's interlocutor's country and of the general processes of societal
>
> and individual interaction. So, knowledge can be defined as having two major
>
> components: knowledge of social processes; and knowledge of illustrations of
>
> those processes and products; the latter includes knowledge of how other people
>
> see oneself as well as some knowledge about other people.

Foreign language learners need to acquire knowledge in order to behave appropriately. However, this important element cannot function alone in intercultural encounters. Other components must be present.

*III.4.2.1.2.    Savoir être / Attitudes.*

Engaging in intercultural communication and maintaining intercultural contact require positive attitudes towards the foreign culture and the culturally different others. Due to its importance, this component,  as Byram et al. (2001, p. 5) claim, " is the foundation of intercultural competence." The most important positive attitudes that intercultural mediators should hold are summarized in the following points:

✓ Being curious to know more about people from the foreign culture;

✓ Being open towards intercultural differences;

✓ Being ready to suspend disbelief about the other cultures and belief about one's own;

✓ Being able to decentre by recognizing the validity of different visions of the world;

✓ Being able to see the native beliefs, values and behaviors through the lens of an outsider who has a different worldview;

✓ Showing the willingness to relativise one's own values, beliefs and behaviors by recognizing that their cultural values, practices and behaviors are not the only correct ones.

*III.4.2.1.3.     Savoir comprendre / Skills of interpreting and relating.*

Savoir comprendre, also known as skills of interpreting and relating, refers to the  "ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own" (Byram et al., 2001, p. 6). Skills of comparison between two different cultural practices, ideas, events and documents improve learners' understanding of the different worldviews and the different experiences of the same situation or the same phenomenon. Thus, intercultural speakers gain more insights about the potential risks of misunderstanding problems that may occur because of the intercultural differences and how they can solve them.

*III.4.2.1.4.     Savoir apprendre / faire /skills of discovery and interaction*

Since developing intercultural competence is a lifelong process, intercultural learners constantly find themselves in need to learn new cultural information such as the need to discover how people from the foreign culture address each other. Thus, they have to acquire some skills that are helpful to search for knowledge and to collect new information to be added to the existing repertoire and used when needed in interaction. These skills of discovery and interaction are defined by Byram et al. (2001, p. 6) as the ability "to acquire new knowledge of a new culture and cultural practices, and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction."

*III.4.2.1.5.       Savoir s'engager /Critical cultural awareness.*

Savoir s'engager or critical cultural awareness is the ability to "to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (Byram et al., 2001, p. 7). Throughout the process of developing intercultural competence, learners need to acquire critical and analytical skills in order to consciously reflect on cultural phenomena in the native and the foreign cultural groups. To be interculturally competent speakers, they should learn how to critically assess and evaluate their own cultural values, beliefs, behaviors and practices and their influence on their worldviews as well as those of the foreign culture, using explicit criteria, in order to develop cultural awareness of themselves and others. As this component is placed in the core of the model of intercultural communicative competence, Byram (1997) asserts the necessity to stress critical cultural awareness as an objective in intercultural pedagogy to promote learners' analytical and critical skills and cultural awareness.

These five dimensions are very crucial for successful intercultural communication and the reliance on one's cultural knowledge alone without the inclusion of other components like openness, empathy and skills cannot enhance learners' intercultural understanding.  The five 'savoirs' work together to enable learners to interact with speakers from different linguistic and cultural worlds. Therefore, this referential model does not only describe the abilities and the skills that intercultural speakers should have, but it also facilitates the assessment, either formative or summative, of speakers' intercultural competence by identifying the elements that should be measured.

**III.4.2.2.       *Deardorff's pyramid model of intercultural competence.***

Deardorff's (2006) pyramid model is a compositional one because its main focus is the identification of the elements comprising intercultural competence. This model proposes five

components of intercultural competence that are presented in the following order: attitudes, knowledge, skills, desired internal outcome and desired external outcome.

*III.4.2.2.1. Attitudes.*

Deardorff (2006) identifies three important elements that constitute the attitudes of an interculturally competent speaker:

✓ *Respect to others and to cultural diversity, and valuing other cultures;*

It is very important to display respect towards people from different cultural backgrounds and to value their cultural beliefs, norms and practices in intercultural situations.

✓ *Openness to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, withholding judgment;*

The interculturally competent speaker should be open to different worldviews to be able to see things from different perspectives.

✓ *Curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty);*

These attitudes imply the readiness and the willingness to risk and to go beyond one's comfort zone by tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty. Learners should see  intercultural communication as an opportunity to learn more about cultural differences.

Attitudes like respect, openness, curiosity and discovery prepare people to engage in intercultural communication and cooperate with people from the foreign culture as they help them to develop their knowledge and skills. Hence, in order to minimize ethnocentric attitudes and promote the ability to decentre,  foreign language learners  should be trained to respect and accept cultural difference,  question the validity of prejudice and stereotypes that may misguide them, tolerate ambiguities that often characterize intercultural situations, and increase their curiosity to discover new aspects about the target culture. These positive attitudes which are located in the bottom of the pyramid are considered as the groundwork for the development of knowledge and

skills that are set in the second level of the pyramid because the more positive attitudes learners hold, the higher intercultural knowledge and skills will be developed.

*III.4.2.2.2.    Knowledge and comprehension.*

Deardorff (2006) specifies the following types of knowledge that interculturally competent speakers should acquire:

- ✓ Cultural-self awareness which means the awareness of the way in which one's native culture shapes his/her vision of the world and identity;
- ✓ Deep understanding and knowledge of culture (including contexts, role and impact of culture and understanding others' world views);
- ✓ Culture-specific information such as knowledge of values, traditions and beliefs;
- ✓ Sociolinguistic awareness which implies an awareness of the relationship between language and meaning in a social context.

This component can easily be developed in the classroom through designing and teaching courses that address this component, as it can be promoted by exposing learners directly to the foreign society outside the classroom to help them clearly understand how culture influences worldviews.

*III.4.2.2.3.    Skills.*

In addition to knowledge, Deardorff (2006) lists the skills that are needed for developing individuals' intercultural competence:

- ✓ Skills of listening;
- ✓ Skills of observation;
- ✓ Skills of interpreting;
- ✓ Skills of analyzing;

- ✓ Skills of evaluating;

- ✓ Skills of relating.

These skills are central for communication and interaction with people from a foreign culture because they are needed for the acquisition and the processing of knowledge related to the foreign culture as well as the native one. Therefore, they are put next to knowledge at the same level.

### III.4.2.2.4. Desired internal outcome.

As the components at lower levels affect the components at higher levels, the development of intercultural attitudes, knowledge and skills leads to the internal outcome which consists of the following elements:

- ✓ Adaptability to different communication styles and behaviors; adjustment to new cultural environments;

- ✓ Flexibility by selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behviours: cognitive flexibility;

- ✓ Ethnorelative view;

- ✓ Empathy.

The internal outcome is attained by the individuals as the result of their progress at the levels of attitudes, knowledge and skills. At this level, learners become able to see the world through the lens of people from the foreign culture, taking into consideration their perspectives, which reduces cultural clashes. Hence, the internal outcome causes an internal shift in one's frame of reference. However, its degree differs from one individual to another.

*III.4.2.2.5.        Desired external outcome*

This component is placed at the top of the pyramid of intercultural competence, and it implies behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to achieve one's goals to some degree. The development of the preceding elements results in a visible external outcome which is manifested in people's ways of behaving and communicating when interacting with people from the foreign culture. The extent to which these elements are promoted is reflected in people's behaviors and reactions in intercultural communication. If learners reach a high level of knowledge, skills and attitudes, their intercultural competence will consequently be high. On the other hand, limited knowledge, skills and attitudes mean poor intercultural competence. Thus, we conclude that the effective and the appropriate communication in intercultural situations presupposes positive attitudes, high knowledge and skills.

| DESIRED EXTERNAL OUTCOME: |
|---|
| Behaving and communication effectively and appropriately (based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to achieve one's goals to some degree. |

| DESIRED INTERNAL OUTCOME: |
|---|
| **Informed frame of reference/filter shift:** |
| Adaptability (to different communication styles and behaviours; adjustment to new cultural environments); Flexibility (selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours; cognitive flexibility); Ethnorelative view; Empathy. |

| Knowledge and Comprehension | Skills |
|---|---|
| Cultural self-awareness; Deep understanding and knowledge of culture (including contexts, role and impact of culture and others' world views); Culture-specific information; Sociolinguistic awareness. | To listen, observe, and interpret. To analyse, evaluate, and relate. |

| Requisite Attitudes |
|---|
| Respect (valuing other cultures, cultural diversity). Openness (to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, withholding judgment). Curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty) |

*Figure 2.* Deardorff's pyramid model of intercultural competence (2006).

### III.4.2.3.  *Deardorff's process model of intercultural competence.*

Beside the Pyramid model which identifies the components of intercultural competence that must be developed, Deardorff (2006, 2009) proposed a process model that highlights the interaction between the elements that constitute intercultural competence. The process model (2006, 2009) contains the same components as the pyramid model, but its focus is on the process of developing intercultural competence. In this model, it is possible for someone who succeeds to acquire the necessary attitudes to develop the desired external outcomes without developing the needed knowledge and skills. The minimal appropriate and the effective

communication can be achieved without the sufficient acquisition of knowledge, skills and internal outcome. Therefore, "attitudes of openness, respects (valuing all cultures), curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity) are viewed as fundamental in intercultural competence" (Deardorff, 2006, p.255). However, the acquisition of knowledge, skills, adaptability, flexibility and empathy ensure an effective and an appropriate communication. Thus, these components are also important to improve further the desired outcome. Moreover, this model depicts the development of intercultural competence as a complex lifelong process that may take the whole life. Therefore, there is no specific stage in which learners can become completely interculturally competent.

These two models have been proposed to orient and guide educators and teachers when designing curricula, courses and exercises to develop learners' intercultural competence as they can be used to set the criteria to assess their intercultural competence.

### III.4.2.4.       Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS).

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) has been developed by Bennett (1993) to describe how people's experience of cultural difference can evolve from the most ethnocentric perspective (denial) to the most ethnorelative perspective (integration). It summaries the different stages that people go through to modify their worldviews and their perceptions of the cultural differences, and consequently develop their intercultural sensitivity. The success of intercultural communication is built upon the understanding that people perceive and interpret the world differently because of the cultural differences, Therefore, in this model, people's perception of the differences determine their intercultural sensitivity. Accordingly, "if a learner accepts this basic premise of ethnorelativism and interprets events according to it, then intercultural sensitivity and general intercultural communication effectiveness seem to increase" (Bennet, 1993, p. 22). The DMIS model basically emphasizes learners' cognitive ability of "the construction of reality as increasingly

capable of accommodating cultural difference" Bennett (1993, p. 24), which is termed intercultural sensitivity.

In this model, learners' intercultural sensitivity progresses from the ethnocentric stages (denial, defense, minimization) to the ethnorelative stages (acceptance, adaptation, integration). Each of these stages describes how people perceive reality and construe the cultural differences. Throughout the move from one stage to another, people's perception and experience of cultural differences become more complex and more sophisticated. During the ethnocentric stages, they believe that their own culture is the only or the best one. Yet, during the ethnorelative stages, they become aware of the existence and the importance of other cultures along with the native one. They experience the native and the foreign cultures as relative to the context. Bennett (2003, pp. 9-10) describes these two main stages of experiencing cultural differences as follows:

In ethnocentrism, people unconsciously experience their own cultures as central to reality. They, therefore, avoid the idea of cultural difference as an implicit or explicit threat to the reality of their own cultural experience. In ethnorelativism, people consciously recognize that all behavior exists in cultural context, including their own. They recognize the restriction this place on their experience, and they therefore seek out cultural difference as a way of enriching their own experience of reality as a means to understand others.

**Development of Intercultural Sensitivity**

Experience of difference →

| Denial | Defence | Minimization | Acceptance | Adaptation | Integration |
|--------|---------|--------------|------------|------------|-------------|

Ethnocentric
stages

Ethnorelative
stages
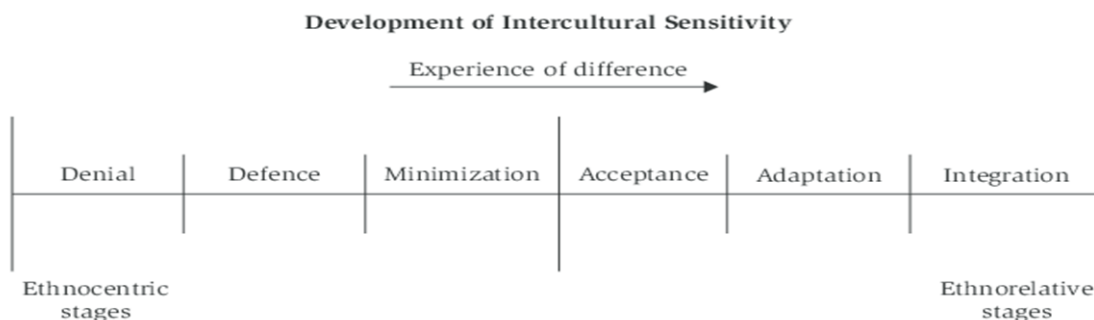
*Figure 3.* Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (2003).

*III.4.2.4.1.    Denial.*

Bennett (1993) asserts that, at this stage, people are in denial about the cultural differences. They do not construct the category of cultural difference because they are not able to notice and perceive much of the cultural differences. This state of denial is caused by people's tendency to isolate themselves from those who are culturally different to feel more comfortable in the familiar environment. Thus, the exposure to cultural differences cannot be experienced. Bennett (2003, p. 248) explains this situation by stating that "to them, the world is completely their current experience of it, and alternatives to that experience are literally unimaginable." They perceive only their own cultural experience as they dehumanize people around them from a different cultural background. Moreover,  individuals are unaware of the influence of their culture on their lives, which means that they do not understand how their cultural background shapes their worldviews. In addition, people may seem tolerant at this stage by using statements like "live and let live" and asking naive questions about the foreign culture because of their poor cultural experience. For Bennett, this stage can last the whole life if people maintain their isolation from the culturally different others.

*III.4.2.4.2.     Defense / Reversal.*

At the second stage of ethnocentrism, "people have become more adept at perceiving cultural difference" (Bennett 2003, p. 249) because of the casual exposure to foreign cultures. They become relatively aware of the other cultures, but they may perceive them in a negative manner. For them, the culturally different others truly exist, however, they are viewed as a threat to their native culture. In order to protect themselves, people construct boundaries between themselves and the others. Furthermore, their perception is usually shaped by negative stereotypes about the foreign culture. On the other hand, to depict their culture as a model for the world, they focus more on the positive aspects of their culture. Hence, their dualistic cultural experience organizes the world into 'us' and 'them'. For them, the 'us' is more superior than the 'them' which means that the foreign culture is denigrated. This ethnocentric situation is reflected in the use of statements such as  'my own culture is much better than the others.'

On the other hand, Bennett et al. (2003, p. 249) state that " occasionally, people at this stage may go into reversal, wherein they exalt an adopted culture and denigrate their own primary socialization ("going native," or "passing")." Unlike defense, at this stage people start to feel that the foreign culture is better than the native one. Therefore, they criticize their native culture.

*III.4.2.4.3.     Minimization.*

Bennett (2003, p. 249)  clarifies that at this ethnocentric stage, "differences that were threatening in Defense are subsumed into already-existing, familiar categories." Although people become able to recognize the cultural differences, they try to tolerate and absorb them by insisting on the belief that behind this surface variation, there are deep commonalities and similarities which transcend the superficial differences. Thus, they focus on the universal cultural features which are, according to them, helpful to avoid any requirement of adaptation

in intercultural and cross-cultural communications since they think that, after all, humans are either physically and psychologically or spiritually and philosophically similar in their essence. They attempt to construe what is unfamiliar in the foreign culture with the familiar categories of one's own worldview to minimize the differences. In addition, people, at this stage, do not accept categories like dominant culture and minor culture because they feel that they are equal, and they employ statements such as 'we are all created by God', or 'we are all one under the sun'.

### III.4.2.4.4.    *Acceptance.*

To describe people's experience of cultural differences at this ethnorelative stage, Bennett (2003, p. 250) claims that "they are adept at identifying how cultural differences in general operate in a wide range of human interactions." They become aware that their perception of the world is one of the existing worldviews. More interestingly, they accept the distinctive cultural realities and the different experiences as they respect the cultural differences that are reflected in people's behaviors, beliefs and values. However, acceptance does not imply agreement because some cultural differences can be negatively perceived at this stage, but in a non-ethnocentric way. Furthermore, they become more curious to learn more about the foreign cultures and to contrast them with the native one to recognize the cultural differences. Yet, they are not skillful enough to adapt their behaviors to different cultural contexts because of their limited cultural knowledge.

### III.4.2.4.5.    *Adaptation.*

According to Bennett (2003), people become able to mediate between different cultural frames of reference by dint of their increasing ability to perceive the world through the other cultural lens. They can consciously modify and adapt their worldviews in intercultural and cross-cultural situations because of the empathetic attitudes and the

flexibility they have developed, which allow them to behave and act appropriately and naturally when they interact with people from the foreign culture.

### III.4.2.4.6.    *Integration.*

During the final ethnorelative stage, people become more skillful in intercultural mediation. As their awareness and their understanding of the different worldviews increase, they acquire a rich repertoire of different cultural perspectives and behaviors, and develop multiple frames of reference which allow them to integrate more than one cultural worldview into their identity to become bicultural/multicultural persons and even global citizens. The shift from one cultural perspective to another becomes a natural and subconscious process that is integrated in the individual's identity.  People begin to see themselves as  "“moving around in cultures”, no longer completely at the center of any one or combination of cultures" Bennett (1993).

In the context of foreign language teaching and learning, this model offers an important sequential framework that can be applied when teaching and learning culture to train learners to mediate between different cultural worldviews. The curriculum can be designed in a way that addresses some skills and attitudes that are related to one of these developmental stages. The objectives set in the lesson plan can be devoted to the development one of the different experiences of cultural differences that characterize one particular developmental stage such as minimization of the differences and the focus on the similar features in the classroom. To improve learners' ability to adapt their behaviors and increase their empathy and their flexibility, activities on cultural shocks and critical incidents are useful during this stage. On the whole, this model can be exploited to design and introduce some effective strategies and materials to develop the intercultural sensitivity of foreign language learners in the classroom.

**III.5. Issues Related to the Integration of the Intercultural Dimension in Foreign Language Classroom**

**III.5.1. Creating a third place.**

Kramsch (1993) is one of the scholars who advocate the integration of culture in second/foreign language classroom. For her (1993),  the imitation of people from the foreign culture cannot guarantee the acceptance of the native speakers of the foreign language. Therefore, she rejects the native-speaker model and substitutes it with the intercultural speaker who is able to mediate between cultures. She encourages culture teaching pedagogy that is based on the reflection on the foreign culture as well as the native one in order to help learners establish a space between them, a third sphere. In this respect, Kramsch (1993, p. 210) writes:

> The only way to start building a more complete and less partial understanding of C1 and C2 is to develop a third perspective that would enable learners to take both an insider's and outsider 's view on C1 and C2. It is precisely that third place that cross-cultural education should seek to establish.

Unlike the traditional approach of culture teaching, whose main objective is the transmission of factual information about the foreign culture without addressing learners intercultural abilities and attitudes, the aim behind the integration of the intercultural approach, as kramsch (1993, 2008, 2013) contends, is to train learners to stand in a position that allow them to see themselves from the inside and from the outside, and to act as intercultural mediators who succeed to cope  with the differences. In order to achieve this goal, the foreign culture should always be put in relation to the native one to explore the

similarities and the differences between them through the use of dialogues which reduce conflicts and increase learners' ability to decentre (Kramsch, 1993).

Kramsch (1993, p. 210) identifies four steps to increase learners' cross-cultural understanding in the classroom:

- ✓ Reconstruct the context of the production and the reception of the foreign culture;

- ✓ Find an equivalent phenomenon in learners' native cultural context and construct it with its own network of meanings;

- ✓ Examine how the native and the foreign culture view each other;

- ✓ Lay the ground for a dialogue that could lead to change.

In an interconnected world, the need to intercultural dialogues becomes a prerequisite to help learners relativise their worldviews and promote their understanding of the world around them.

### III.5.2. Culture shock as a transitional stage in culture learning process

Culture shock describes a situation wherein anxiety, confusion, uncertainty and discomfort are prevailing because of the exposure to an unfamiliar cultural environment that is different from one's own. Such ambiguous situation occurs when the individuals face difficulties to cope well with the new culture since they do not receive any previous training. They feel disoriented as their familiar cues and symbols cannot be applied in the new world, and they are not equipped with the adequate frames of reference. Thus, they fail to expect and understand people's behaviors, reactions, beliefs and attitudes in a given cultural situation. Toffler (1970, p. 3) depicts culture shock as "what happens when a traveler suddenly finds himself in a place where 'yes' may mean 'no', where 'fixed price' is negotiable, where to be kept waiting in an outer office is no cause for insult, where laughter may signify anger." This

experience is considered as a natural common reaction to new situations to which people are not prepared, especially foreign language learners.

Although culture shock has been conceived as an illness by some anthropologists such as Foster (1962) and Oberg (1958). Alder (1975) view that it would be inappropriate to label culture shock as a deconstructive or a negative experience since it is rather a transitional experience of culture learning process. Exposing learners to culture shock can be a constructive experience that contributes to their personal, cognitive, psychological and social growth. Hence, what can be treated as a disease can be exploited by teachers to raise learners' intercultural awareness and to reach advanced intercultural stages such as acceptance and adaptation.

Adler (1975) explains this transitional experience of cultural shock in terms of five stages:

**Contact:** It occurs when the individual is newly exposed to a foreign culture. It is characterized by excitement, curiosity and euphoria of new experience. Yet, he/she is not prepared to handle the differences. Therefore, he/she focuses more on the similarities.

**Disintegration of the old familiar cues:** The individual starts to feel frustrated, confused and disoriented as he/she becomes unable to predict behaviors, and fails to manage intercultural interactions.

**Reintegration of the new cues:** It is characterized by strong rejection and negative feelings like anger towards the foreign culture because of the difficulties people face. The foreign culture is perceived in a judgmental way through stereotypes and generalizations.

**Autonomy:** This stage is also marked by the development of flexibility and empathy and the acquisition of appropriate coping skills for the foreign culture. The individual becomes able to operate effectively in two cultures as his/her familiarity with the foreign culture increases

**Independence:** The individual becomes more comfortable in both cultures as he/she accepts and enjoys the cultural differences. Consequently, he/she succeeds to interact with people from the foreign culture and adapts to the new cultural environment.

### Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter was dedicated to the teaching of culture in foreign language classroom, with an emphasis on the necessity to introduce the intercultural approach. First, we highlighted some definitions of culture as we attempted to provide an insight into the link between language and culture, followed by an overview of the shift in the perception of culture teaching from the description of abstract cultural knowledge to the development of learners' intercultural competence. After defining the concept of intercultural communicative competence, a brief classification of the intercultural frameworks was reviewed to understand the main components that intercultural competence encompasses. This chapter also addressed important issues related to the development of learners' intercultural competence such as promoting learners' ability to mediate between cultures through the creation of a third sphere and exposing them to culture shock as a transitional stage to increase their intercultural understanding. In the next chapter, an overview of sociolinguistic issues will present.

# Sociolinguistic Theoretical Framework

## Introduction

This chapter seeks to present a review of the most significant sociolinguistic theories and introduce the basic concepts that are relevant to the sociolinguistic research. First, we will start the chapter with a brief overview of the study of language from the structural perspective in order to demonstrate how the interest in language variation and sociolinguistic research has emerged. Then, the possible relationships between language, society and culture that are suggested by researchers in the fields of sociolinguistics and sociology of language will be highlighted. Since the concept of speech community is central to the sociolinguistic research, this chapter will offer the most important definitions proposed to this concept as it will examine how varieties of language are labeled by sociolinguists according to geographical, social and contextual factors. Beside the field of variationist sociolinguistics, interactional sociolinguistics which focuses on the analysis of language use in social interaction will also be explained in relation to cross-cultural communication. Finally, a brief description of the teaching of sociolinguistics for EFL students at Batna 2 University will be presented.

## IV.1. Linguistic Theory and Language Variation

During the 19$^{th}$ century, the study of language followed a comparative approach, known as 'comparative philology'. At this stage, philologists put their research into a historical perspective to study the diachronic evolution and the change of languages over time. They also compared different languages to classify them into language families such as the Indo-European one. Yet, the comparative philology, based on the item-centered investigation, could not hold on because of the criticism of its unscientific methods that weakened the significance of its contribution to linguistic research.

At the beginning of the 20th century, structuralism as an approach to human sciences started to prevail in the study of language with the publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's book of 'Cours de Linguistique Générale' in 1916. In this book, de Saussure introduces important ideas that illustrate the influence of structuralism through his focus on the structure of language as a primary concern in the linguistic research in order to describe linguistic facts. He postulates that language should not be studied in terms of its isolated words as comparative philologists did in the 19th century, but in terms of a system of interrelated signs that constitute the structure of the language. He explains his understanding of language in two concepts 'langue' and 'parole' which respectively correspond to language and speech in English.

De Saussure (1915) defines langue as "a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty" (as cited in Williams, 1992, p. 37). Langue is regarded as an abstract linguistic system of signs that exist in the minds of a group of speakers who belong to the same speech community. This social phenomenon is not complete in any individual speaker; it is fully stored in the collectivity. Thus, we can say that langue is a common possession since it is shared by the members of the speech community. On the other hand, he defines parole as the actual realization and the concrete manifestation of the abstract linguistic system that can be observed when the individual speakers use interrelated signs from langue to express their thoughts. During the act of speaking, individuals can produce different sentences to express the same idea through the selection and the combination of a set of different signs that exist in langue. Accordingly, the linguistic variation is constantly observed only in parole, and not langue. This distinction between langue and parole is primarily a distinction between what is social and what is individual, what is abstract and what is concrete, what is homogeneous and what is heterogeneous. De Saussure who was

concerned with the structure of language eliminated parole from the study of language because he believed that parole cannot be structured due to its linguistic variation. Hence, his linguistic theory prioritizes the study of langue over parole. He insists on the study of langue as an abstract homogeneous linguistic system apart from the influence of social, psychological and cognitive factors that can lead to significant progress in the linguistic research. In his description of this approach, Albrecht (2011, p. 821) states that this view:

> [T]reats the language system as an autonomous object which can and should be abstracted from adjacent factors such as the history of the language, the anatomic and neurological requirements for the faculty of speech, the cognitive and social conditions of verbal communication and, last but not least, the practical purposes of speech acts.

The linguist Noam Chomsky (1965) adopts the structural ideas proposed by the founders of modern general linguistics like de Saussure because he views that "no cogent reason for modifying it has been offered" (p. 4), though such argument is not supported by a strong evidence. He introduces a distinction between competence and performance that are, in the essence, similar to de Saussure's dichotomy of langue and parole. Chomsky (1965, p. 4) conceives competence as "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language." It is an innate knowledge about the rules of the pronunciation of words (phonology), the meaning of words (semantics) and the class of words (syntax). Such mental knowledge of the linguistic system that exits in the mind of speakers governs the linguistic behavior and allows speakers to judge structures as being grammatical or ungrammatical. On the other hand, Chomsky (1965, p. 4) defines performance as "the actual use of language in concrete situations." In other words, it is the concrete linguistic behavior itself that is manifested through the selection and the execution of the abstract rules of competence. As mentioned before, Chomsky's competence–performance distinction is inspired by de Saussure's distinction between langue and parole.

When we compare and contrast the researchers' conceptions of these dichotomies, we conclude that Chomsky's performance is very similar to de Saussure's parole. Yet, the concept of langue differs from the concept of competence in two ways:

- ✓ While de Saussure claims that langue is a set of signs, Chomsky argues that langue should not be limited to the knowledge of a set of linguistic signs since the linguistic system is governed by rules. Therefore, he develops the concept of competence which includes knowledge of not only linguistic signs but also, more importantly, the combinatorial rules of the system;
- ✓ Unlike langue, competence is not a social product since it consists of universal features that exist innately in the mind of individual speakers while langue exists in the collectivity. Therefore, competence is the property of the individual, not the community.

Chomsky (1975) asserts that in order to construct linguistic theories "it is the linguist's task to characterize what speakers know about their language, that is, their competence, not what they do with their language, that is, their performance" (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 4). The use of language in the social context is not relevant to Chomsky's linguistic theory since he believes that language can be better understood when linguists describe combinatory rules and features that are universal to human languages. Thus, he sets competence as the main object of study in theoretical linguistics while performance has been excluded because, according to him, the real use of language is always subject to some limitations and constraints like errors and distraction and, consequently, it cannot significantly contribute to the study of language. Chomsky's (1979) most controversial view considers linguistic variation that we constantly observe in the individual performance as an error in the application of the universal rules that cannot be structured. Therefore, he believes that variation in the use of language by different speakers is not worth to be studied in theoretical

linguistics. To overcome the influence of the possible limitations of the daily use of language in real-life situations, Chomsky describes the linguistic system of an ideal speaker-hear used in a homogeneous speech community to reach the possible generalization of his linguistic theory. Chomsky (1965, pp. 3-4) expounds this point of view as follows:

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

Chomsky has been criticized by many researchers for his assumption that the linguistic theory can only be developed through the study of the homogeneous speech community because linguistic behaviors cannot be uniform in real situations. They reject the idea of the homogeneous speech community since language does not exist in isolation of the social context where it is used. In this respect, Labov (as cited in Waurdhaugh, 2006, p. 3) maintains that "the linguistic behavior of individuals cannot be understood without knowledge of the communities that they belong to." Thus, Chomsky's knowledge of universal features (competence) is not sufficient to reach a deep understanding of language. Moreover, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015, p. 6) argue that "meaningful insights into language can be gained only if performance is included as part of the data which must be explained in a comprehensive theory of language." The link between language and social context where it exists urges sociolinguists to focus on the use of language in real-life situations (performance) because linguistic and social structures are "by no means co-extensive"(Labov, 1970, p. 199). As speakers never use the same linguistic forms in different situations, sociolinguists view that the study of language should transcend the description of homogeneous linguistic

structures, proposed by theoretical linguists, and they attempt to explain how and why linguistic variation that is structured by the norms of the speech community occurs within and across social groups. They relate the use of different linguistic forms to social factors like age, social class and gender. Thus, they assert that knowing a language is more than the mastery of its grammatical rules and principles; "knowing a language also means knowing how to use that language, since speakers know not only how to form sentences but also how to use them appropriately" (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 5 ).

A great chasm between theoretical linguistics and sociolinguistics is clearly manifested in the structural and the sociolinguistic arguments. For theoretical linguists, only homogeneous speech community can be structured while linguistic variation cannot. Therefore, it has been discarded in their research. On the other hand, sociolinguists agree that variation is not an error of performance. It is a natural evidence of the link between language and society. Hence, they assert that any realistic study of the human language must take into account the social aspects of language use.

## IV.2. Language, Society and Culture

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that puts the study of language into a social perspective. It deals with the examination of the possible relationships between language and society in order to achieve a better understanding of language in its social context. In this field, sociolinguists attempt to describe and explain language variation in relation to the social factors that affect the choice of particular linguistic forms in particular social contexts as they seek to identify the role of language in constructing social meaning and social identity. Holmes (2013, p. 1) summaries the areas of interest of sociolinguists by stating that "they are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with  identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning."

In sociolinguistics, the study of the interrelation between language and society is, in the first place, directly related to the objective of the interest in such link. Many scholars argue that social features like age, ethnicity, social status and gender affect the way people use language. The choice of the appropriate linguistic forms in a particular social context depends on the norms imposed by society. This means that the same linguistic behavior that is acceptable when used in one social situation can be rejected in another context because of some social differences. For instance, the choice between one of the greeting forms' hi' or 'good morning' depends on the formality of the situations (street/university) and the relationship between the interlocutors (intimate/distant). Hence, it would be inappropriate if a student salutes his/her teacher using informal expressions such as 'hi'. Romaine (2000, p. 26) is one of the sociolinguists who support the interrelation of language and society by stating that "there probably aren't any speech communities in which aspects of society have no impact on language whatsoever." Such social impact can be clearly noticed at the lexical, the phonological and the grammatical structures of languages as it can be manifested in the use of particular dialects, accents, styles, registers and even languages.

The way speakers categorize and name objects or concepts in language is influenced by the social reality. One famous example that can be mentioned in this context concerns the existence of many distinctive lexical items used in Eskimo to refer to snow because it is an important feature in the Eskimo's culture while only one word is used in English. The kinship system is also not analogical in all societies because of the socio-cultural differences. Some cultures like Arabic differentiate between mother's sister and father's sister while others like French and English do not. At the grammatical level, Romaine (2000, p. 28) cites an example of existences of 10 pronouns that are equivalent to 'you and I/ we' in Adnyamadhanha. In this culture, the choice between these pronouns depends on clan membership, kin relation, and generation level. Also in Japanese, there are four pronouns that can be used to refer to oneself

'T', depending on the formality of the situation and the status of one's interlocutor while only one pronoun is used in English. Moreover, In French, there are two pronouns used to address the other self 'tu / vous' depending on the social distance between the interlocutors, the formality of the situation, the age factor and the social status.

Accordingly, "languages are not the same because they represent different social realities" (Romaine, 2000, p. 26). The observable differences in the use of language reflect the socio-cultural construction of the speakers of particular languages. Consequently, any investigation of language variation can result in a deep understanding of the socio-cultural structure. This view is also supported by Holmes (2013, p. 2) who claims that "we also indicate aspects of our social identity through the way we talk." In other words, the choice of particular linguistic forms in social interactions reveals information about the users of language such as their social class, educational background, occupation, age, gender, social status, ethnicity, social distance and setting.

Wardhaugh summaries the different standpoints on the relationship between language and society that researchers advocate in their studies. He (2006, pp. 09-12) suggests four possible explanations of the link between them:

- ✓ *Social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behavior*: the proponents of this view explain that social factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and social class affect the use of linguistic structures. For instance, sociolinguistic research proved that children use some linguistic forms that do not appear in adults' speech and vice versa. In addition, sociolinguists assert that women speak differently than men;

- ✓ *Linguistic structure and/ or behavior may either influence or determine social structure*: this view is supported in Sapir- Whorf hypothesis which assumes that the language we speak shapes the way we view the world and the way we think. It

also appears in Basil Bernstein sociological work on the effect of the code employed by speakers (elaborated or restricted) on their social class, beside the study of the phenomenon of sexism in language that reflects the dominance of men over women in society;

✓ *The influence is bi-directional*: this perspective indicates that language and society may influence each other. Wardhaugh (2006) is one of the advocates of the existence of mutual influence between language and society as he believes that sociolinguists must establish theories that explain how linguistic and social structures overlap and interact in a systematic way;

✓ *There is no relationship between linguistic structure and social structure*: this position is strongly supported by theoretical linguists like Chomsky who eliminates the social dimension in his description of the structure of language, focusing on abstract universal principles rather than the use of language in concrete situations.

The first three perspectives that affirm the link between language and society are significant starting points that determine the orientations of the sociolinguistic research, its scope and its objectives. In the light of the opinions presented above, it is necessary to make the distinction between two branches of sociolinguistics: sociolinguistics and sociology of language.

**IV.3. Branches of Sociolinguistics**

Researchers (Fishman, 1927; Hudson, 2001 & Wardhaugh, 2006) elucidate that the relationship between language and society can be tackled from two angles depending on the focus and objective of the investigation.

### IV.3.1. Sociolinguistics or micro-sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics, also known as micro-sociolinguistics, is defined by Hudson (2001, p. 4) as "the study of language in relation to society." This field is concerned with the study of language in its social context to achieve a better understanding of the nature of the human language. In other words, language is the pivotal interest in this correlational research. Coulmas (1997, p. 2) also defines the scope of this research by stating that "micro-sociolinguistics investigates how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex, and age." In this arena, sociolinguists seek to explain how the variation of the linguistic forms and the use of linguistic structures are tied to certain social parameters. Hence, the inclusion of the social dimension in the study of language is essential to understand how language as a communal possession functions. Topics related to language variation according to use and users, such as style, register, gender and age as well as issues like face to face interaction, and discourse analysis within a small group of speakers are located within sociolinguistics' scope.

### IV.3.2. Sociology of language or macro-sociolinguistics.

Hudson (2001, p. 4) defines sociology of language as "the study of society in relation to language." It is also termed macro-sociolinguistics. The objective of this branch is more sociological than linguistic because it seeks to understand the structure of society through the study of its language. Sociologists assume that language can help them understand the structure of society as "it is hard to think of any characteristic of a society which is as distinctive as its language or as important for its functioning" (Hudson, 2001, p. 4). Therefore, they handle language as a sociological phenomenon. In order to illuminate issues related to the social organizations, Wardhaugh (2006, p. 13) clarifies that this subfield tries to discover "how certain linguistic features serve to characterize particular social arrangement." Furthermore, it investigates linguistic phenomena like language planning, standardization,

languages in contact (including bilingualism, code-switching and diglossia) and language maintenance and shift in large social institutions like speech communities, cities and countries. Subsequently, studies that investigate the effects of these phenomena on educational, economic and political systems fall under the subfield of sociology of language.

Similarly, Romaine (2000, p. x) explains the difference between these subfields by claiming that "macro-sociolinguistics takes society as its starting point and deals with language as a pivotal factor in the organization of communities. Micro-sociolinguistics begins with language and treats social forces as essential factors influencing the structure of language." Thus, the difference between sociolinguistics and sociology of language is determined by the major objective of the study: whether understanding the linguistic structure or the social structure.

In the same vein, Trudgill (1978) distinguishes three areas of research that deal with the relationship between language and society with different objectives to demonstrate that not all what studies language- society relationship is sociolinguistics. In this respect, he (1978, p. 1) states that "while everybody would agree that sociolinguistics has *something* to do with language and society, it is clearly also, not concerned with everything that could be considered 'language and society." Accordingly, He attempts to draw the line between language, society, and sociolinguistics in three ways:

✓ The first category concerns studies whose objectives are 'purely linguistics'. Trudgill (1978, p. 11) describes this category by stating that "studies of this type are based on empirical work on language as it is spoken in its social context, and are intended to answer questions and deal with topics of central interest to linguists." This field of research is known as sociolinguistics, and it links language to society in order to improve and develop a deep understanding of the nature of language. Studies that deal with language variation belong to this category.

✓ The second category combines views from the fields of sociology and linguistics to achieve their objectives that are 'partly linguistic and partly sociological'. It covers branches such as sociology of language, social psychology of language, anthropological linguistics, ethnography of speaking, discourse analysis. Topics like languages in contact and kinship system fall under this category.

✓ The third type deals with studies which are purely sociological in their objectives. In this category, researchers use the linguistic information to understand the structure of society. For instance, issues like ethno-methodological studies in sociology that aim to understand how people interact in conversations and maintain social contact in society as well as Bernstein' study of social classes in society in relation to the kind of the code employed by speakers are, according to Trudgill (1978),  sociological.

Despite the researchers' efforts to make a clear distinction between these fields of research, Waurdhaugh  (2006) views that such categorizations should not be rigid as fields like sociolinguistics and sociology of language should have common objectives for the benefits of both branches to explain both, the linguistic as well as the social structures since "a sociolinguistics that deliberately refrains from drawing conclusion about society seems to be unnecessarily restrictive, just as restrictive indeed as a sociology of language that deliberately ignores discoveries about language made in the course of sociological research" (p. 13).

**IV.4. Speech Community**

Since language is a communal possession, its existence is bound to the existence of a group of people where it is used. This group is known as a 'speech community'.  Many definitions have been proposed by linguists and sociolinguists for this concept. From the perspective of theoretical linguistics, speech community is defined as a group of individuals who share the same linguistic knowledge. However, in this view, the speech community is confined to the linguistic criterion. If we agree on this definition, this means that we accept

that all speakers of English belong to the same speech community. Nevertheless, sociolinguists insist that speech community cannot be defined in terms of the shared linguistic knowledge alone for two reasons:

✓ Different varieties can be used in the same speech community:

Sociolinguists adduce evidence from speakers of unintelligible dialects or different languages who belong to the same speech community because they share the same norms for the appropriate use of language. As an example, Wardhaugh (2006, p. 122) considers that "most Chinese will see themselves as members of the same community as well other Chinese, even though speakers of Cantonese or Hokkien may not be able to express that sense of community to a speaker of Mandarin or to each other except through their shared writing  system."

✓ The same language can exist in different speech communities:

Although speakers of English in England, United States, Canada and Australia use mutually intelligible dialects, for sociolinguists, they do not belong to the same speech community because their rules of speaking and interaction are not the same.

Accordingly, Gumperz (1971,  p. 101) maintains that "there are no a priori grounds which force us to define speech communities so that all members speak the same language." From a sociolinguistic point of view, Speech community cannot be defined as a group whose members speak the same variety or the same code because people who speak the same language do not, ipso facto, belong to the same speech community. In this regard, Romaine (2000, p. 23) defines speech community as "a group of people who do not necessarily share the same language, but share a set of norms and rules for the use of language. The boundaries between speech communities are essentially social rather than linguistic." Furthermore, Wardhaugh  (2006, p. 120)  argues that "we must also acknowledge that using linguistic characteristics alone to determine what is or is not a speech community has proved so far to

be quite impossible because people do not necessarily feel any such direct relationship between linguistic characteristics A, B, C, and so on and speech community X." Sociolinguists agree that the linguistic characteristic is not the only criterion used to define speech communities. They highlight many criteria to be shared by the members of the same speech community such as shared norms and rules, geographical, regional and political boundaries, sociocultural context and patterns of social interaction. Saville-Troike (2003, p. 15) believes that the essential criterion that defines a speech community is related to "the ways in which members of the group use, value or interpret language."

According to Labov (1972, pp. 120-121):

The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement on the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.

Labov asserts that members of speech community do not obligatorily agree on the use of the same language, but they have to share a set of norms that can be mirrored through the abstract patterns of variation that are unique to particular speech communities.

Complex societies where different speech communities overlap are common. In this regard, Saville-Troike (2003, p. 17) clarifies that "each member of a community has a repertoire of social identities, and each identity in a given context is associated with a number of appropriate verbal and nonverbal forms of expression." Consequently, any speaker who belongs to more than one speech community categorizes and selects the appropriate linguistic behaviors from the distinguished patterns of social interaction according to the context in

which he/she is communicating and according to his/her interaction with the other members of each community.

## IV.5. Language Variation and Social Identity

We have discussed how the structural linguists de Saussure (1915) and Chomsky (1965) handled language as a homogeneous linguistic system in their linguistic theories. Yet, sociolinguists like Labov (1966, 1970, 1972) and Trudgill (1978) argue that language cannot be homogeneous when it occurs in natural speech since people do not speak in the same way in real situations. Their use of the same language varies from one group to another and from one speaker to another. Furthermore, they assert that this variation in the linguistic behavior is not uncontrolled; it is bound to some factors and norms. According to Wardhaugh (2006, p. 6), the sociolinguists' task "will be one of trying to specify the norms of linguistic behavior that exist in particular groups and then trying to account for individual behavior in terms of these norms." The way individuals speak differs from one region to another, from one social group to another and from one contextual situation to another. The field of sociolinguistics is concerned with the explanation of language variation, as one of its major scopes, with reference to regional, social and contextual factors. Sociolinguists maintain that language variation is not meaningless since differences in the use of linguistic forms contribute to the construction of the social identity and assert the membership to a particular group. Chambers (1995, p. 250) explains that "the underlying cause of sociolinguistic differences, largely beneath consciousness, is the human instinct to establish and maintain social identity." Hence, the way people speak reveals information about who they are, where they come from and what they are doing. For instance, on the basis of the words a speaker employs in her/his speech, we can recognize her /his origin, her/his social class and in some cases her/his occupation.

**IV.5.1. Sociolinguistic variable.**

In their quantitative study, sociolinguistic variationists concentrate on the correlation between two kinds of variables to explain language variation:

*IV.5.1.1. Linguistic variable.*

Wardhaugh (2006, p. 145) defines the linguistic variable as "a linguistic item, which has identifiable variants." It refers to the realization of certain lexical, grammatical and phonological variants in the linguistic structure. In correlational research methodology, it is known as the dependent variable. For instance, the suffix *-ing* in British English is a linguistic variable that has two different realizations. The first variant is the alveolar nasal [n] and the second variant is the velar nasal [ŋ]. Sociolinguists explain this linguistic variation in relation to other extra-linguistic variables to demonstrate that this variation is meaningful and not random.

*IV.5.1.2.   Extra-linguistic variables.*

Extra-linguistic variables are independent variables that affect the linguistic variable. They can be divided into three categories:

✓ Regional variable that concerns the geographical location where the speech is produced. It can be a country or a city;

✓ Social variables related to the speakers' age, gender, ethnic group and social class;

✓ Contextual variables related to the degree of the formality of the situation, the relationship between interlocutors and the topic. These factors explain language variation within the same individual.

The way the linguistic variable co-varies with the extra-linguistic factors like age and gender is known as the sociolinguistic variable. Labov (1966, p. 49) defines the sociolinguistic variable as "a linguistic feature which varies in form and has social

significance." Different linguistic forms or variants can be used to say the same thing, but the use of a particular variant of the linguistic variable has a social meaning. The sociolinguistic variable demonstrates the correlation between variants of a linguistic variable and regional, social and contextual factors. Berruto (2010, p. 229) explains the sociolinguistic variable as follows:

> a point of system of language (phonetic/ phonological unit, a morphological item, a syntactic structure, a construction, a semantic unit and so on) that admits and shows different realizations with the same referential meaning, in correlation with extra-linguistic (geographical, social, situational) factors and properties … Thus, a sociolinguistic variable, as linguistic form carrying social meaning, represents the minimal sociolinguistic unit in which language and society (in the broadest sense) closely correlate; it is the stitch that sews together language and society.

This association of the realization of particular variants with social, regional and contextual factors can be better understood in the study of language varieties including dialects, accents, styles and registers.

### IV.5.2. Varieties of language.

Sociolinguists agree that variety is a general term which is used to refer to any linguistic form. Chambers and Trudgill (1998, p. 5) suggest a broad and general definition for this term by stating that variety is "a neutral term we apply to any particular kind of language which we wish, for some purpose, to consider as a single entity." Variety can be employed to refer to all forms of languages, dialects, registers or accents in different contexts to avoid problems when drawing a distinction between these concepts. Husdon (1996) defines variety of a language as "a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution" (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 25) According to this definition, the same language can be manifested in different

varieties; each variety is distinguished by its linguistic items (lexical, syntactic or phonological) that are associated with social factors. In this respect, Wardhaugh (2006, p. 24) also claims that "all languages exhibit internal variation, that is, each language exists in a number of varieties and is in one sense the sum of those varieties." Some varieties are formal and standardized, others are informal and colloquial. For instance, Standard English, Canadian English, Cockney, Oxford English and Yorkshire dialect are varieties of English language.

Sociolinguists agree that the term variety covers dialects, accents, styles and registers of a language. However, Wardhaugh (2006) extends the use of this term to refer also to a set of languages spoken by multilingual speakers or communities.

Since language variation is tied to social factors such as social class, region, age, gender and ethnicity, the use of particular variety indicates the social identity of speakers and signals their regional location. The forms of varieties that are characterized by social and geographical distributions are users-related varieties. On the other hand, Variation can be noticed even among speakers who belong to the same social group and who live in the same geographical location. Varieties that are used by the same speaker depending on the context of the use are use-related varieties.

### IV.5.2.1. *Language variation according to users.*

Dialects and accents are language varieties which deal with social and regional factors that affect the way people speak and use language like age, gender, ethnic group, social class, geographical location… etc.

### IV.5.2.1.1. *Dialect.*

People face difficulties to describe what they speak as being a language or a dialect. Sociolinguists attempt to make a clear distinction between language and dialect. Haugen

(1966) says that language refers to a single linguistic norm or to a group of linguistic norms while dialect refers to one of these norms. For Hudson (2001), language is larger and more prestigious than dialect. A language may consist of many dialects. For example, English as a language contains many dialects like Cockney, Yorkshire… etc. Holmes (2013, p. 138) also defines language as "a collection of dialects that are usually linguistically similar, used by different social groups who choose to say that they are speakers of one language, which functions to unite and represent them to other groups." Thus, when speakers, from a social group, use their own dialects, they offer clues about their geographical and social backgrounds.

Dialect is a type of language variation that is observed at three levels of language: grammar, phonology and vocabulary. For instance, the suffix –*ing* in English has two pronunciations in different dialects. The standard pronunciation / Iŋ/ is associated with the upper-class dialect while the non-standard pronunciation /in/ is associated with the working-class dialect.

Sociolinguists assert that there should be a mutual intelligibility between different dialects of a given language. This means that users of dialects of the same language can understand each other when they communicate. However, there are also many languages that are mutually intelligible. For example, in Scandinavia, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish are recognized as different languages although speakers of these languages face little difficulties to understand each other when they communicate. In such situation, the criterion of mutual intelligibility is present, but we cannot say that Norwegian, Swedish and Danish are dialects of the same language. For cultural and political reasons, they are considered as autonomous languages. On the other hand, in China, speakers of Cantonese and Mandarine insist that they are speaking dialects of the same language although mutual intelligibility does not exist when speakers of these varieties communicate verbally, but they share the same writing system. For

these reasons, Trudgill (1995, p. 4) asserts that "the criterion of 'mutual intelligibility', and other purely linguistic criteria, are … of less importance in the use of the terms language and dialect and they are political and cultural factors, of which the two most important are autonomy and heteronomy." Moreover, when Yugoslavia was united, the Serbo- Croatian language was recognized as the language that displays some regional variations. After the separation by the distinct political boundaries, the Serbian and Croatian have emerged as independent languages for political, social and ethnic purposes.

Spolsky (2010, p. 30) explains the differences between language and dialect by stating that "a language… is a dialect with a flag, or even better, with an army." This view conceives language variation as a political issue. He (2010, p. 30) adds that "the decision of what language a dialect belongs to is therefore social and political rather than purely linguistic." For example, Hindi and Urdu in India are considered as autonomous languages although they share common grammatical system because of political and religious reasons, and the choice of one of these languages depends on the situation of communication.

The dialects people speak are markers of their social and geographical affiliations. In this regard, Chambers and Trudgill (1998, p. 45) state that:

> All dialects are both regional and social, all speakers have a social background as well as regional location, and in their speech they often identify themselves not only as natives or inhabitants of particular place, but also as members of particular social class, age group, ethnic background, or other social characteristics.

From this statement, two types of dialects exist: regional and social dialects.

**Regional Dialects**

The study of the geographical distribution of linguistic items has long been the concern of historical – comparative philology in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century before the emergence of

the discipline of sociolinguistics. Regional dialect is a variety of language that is used in a distinct geographical area and differs from other dialects of the same language spoken in other regions at the level of grammar, vocabulary and phonology. This type of dialects emerges when groups of individuals are separated from each other geographically. For example, in Southern England, the word child is used while in Northern England, they use the term bairn. The word pail is used in New England, and the word bucket is used in Texas. These examples illustrate the difference between two regional dialects at the level of vocabulary. In a northern area in the eastern United States, 'grease' and 'greasy' are pronounced with a /s/, in a transitional zone, 'grease is pronounced with a /s/ and 'greasy' with a /z/, and in southern, both are pronounced as /z/. These regional dialects are identified according to the geographical areas where speakers live.

**Dialect Continuum**

Dialect continuum refers to a chain of dialects spoken in many regions. Speakers of one dialect can understand the dialects spoken in the neighboring regions because of the existence of mutual intelligibility between these dialects. However, this mutual intelligibility decreases as the geographical distance between dialects increases to the extent that speakers of dialects of distant regions face some problems to understand each other. For example, Arab countries are speaking dialects of the Arabic language. People living in Algeria can easily understand speakers from neighboring countries like Tunisia and Morocco. Yet, they have more difficulties to understand speakers from distant countries like Iraq and Yemen.

**Social Dialects**

While regional dialects deal with language variation according to the geographical location of speakers, social dialects concern language variation according to speakers' social background. In this type, the linguistic variants are related to social factors. Sociolinguists

assert that the selection of particular grammatical, lexical or phonological variants correlates with social factors like age, gender, social class and ethnicity. Chambers (1995, p. 26) explains further the relationship between language variation and social factors as follows:

> Correlations like these are crucial. *Socially significant linguistic variation requires correlation*: the dependent (linguistic) variable must change when some independent variable changes. It also requires that the change be orderly: the dependent variable must stratify the subjects in ways that are socially or stylistically coherent.

Since social dialects are spoken by particular social groups, the use of one social dialect asserts the speakers affiliation to a particular group. For instance, in USA, African Americans use the African American Vernacular English (AAVE) to distinguish themselves and to stress their ethnic belongings.

**Language Variation and Social Class**

Trudgill (1995, p. 23) defines social class as "a term used to refer to any hierarchical ordering of groups within a society."  This hierarchical classification of people into social classes emerged at the beginning of the 19th century as a consequence of the industrial revolution. Subsequently, two major classes have been recognized: the working class and the middle or the bourgeoisie class. One's social class is determined by many scales like occupation, education, income and wealth.

Sociolinguistic research reveals a direct link between the social class and the characteristics of speech used by people. Sociolinguistic variationists contend that speech variation provides evidence of the social class of speakers since "different social groups use different linguistic varieties" (Trudgill, 1995,  p. 22). This means that the use of a particular

linguistic form can reveal the speaker's social class. For instance, the verb 'ain't' is a linguistic feature that often characterizes the speech of the working class. Sociolinguists found that, contrary to the working class speakers, people from a higher class tend to adopt standard and formal linguistic features to emphasize their prestige. One of the significant studies on the relationship between language and social class is presented by Bernstein (1971) who distinguished two types of codes: the elaborated code which is a formal and a complex variety associated with the middle class, and the restricted code which is an informal and a simple variety associated with the working class. Each code is acquired by a given social group through the process of socialization. In addition, Labov (1966), in his study of language variation in New York City, found that the realization of post vocalic /r/ correlates with the socioeconomic class of the speaker.

## Language Variation and Ethnicity

An ethnic group refers to a group of people who share the same cultural, political, linguistic, religious and historical background. Language is considered as one of the most important constituents of the ethnic identity. This view has been supported by Trudgill (1995, p. 41) who states that "linguistic characteristics may be the most important *defining* criteria for ethnic-group membership." For instance, in USA, the African Americans use their distinguished dialect, known as the African American English Vernacular, to signal their affiliation to their minority ethnic group. Such variety differs from other English varieties at the levels of grammar, vocabulary and phonology. Also, Irish people use consciously their own variety 'Gaeilge' to differentiate themselves from others.

## Language Variation and Age

Sociolinguistic variationists are interested in the study of the linguistic characteristics that are associated with speakers from different ages and generations to investigate the

relationship between the use of a particular variety of language and the age of speakers. They found that young speakers speak differently than old speakers. For instance, Rickford (1996) points out that the adolescents in U.S. use expressions like 'go, be like, and be all' instead of ' say' to introduce quotations in speech 'he's like, I'm not gonna do that, and I'm all, yes you will.' Furthermore, they notice changes in the linguistic behavior of the individual speakers as they get older. This phenomenon is known as the age grading phenomenon which means that the same speakers exhibit different linguistic behaviors at different stages of life from the childhood to the caducity.

**Language Variation  and Gender**

One of the social differences that language can reflect is the gender differences. Variation studies correlate gender differences with the use of particular phonological, grammatical, lexical, conversational and stylistic features. Generally speaking, as Holmes (2013, p. 159) states "women are more linguistically polite than men" because they are more sensitive towards the social status. Hence, they use prestigious and formal forms of language to mitigate their unprivileged social status while men use less prestigious and nonstandard forms to mark masculinity. Trudgill (1995, p. 65) states that "women on average use forms which more closely approach those of the standard variety or the prestige accent than those used by men." Studies conducted by Trudigll (1995) on Norwich English reveal that women pronounce more frequently the final /Iŋ/ because it is more formal and standard while men use more the informal variant /In/ in their speech. This phonological difference is one of the aspects that confirm that women tend to behave linguistically like speakers from the middle class while men speech is similar to the one of the working class. Trudgill (1995, p. 72) explains the association between gender and social class in speech as follows:

It has been pointed out that working class speech, like certain other aspects of

working class culture in our society, seems to have connotations or associations

with masculinity, which may lead to be more favorably disposed to nonstandard linguistic form than women. The use of particular linguistic forms by women reflects their subordinate status in society.

Lakoff (as cited in Holmes, 2013) lists ten features that are frequently used by women:

- ✓ Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. you know, sort of, well, you see;
- ✓ Tag questions, e.g. she's very nice, isn't she?
- ✓ Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. it's really good?
- ✓ 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. divine, charming, cute;
- ✓ Precise color terms, e.g. magenta, aquamarine;
- ✓ Intensifiers such as just and so, e.g. I like him so much;
- ✓  Hypercorrect grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms;
- ✓ 'Superpolite' forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms;
- ✓ Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. fudge, my goodness;
- ✓ Emphatic stress, e.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.

Studies on language variation in relation to gender are classified into two approaches: the dominance approach and the difference approach. The dominance approach, followed by Lakoff (1975), attributes the linguistic differences between men and women speech to the dominance of men over women in society. On the other hand, the difference approach, advocated by Tennan (1994), suggests that men and women behave not only linguistically but also socially differently because they belong to different subcultures. Tennan uses the term genderlect to refer to the differences in the speech patterns of men and women. She proposes that men and women are speaking different dialects that can be termed 'genderlects'.

*IV.5.2.1.2.Accent.*

While dialect deals with grammatical, phonological and lexical variation, accent deals with the phonological variation of language. It refers to the way people pronounce stretches of words when they speak. For instance, RP or Received Pronunciation is a Standard English accent used in UK that reflects the speakers' educational and social background. The listeners can also identify the origin of the speakers from the accent employed in their speech. They can recognize that the speaker has the Oxford accent if they identify in his/her speech certain phonological features that characterize the speech of people who live there.

**IV.5.2.2.Language variation according to use.**

Language variation is also noticed among speakers from the same social group, living in the same territory because of the contextual variation. For instance, the same speaker uses *don't* in one situation and uses *do not* in another situation, depending on contextual factors such as the formality of the situation, the social distance between the interlocutors and the topic. Style and register are use-related varieties.

*IV.5.2.2.1.Register.*

Register is a contextual and an occupational variety of language. Wardhaugh (2006, p. 52) defines it as "sets of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups." Subsequently, the use of these linguistic items that characterize a distinct register indicates speakers' affiliation to a particular professional and social group. Yule (2006, pp. 210-211) views that register " is a conventional way of using language that is appropriate in a specific context, which may be identified as situational (e.g. in church), occupational (e.g. among lawyers) or topical (e.g. talking about language)." No one uses the same register all the time. It systematically varies depending on contextual factors. For instance, the religious register is used only in religious sermons. Furthermore, computer programmers employ their

specific register that outsiders face difficulties to understand. Halliday (1964) identifies three variables that determine register: field, tenor and mode.

✓ Field: it refers to the subject matter of the interaction.

✓ Tenor: it refers to the relationships between the participants in the interaction.

✓ Mode: it refers to the channel of communication (e.g. spoken or written).

*IV.5.2.2.2.Style.*

Style is another manifestation of language variation according to use. While dialects and accents are inter-groups variations, style is an intra-group variation since it occurs within the speech of the same individual. This means that, in order to express the same information, the same speaker is able to use different styles that range from the extremely casual to the most formal depending on the context where language is used (sermon, lecture, home) and the relationship between the speaker and the addressee, mainly the degree of social distance and solidarity (son- father, intimate friends, teacher-student). In an informal context such as a conversation between intimate friends, the degree of solidarity increases. In this type of variation, as Holmes (2013, p. 240) claims, "the better you know someone, the more casual and relaxed the speech style you will use to them. People use considerably more standard forms to these they don't know well, and more vernacular forms to their friends." Thus, the interpersonal relationship between the interlocutors is important to select the appropriate style. In the casual style, speakers employ short sentences, simple grammatical structures, simple and common words that convey explicit meaning and nonstandard forms. In formal style, speakers use complex sentences and less frequent words.

In some situations where the speaker speaks to someone from a different social background, the speaker's speech converges towards the speech style of the person he/she is talking to through the process of accommodation in order to show solidarity.

### IV.6. Interactional Sociolinguistics

Interactional sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field which is rooted in linguistics, pragmatics, sociology and anthropology since language is perceived as a socio-cultural phenomenon. It is concerned with the description and the analysis of language use in face to face interaction. This theoretical and methodological approach is grounded in the study of John J. Gumperz (1982, p. vii) who "seeks to develop an interpretive sociolinguistic approach to the analysis of real-time processes in face to face encounters." Moreover, this field is based on Bateson (1972) notion of framing which means that "no message (the meaning of words or utterances) can be interpreted without reference to a metamessage about the frame" (Tennan, 1997, p. 451). Methodologically, in this approach, researchers analyze and interpret data obtained from audio and/or video recordings of natural speech as it occurs in real social interactions.

Interactional sociolinguistics is built on the view that knowledge of linguistic structure is not enough to express ideas successfully; extra-linguistic knowledge is needed to communicate and understand the full meaning. This field demonstrates how the socio-cultural background knowledge, along with the linguistic knowledge, is involved to signal and infer meaning in social interaction. As the interpretation of the referential content is linked to the context, contextualization cue is a central concept in interactional sociolinguistics that proposes the frame in which the utterance is interpreted. Gumperz (1982, p. 131) defines contextualization cues as "the means by which speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows." These cues that accompany speech performance involves features such as prosody (intonation), formulaic expressions, facial signs and gestures (smile), style shifting… etc.

### IV.6.1. Interactional sociolinguistics and cross-cultural communication.

Interactional sociolinguistics is interested in the examination of misunderstanding in cross-cultural communication since the inferential meaning of contextualization cues varies across cultures. Therefore, when speakers from different cultural backgrounds interact with each other, they may fail to understand the messages since they do not share the same contextualization cues. Consequently, misunderstanding can occur when a person fails to infer the real meaning of contextualization cues in social interaction. In the following example, Gumperz (1982, p. 147) explains how intonation can be used as a contextualization cue:

Teacher: James, what does this word say?

James: I don't know.

Teacher: Well, if you don't want to try, someone else will. Freddy?

Freddy: Is that a p or b?

Teacher: (encouragingly) it's a p.

Freddy: Pen

In this example, the teacher interpreted James' response as an indication that he did not wish to try to answer the question. However, James response with the final rising intonation means in the African-American community, to which James belongs, his need for encouragement. The teacher failed to interpret the meaning of the utterance because he did not understand the meaning of the contextualization cue. The ability to interpret the meaning of these cues is unconsciously acquired through the close face to face interaction to form people's socio-cultural background which allows them to predict and infer what will come in the conversation.

Gumperz' contribution to the field of interactional sociolinguistics enlightens how people may share the same linguistic knowledge, but they contextualize utterances differently which results in the production and the interpretation of completely different messages. In this regard, Schiffrin ( 2009, p. 315) writes:

> The key to Gumperz' sociolinguistics of verbal communication is a view of language as a socially and culturally constructed symbol system that is used in ways that reflect macrolevel social meanings (e.g., group identity, status differences) but also create microlevel social meanings (i.e., what one is saying and doing at a particular moment in time).

This means that the way people use language reflects their socio-cultural group affiliation as it reveals the situated indexes and the interpretive frames, such as what they want to say and how they do it.

## IV.7. Teaching Sociolinguistics in the Department of English at Batna 2 University

Sociolinguistics is one of the main subjects that are thought to EFL students. The course is introduced to third-year undergraduate students of English at Batna 2 University for only one semester with an average of three hours per week. In order to describe the syllabus of sociolinguistics, it is worth noting that the department does not adopt any official curriculum recommended by experts from the Ministry of Higher Education since such document is not available. However, the teachers of the subject coordinate together to set the most important aspects that should be handled in sociolinguistics course. As a teacher of the subject, the researcher has noticed that variationist sociolinguistics is the central subject matter in sociolinguistics syllabus. At the beginning of the course, the teachers introduce the concept of *communicative competence* to highlight the dynamic nature of language and to emphasize the effect of the socio-cultural context on language use as they define sociolinguistics and its

major concepts like society and speech community. The second unit deals with *language variation* in which the teachers explain the *inter-group variation* (variation according to users) and demonstrate how dependent variables (phonological, grammatical, lexical linguistic units) are affected by the independent variables (geographical and social factors such as region, gender, age, social status and ethnicity) resulting in two language varieties: *dialects* and *accents*.  Then, teachers expound the contextual factors that affect the use of language in different situations. This *intra-group variation* (variation according to use) is presented to explain the concepts of *register* and *style*.  In the third unit, *language in contact*, sociolinguistic phenomena such as diglossia, bilingualism and multilingualism, code switching and code mixing, pidgin, creole, borrowing and lingua-franca are introduced in the course. In order to help students understand how the linguistic situation of the country is organized in terms of official language, standard language, native language, second language and foreign language,  the fourth unit deals with language planning and policy. In sum, the main objectives of sociolinguistics course are to introduce students into the basic sociolinguistic concepts and to help them understand how language and society interact with each other in a way that makes people speak differently in different contexts.

The major themes of sociolinguistics course are summarized in table (1):

Table 1

*Syllabus of Sociolinguistics in the Department of English- Batna 2 University*

| Unit | Title | Topics |
|---|---|---|
| Unit One | Introduction into Sociolinguistics | Linguistic competence vs. communicative competence |
| | | Society and speech community |
| | | Definition of sociolinguistics and its scopes |
| Unit Two | Language Variation | Inter-group variation: Dialect, sociolect, ethnolect, ecolect, idiolect and accent |
| | | Intra-group variation: register and style |
| | | slang, jargon |
| | | solidarity and power |
| Unit Three | Languages in Contact | Diglossia |
| | | Bilingualism/multilingualism |
| | | Code switching/code mixing |
| | | Pidgin, creole |
| | | Lingua-franca |
| | | Borrowing |
| Unit Four | Language Planning and Policy | Standardization |
| | | First language, native language, mother tongue, second language, foreign language, vernacular, standard language. |

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of some theoretical bases of sociolinguistics. In order to understand how the field of sociolinguistics emerged, a brief account of structural linguistics that neglected the variation of language was presented. Basic concepts such as speech community, microsociolinguistics and macrosociolinguistics were also explained. The effect of social, regional and contextual factors on the linguistic forms was highlighted when defining sociolinguistic phenomena such as dialect, accent, register and style to emphasize the fact that language is not used in the same way in all speech communities and in all situations. Then, the field of interactional sociolinguistics was introduced in this chapter to highlight the need to acquire socio-cultural background knowledge in order to communicate and interpret meaning appropriately without potential misunderstanding. Finally, the teaching of sociolinguistics as a subject to third-year EFL students at Batna 2 University was described in terms of the major issues presented in the course. The next chapter will be devoted to the explanation of the methodological design of the research.

# Research Design and Methodology

## Introduction

Researchers go through many steps when conducting a research. In this chapter, we explain the general plan of the study and the procedures that are undertaken by the investigator in order to test the hypotheses and to answer the research questions. The researcher accounts for the methods followed in the investigation of the issue under study. Then, she describes the whole population that is concerned with the study, the sample chosen to be part of the research as well as the used sampling technique. The selection of data gathering instruments to be employed in the research is described in this chapter along with the procedures of data analysis and interpretation. In sum, This chapter focuses on the research design followed by the researcher to attain the research objectives

## V.1. Choice of the Method

The nature of the investigation, the research objectives, and the kind of data needed for the study impose on the researcher the use of a particular research method. In this study, the researcher investigated the effect of sociolinguistic knowledge (independent variable) on students' understanding of the intercultural differences (dependent variable). Thus, the researcher manipulated the independent variable to observe and measure its effect on the dependent variable. The manipulation of the independent variable in this research means the exposure to a particular condition in the classroom (the treatment) and measuring the change in the performance of learners by designing a quasi-experiment. Loewen and Plonsky (2016, p. 155) explain the quasi-experimental design as follows:

A study in which a dependent measure is compared for two or more prestigious groups. Quasi-experimental design is a less rigorous version of experiment design. For example, quasi-experimental design does not require random selection or

assignment of participants. Instead, participants may constitute a convenience sample. In addition, intact classes may be used for different groups ... Much of the quantitative research in applied linguistics is quasi-experimental, rather than experimental.

In this study, the researcher views that the quasi-experimental design is important to investigate the cause/effect relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. This approach allows the researcher to test the hypotheses using credible statistical analysis of quantitative data.

To gain more insights into how teachers of sociolinguistics conceive the issue under study, the researcher believes that their opinions and their attitudes based on their teaching experience are also significant for answering the research questions because they constitute an important source of quantitative and qualitative data that describe facts related to the situation as it occurs in the natural setting. This type of information is obtained through the inclusion of the descriptive method in the research.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, known as the mixed method, "allowed the validity of the research to be improved, as it facilitated analysis of the issue on a number of different levels, and triangulation of data could be employed" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 45). Accordingly, the researcher used a mixed method to collect both quantitative and qualitative data via the implementation of a quasi-experiment and the use of a questionnaire to attain the objectives of the research and to answer the research questions. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistics while qualitative data were analyzed using textual categorization, description and interpretation.

It is worth noting that the investigation falls into the action research type since the study was conducted by the teacher whose main objective is the improvement of the teaching process.

## V.2. Population and Sample

Before explaining how the experiment was conducted, we have to identify and define the target population in the study. The population of this research consisted of 426 students who were enrolled in the third-year undergraduate level in the department of English, at Batna 2 University during the academic year (2016-2017). We selected students from this level for two reasons. First, we assumed that, in the graduating year, students are expected to develop satisfactory linguistic skills and competencies in English. The presence of these linguistic abilities fosters the development of intercultural competence while its absence can delay it. Also, at this level, the effect of the linguistic deficiency as an extraneous variable on learners' performance is minimized to the highest degree. Second, they have been selected because they were taught the course of sociolinguistics only in their third year. Thus, the researcher viewed that teaching this subject can be an occasion to develop learners' intercultural competence before their graduation.

In addition to students, we also selected all sociolinguistics teachers to collect qualitative and quantitative data. However, only six teachers sent back the questionnaire.

### V.2.1. Sample and sampling technique.

Since it is practically difficult to conduct the experiment on the whole population (426), we selected a sample that consisted of 64 students from the whole population to be part of the investigation. These subjects constitute intact classes that were chosen depending on their allocation put by the administration at the beginning of the academic year according to the alphabetic order since the researcher was also teaching these subjects. The use of the

stratified sampling technique based on learners' social background is not appropriate in this situation because the Algerian society does not adopt any cohesive social class division as such characteristic is still considered as an ethical issue in the Algerian context. To initiate the experiment, the intact groups were randomly divided into an experimental group and a control group.

### V.2.1.1. The Control group.

The control group consisted of 32 third-year undergraduate students of English at Batna 2 University. Students in this group were exposed to the traditional method of teaching sociolinguistics which is based on describing and explaining abstract sociolinguistic concepts without a deep reflection on English speaking communities and the native one.

### V.2.1.2. The Experimental group.

The experimental group consisted of 32 third-year undergraduate students of English at Batna 2 University. Learners in this group were exposed to the treatment in which the teacher exploited the teaching of sociolinguistics to improve learners intercultural competence by integrating the intercultural dimension in the classroom. In other words, the teacher taught sociolinguistic knowledge based on the deep reflection on the native and the target speech communities to highlight the similarities and the differences between cultures.

## V.3. Data Gathering Tool

The choice of the research method, the type of the needed data and the nature of the variable intended to be measured and tested dictate on the researcher the use of the relevant data gathering tools. In the experiment, we used a series of tests as a major research instrument along with continuous classroom observation and self-assessment surveys to assess students' progress. We also used a questionnaire that was administered to teachers of sociolinguistics within the descriptive approach. The validity has been examined by experts in

the fields of applied linguistics and educational research methodology to determine whether the instruments measure what the researcher intended to test. Accordingly, some modifications have been introduced by the researcher. It is worth noting that these instruments have been employed during the academic year 2016/2017.

### V.3.1. Tools used in the experiment.

Pretest, progress tests, self-assessment surveys, classroom observation and posttest were employed by the researcher to evaluate students' intercultural competence before, during and by the end of the experiment. Based on the reviewed literature,  intercultural competence (the dependent variable) has been assessed in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Since each of these aspects requires a particular test format, tests have been designed according to the components intended to be tested. The experiment that lasted eight weeks has been segmented into three phases. The first phase ended with the progress test 1, the second phase ended with the progress test 2 and the last phase ended with the posttest. Classroom observation and self-assessment surveys took place from the beginning of the experiment to its end to assess the progress of students' attitudes.

### *V.3.1.1. Pretest.*

The pretest is an essential research instrument that has been employed to stand on students' initial intercultural competence in general,  and knowledge, skills and attitudes in particular in the experimental group as well as the control one before starting the experiment. It allowed the researcher to compare and verify whether and to what extent students in both groups shared common social, educational and communicative backgrounds and to what extent they possessed nearly the same level of intercultural competence. Examining the homogeneity among the groups before introducing the treatment is important to ensure that "the control group represents the same population as the experimental group: it is as if we are comparing the same individuals with and without treatment" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p.

141). Consequently, the pretest has been designed and implemented to reach these objectives (Appendix D 5). We compared the levels of both groups before receiving the treatment by comparing the percentages of the occurrence of each answer in the first part and the mean of scores calculated in each group to ensure to a great extent that the difference between the two groups at the end of the experiment is attributed to the treatment rather than to other variables. The results of the pretest will be discussed in the next chapter.

*V.3.1.1.1. Description of the pretest.*

The pretest consists of two parts

**Part One**

As explained above, the researcher sought to ensure the homogeneity of the groups by checking whether the participants shared common characteristics in order to avoid bias and to eliminate the effect of some intervening variables. The first part of the pretest was designed in a form of a questionnaire which consisted of nine closed-ended questions that helped the researcher understand and compare between students' profiles, including their social background (mother tongue, gender, age), their abilities in understanding the authentic language, and their intercultural communicative experience including the intercultural difficulties they were facing. The last two items in this part aim to recognize students' awareness of the effect of culture on the use of language.

**Part Two**

The second part evaluated students' initial intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes that formed their intercultural competence before the experiment in both groups. It consisted of three tasks that were used on purpose. Each task was designed to test one of the three aspects of the dependent variable separately because, as we have mentioned before, each component in intercultural competence is examined using a different test format.

Subsequently, The first task dealt with the cognitive aspect of intercultural competence. Learners were requested to explain and suggest the Algerian equivalence of five English idioms to assess their cultural knowledge and their understanding of the cultural differences. The second task focused on the behavioral domain. The researcher described five hypothetical intercultural scenarios where learners are required to behave linguistically in order to assess their skills of comparing, relating, interpreting and interacting as well as their abilities to successfully adjust their behaviors in intercultural situations to avoid misunderstandings. The last task was designed for the affective domain. It aimed at evaluating students' attitudes towards the target culture by asking some questions of cultural nature. We deduced the attitudes of learners that could be positive, negative or neutral from their responses. At the end, the researcher calculated the global score of the intercultural competence of each student which is the average of scores obtained in the three components. Then, we compared the means of each group.

### V.3.1.1.2. Administration of the pretest.

The pretest has been administered to both groups during the scheduled sociolinguistics session by the researcher who was also the teacher of the subject. We believe that answering the pretest in the same session with the presence of the teacher is important in order to explain carefully the instructions to learners and to respond to their needs to clarify some elements without affecting their performance. They spent one hour to answer both parts.

### V.3.2. The treatment (the independent variable).

The amelioration of the intercultural competence is always of paramount importance for foreign language learners. Increasing interest is oriented towards the implementation of methods, strategies, techniques, and tools to improve intercultural knowledge, skills and abilities. Studies and inquiries are aiming to answer the question: how can intercultural competence be developed?

The researcher assumed that sociolinguistics course can be an opportunity for developing learners' intercultural competence when teachers present a sociolinguistic input based on the intercultural approach. It can ensure a meaningful and a significant exposure to the target culture in the absence of the direct contact with native speakers whose presence will certainly offer a vivid and holistic picture of the target culture. The researcher designed the treatment with the objective of exploiting the sociolinguistics course in a way that develops learners intercultural competence.

### V.3.2.1.  The content of the treatment.

The content of the treatment is selected according to its relevance to sociolinguistics courses and according to the potential risk of misunderstanding which may arise because of the unawareness of certain cultural elements that should be included in the treatment. The researcher was continuously reminding the learners of the importance of being aware of the intercultural differences. She segmented the treatment into three phases. During the first phase, a part of the treatment has been introduced to the experimental group within the chapter of communicative competence. The content dealt with nonverbal communication with reference to the native and the target speech communities, and it highlighted how communications can lose its effectiveness because of the unawareness of the differences in the socio-cultural rules of the use of nonverbal behaviors like proxemics, eye contact, gestures and postures in both communities (appendix A). In the second phase, the researcher introduced the link between gender as a social variable and the use of certain linguistic and stylistic features like the use of address terms, gender stereotypes and sexism in language in the native and the target speech communities to understand the similarities and the differences between them (Appendix C). In the last stage, the researcher taught students in the experimental group taboo and euphemism to illustrate how the use of language in general and taboo/euphemism, in particular, varies from one culture to another. She grabbed students'

attention to the idea that some expressions may have offensive connotations in one culture while the same words may hold positive associations in another cultural group. During this phase, she raised students' awareness of the cultural differences in the use of euphemism as a polite strategy and a linguistic trickery to avoid communication problems like embarrassment and impoliteness (Appendix B). Learners were encouraged to reflect on the use of this linguistic device in the native and the target speech communities. At the end of this phase, students were expected to acquire higher intercultural knowledge and greater skills and develop positive attitudes towards the target culture. Both groups were taught by the same teacher who implemented different course contents and different teaching materials and approaches. The comparative teaching approach was used in the experimental group to identify specific cultural patterns in both cultures using materials such as videos, pictures, simulations and discussion of critical incidents to illustrate intercultural communication. On the other hand, the control group was receiving the traditional treatment, i.e. teaching sociolinguistic concepts apart from any cultural emphasis.

### V.3.2.2. *The objectives of the treatment*

The treatment aims to:

- ✓ Equip learners with a high intercultural knowledge;
- ✓ Develop learners' skills of intercultural integration and interaction;
- ✓ Increase learners' positive attitudes towards the target culture.

### V.3.3. Progress tests.

The effectiveness of the treatment was put under the spotlight by tracking learners' progress of their intercultural competence as the experiment went forward. At the end of the first phase, the researcher used the progress test one to evaluate learners' intercultural knowledge in the experimental group. The progress test consisted of ten statements related to

nonverbal communication in the native and the target cultures. Learners were asked to identify true and false statements according to their cultural knowledge (appendix E). The second progress test took place after the course of taboo and euphemism to check whether students' intercultural skills have been improved in the experimental group or not. The teachers gave learners ten words and asked them to produce appropriate linguistic forms in which these words must be euphemized in the target culture to avoid communication problems. Their abilities in practicing the right linguistic behaviors in intercultural interactions reflect their intercultural skills (Appendix F).

### V.3.4.  Self-assessment survey.

To evaluate students' progress and change of their attitudes, a self-assessment survey was designed by the researcher and administered at particular stages of the treatment. The self-assessment instrument consisted of seven statements according to which learners rated their attitudes from 0 to 3. Each statement was formulated in a way that described learners' attitudes in terms of one of seven criteria, six of which were adopted from the annual of *Intercultural Competence Assessment* (ICA) published in 2004: respect for otherness, tolerating ambiguity, Knowledge discovery, adaptability and empathy. The researcher added a seventh component 'acceptance' and substituted knowledge discovery by curiosity, keeping the same definition. These statements were based on the operational definitions of the components of attitudes that are presented in table (2).

Table 2

*Criteria Used in Self-assessment Surveys to Assess Learners Attitudes*

| Criteria | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Acceptance | Readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own (Byram, 1997). |
| Openness | Withholding prejudice, stereotypes, jokes and other negative attitudes. |
| Respect for Otherness | You are ready to regard other people's values, customs and practices as worthwhile in their own right and not merely as different from the norm. While you may not share these values, customs and practices, you feel strongly that others are entitled to apply them and should not lose respect on account of them. You may sometimes need to adopt a firm but diplomatic stance over points of principle on which you disagree (INCA, 2004). |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | You find the unexpected and unfamiliar an enjoyable challenge and want to help resolve possible problems in ways that appeal to as many other group members as possible (INCA, 2004). |
| Curiosity | You are willing both to do research in advance and to learn from intercultural encounters. You will take the trouble to find out about the likely values, customs and practices of those you are going to work with and will note carefully as you interact with them, any additional points that might influence the way you choose to work with them (INCA, 2004). |
| Adaptability | The ability to adapt one's own behavior to different requirements and situations (INCA, 2004). |
| Empathy | You are able to understand other people's thoughts and feelings and see and feel a situation through their eyes. While this competence often draws on knowledge of how you would expect others to feel, it goes beyond awareness of facts. It often shows itself in a concern not to hurt others' feelings or infringe their system of values (INCA, 2004). |

The researcher viewed that the use of one self-assessment survey could not offer a deep understanding of learner' progress at the level of this abstract aspect. Therefore, learners were asked to rate their abilities in each statement (from 0 to 3) during four sessions.  It is worth mentioning that the scale used by the researcher to assess the attitudes is not based on any previous research. The assessment of students' attitudes was analyzed according to the following scale set by the researcher:

Table 3

The *Scale Used in the Self-Assessment Survey to Assess Learners Attitudes*

| *Scale* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very low | Low | Intermediate | High |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**V.3.5.  Classroom observation.**

Along with the use of the self-assessment instrument, the participants' reactions, behaviors and attitudes towards the cultural differences in the experimental group were constantly under the spotlight of the researcher when discussing cultural issues like critical incidents and cultural clashes to verify any possible discrepancy between participants self-evaluation and their actual abilities. The classroom observation has been used for the sake of obtaining data about students' attitudes that were assessed in terms of the same elements adopted in the self-assessment survey (acceptance, openness, respect for otherness, tolerating ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability and empathy). The researcher prepared four lists in advance to rate students' attitudes. Each list was devoted to one classroom observation that lasted one

session. The researcher observed and analyzed data obtained from classroom discussion using the following rating scale.

Table 4

*The Scale Used in Classroom Observation to Asses Learners Attitudes*

| Elements of attitudes | Absent | Low | Intermediate | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acceptance | | | | |
| Openness | | | | |
| Respect for otherness | | | | |
| Tolerating ambiguity | | | | |
| Curiosity | | | | |
| daptability | | | | |
| Empathy | | | | |

**V.3.6.  The Posttest.**

At the end of the experiment that lasted eight weeks, the researcher sought to check and verify whether and to what extent students' intercultural competence has been progressed. A posttest has been administered to the experimental and the control groups in order to compare the scores obtained in both groups in the pretest and the posttest. Subsequently, any significant difference between the experimental and the control groups' results in the posttest is attributed to the effect of the treatment on students' understanding of the intercultural differences. Therefore, the posttest is also essential for testing the hypotheses and answering the research questions.

*V.3.6.1.  Description of the posttest.*

The posttest shared the same characteristics as the pretest. In other words, they targeted the same components of the intercultural competence, and they were composed of the

same types of activities and instructions. Besides, learners' performances in both tests were assessed using the same evaluation scale. Yet, the first part of the pretest, presented in the form of a questionnaire, did not reappear in the posttest since such information about learners' educational and social backgrounds cannot change during the experiment as the objective of ensuring the homogeneity of the groups has already been proved in the pretest.

The posttest also consisted of three activities. The first activity was intended to test students' intercultural knowledge through testing their understanding and their ability to provide the equivalence of euphemistic expressions in their native culture. In the second activity, to test their intercultural skills, students were put in an intercultural situation, and they were requested to respond linguistically according to the gender of the speaker, highlighting two features at least they used to make their linguistic behaviors sound more feminine or masculine. In the third activity, the researcher asked some questions about learners' potential reactions, feelings and perceptions in intercultural situations to deduce the attitudes of learners through their answers (Appendix H).

### *B. IV.3. 6. 2.* **Administration of the posttest.**

At the end of the application of the treatment, the researcher administered the posttest to students in the experimental and the control groups during the scheduled session of sociolinguistics. She explained and clarified the instructions for learners without affecting their answers. They spent 45 minutes to answer all the activities. The experimenter controlled all the conditions to ensure that the pretest and the posttest were administered in the same circumstances.

### **V.3.7. The evaluation procedure.**

To assess learners intercultural competence in the pretest and the posttest, the researcher designed an evaluation grid. Since we adopted knowledge, skills and attitudes as

the elements that constitute the intercultural competence (dependent variable) as many previous intercultural studies did, the pretest and the posttest have been designed according to these components. Learners' performance in each component was assessed separately in one activity and rated from 0 to 10 based on the presence and the absence of some criteria. Then, the researcher calculated the final score which was the average of the scores obtained in the three components. The scale used in the evaluation of students' intercultural competence was based on three categories that described learners performance according to the scores obtained by learners in each activity: poor, average and excellent. The researcher was aware that the evaluation grid was not set only to measure students' intercultural competence as it was used to asses learners' progress after the experiment by comparing the posttest results with those obtained in the pretest. Therefore, the same scale was used in the pretest and the posttest. In this experiment, we opted for the following scale:

Table 5

*The Scale Used in the Assessment of Learners Intercultural Competence*

| The component | The scale | | Significance | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Knowledge | Excellent | 10 | The subject is highly able to identify, explain and suggest the exact equivalence in the native culture. | The subject is very familiar with cultural expressions in both cultures. |
| | Average | 5 | The subject guesses some meaning in the explanation and translation. | The subject is equipped with some cultural knowledge about the foreign culture. |
| | Poor | 0 | The subject fails to identify, explain and translate the cultural expression. | The subject displays very limited intercultural knowledge. |
| Skill | Excellent | 10 | The linguistic form is very likely to be used. | The subject is skillful in handling intercultural situations and adjusting their behaviors. |
| | Average | 5 | The linguistic form can possibly be used. | The subject performance is relatively acceptable since he/she succeeds in adjusting his/her behaviors in some situations while he/she failed in others because of the influence of his/her culture. |
| | Poor | 0 | The linguistic form is unlikely to be used. | The subject performance displays clear evidence of sociolinguistic transfer that can cause serious misunderstandings because he/she does not make any efforts to adjust his/her behavior. |
| Attitude | Excellent | 10 | The subject attitudes towards the target culture are positive. | The subject's answers demonstrate a high degree of tolerance, respect, adaptability, empathy, and curiosity to know the other culture |
| | Average | 5 | The subject attitudes towards the target culture are neutral. | The subject accepts the cultural differences, but he/she does not make efforts to understand them |
| | Poor | 0 | The subject attitudes towards the target culture are negative. | The subject rejects the cultural differences. This position is manifested in ethnocentric behaviors and cultural bias. |

**V.3.8.  The questionnaire.**

Brown (as cited in Dornyei, 2002, p.6) defines questionnaires as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers." When using this tool in a descriptive research, the subjects are requested to respond anonymously to a set of questions asked by the researcher in order to collect data about their attitudes, beliefs, opinions and perceptions of the issue under study. In our study, to understand better the integration of the intercultural approach within sociolinguistics class, a questionnaire was designed to highlight the appropriate way of teaching sociolinguistics that can ameliorate students' intercultural competence including their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The teachers of sociolinguistics were part of the investigation since they were concerned with the way of teaching sociolinguistics more than anyone in the study. Therefore, the questionnaire examined teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the role of sociolinguistics in developing intercultural competence. This instrument was designed in a way to reach the research objective and answer the research questions. In other words,  the answers of these questions were directly or indirectly related to the information that serves the understanding of the issue under study. The researcher could use a semi-structured interview as a second data gathering tool along with the test. However, she opted for the questionnaire because a great amount of information can be gained in a shorter time. The researcher prepared  24 questions whose answers in an interview may take more than two hours, which makes the interviewee feels uncomfortable. It is important to point out that these questions were inspired and adapted from previous studies conducted in the same field.

*V.3.8.1.  Questionnaire validation.*

Testing the validity of the questionnaire is an important step before administering the final version of the questionnaire to check whether the information obtained from the

questionnaire is actually what the researcher intends to obtain and to verify to what extent data obtained from the questionnaire help in answering the research questions. Validity is an important criterion "for assuring the quality of the data collection procedures for any piece of research. Validity provides information on the extent to which procedure really measures what it is supposed to measure" (Hiradhar, 2012, p. 103). In this study, the use of the validity of content urged the researcher to consult experts in the fields of applied linguistics and research methodology from Algerian universities to receive advice related to the clarity of some expressions, the relevance and the sequence of some questions. In this regard, Seliger, et al. (1989, p. 198) explain that "by using this procedure, the researcher can obtain information on whether the items are well phrased and easily understood by the respondents." Accordingly, the researcher decided to modify some elements based on the comments suggested by the experts such as a better sequencing of questions and reformulation of some items to avoid ambiguous questions and statements.

### V.3.8.2. *Description of the questionnaire*

The questionnaire was employed in this study as a data gathering tool along with the experiment because the researcher was aware of the need to tackle the issue from teachers' perspectives and conceptions. Throughout the use of this instrument, the researcher sought to:

- ✓ Understand how teachers can teach sociolinguistics in a way that helps learners understand the intercultural differences;
- ✓ Highlight the importance of teaching culture along with the foreign language to enhance learners' use of language in different contexts;
- ✓ Establish the recommendations of the research built on the answers of sociolinguistics teachers and design a sociolinguistics syllabus based on the intercultural dimension.

The questionnaire consists of the following forms of questions

*V.3.8.2.1. Open-ended questions.*

In this kind of questions, the respondents were not restricted to a set of choices. They were free to comment, express themselves and answer the questions in the way they thought appropriate.

*V.3.8.2.2. Closed-ended questions.*

The closed-ended questions were used under the forms of yes/no questions and multiple choice questions. In yes/no questions, the respondents were requested to choose between 'yes' and 'no'. In the multiple choice questions, the respondents were given a set of options to choose one answer. In some cases, they could select more than one option, and they could add their own answer when none of the options suggested by the researcher were appropriate. In this case, after ticking the option 'other', they were requested to specify their own answers in an open-ended question as they were asked to justify and explain their choices in some questions.

The questionnaire consisted of 24 items which have been ordered from general to specific and divided into sections according to their content and their focus as summarized in the following table:

Table 6

*Description of Teachers' Questionnaire*

| Section | Title of the section | Description | Items |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | General information | The respondents were asked some background information questions like degree hold, teaching experience, subjects they taught/ they are teaching. | From item 1 to item 3 |
| 2 | Teaching culture | They were requested to define culture in an open-ended question to see how they perceive this concept. They were also asked questions about the relationship between culture and language and the position and the role of teaching culture in foreign language classes and its effect on the native cultural identity. | From item 4 to item 7 |
| 3 | Teaching culture in sociolinguistics classes | This section was intended to collect information about teachers' perceptions of the effective sociolinguistics course, the importance of sociolinguistic knowledge in communication and their evaluation of the cultural content in sociolinguistics syllabus. | From item 8 to item 10 |
| 4 | Students' understanding of the intercultural differences | This section dealt with the description and the evaluation of learners' understanding of the intercultural differences, their sociolinguistic interferences and the role of the intercultural dimension in reducing interference and developing intercultural understanding. | From item 11 to item 17 |
| 5 | Students' intercultural attitudes | In this section, the researcher collected data about students' intercultural attitudes towards the intercultural differences and the role of sociolinguistics course in correcting cultural misconceptions and increasing curiosity to know more about the foreign culture. | From item 18 to item 21 |
| 6 | Intercultural education | This section concerns teachers' description of interculturally competent speakers and their suggestions of the teaching methods or materials to teach culture and help students understand the intercultural differences in sociolinguistics class. | From item 22 to item 24 |

### *V.3.8.3. Pilot administration of the questionnaire.*

Before administering the questionnaire, it has been piloted on five teachers of sociolinguistics who shared the same characteristics of subjects to whom the final version was administered in order to predict how the subjects would react to the questionnaire. This step helped the researcher to examine the clarity, the ambiguity, the precision of the questions. Thus, the pilot administration of the questionnaire proved the clarity and the precision of the majority of questions. Yet, some questions were unclear since some teachers' answers did not fit into the researcher's expectations. Subsequently, they were reformulated and refined in the final version.

### *V.3.8.4. Administration of the questionnaire.*

The printed form of the questionnaire was directly handed to teachers of sociolinguistics from the department of English at Batna 2 University. Since the questions were relatively long, teachers preferred to take the copies with them,  and they returned them few days later.

## V.4.  Data Analysis Procedures

### V.4.1.  Experiment.

After obtaining the final scores of the pretest and the posttest and calculating the sum of the scores and the mean of the experimental and the control groups, the means were compared to verify whether the mean of the experimental has been progressed or not in the posttest. Besides, The quantitative data obtained from the posttest were statistically analyzed using the statistical measures of the frequency of the occurrence of scores, the variance and the standard deviation in each group. For a valid and a reliable testing of the null research

hypothesis, we used a more advanced statistical analysis known as a *t*-test to check to what extent the difference between the means is due to chance.

### V.4.2. Questionnaire.

The answers of closed-ended questions were quantified by storing the answers of each subject and statistically analyzed by calculating the frequency and the percentage of the occurrence of each option using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS. 20). These numerical data helped the researcher comparing the answers of teachers. Concerning the answers of open-ended questions, they were subject to the qualitative textual analysis and interpretation according to the content and the categories of the data generated from the questionnaire. At the end,  we attempted to correlate the results of the experiment with the answers of teachers in the questionnaire to build up the final conclusion of the present research.

**Conclusion**

A detailed description of the outline of the research methodology has been presented in this chapter. The main steps undertaken by the researcher were explained, including the choice of the method, the target population and the sampling technique.  In the design of the quasi-experiment, she has accounted for the selection of the control and the experimental groups, the implementation of the treatment, the tests and the evaluation grid. The use of a questionnaire as another data gathering tool has also been expounded within the plan of the investigation. The next chapter will deal with the analysis and the interpretation of the results obtained from the experiment.

# Data Analysis of the Experiment

## Introduction

The researcher conducted an experiment on a sample of learners of English from the third-year undergraduate level at Batna 2 University in order to investigate the role of sociolinguistics course in improving students' intercultural competence. Since the development of the intercultural competence is an ongoing process, the researcher believes that the assessment of learners' progress should also be continuous through the use of a series of tests at different stages of the experiment. This chapter presents the analysis and the interpretation of data obtained from the pretest, the progress-tests, the classroom observation, the self-assessment surveys and the posttest in order to see whether or not sociolinguistics course can be exploited to help learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences, and subsequently increase their intercultural competence. The results obtained from the experimental group who received the innovative treatment are contrasted to the scores of the control group who received the traditional courses in the posttest in order to test the hypotheses and to answer the research questions.

## VI.1. Results of the Pretest

The researcher views that the pretest is an essential phase before initiating the experiment because it allows her to examine and compare the subjects' initial intercultural competence in the experimental group and the control one. Since the experimental and the control groups were assigned randomly, the researcher wanted to check their homogeneity, not only at the students' level of the intercultural competence, but also at the levels of their social, educational and communicative backgrounds. Thus, the first part of the pretest dealt with the participants' profiles to ensure that they shared common communicative experiences

and perceptions in both groups, and to identify the difficulties they were encountering in intercultural communication. The second part assessed the initial level of learners' intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes which constituted their intercultural competence in the experimental and the control groups. This part consisted of three different types of tasks. Each covered either cognitive, behavioral or affective domain in order to closely observe and analyze learners' performance in each component separately. Later, the researcher came out with the global assessment that included the three components together (Appendix D).

### VI.1.1. Participants profiles in both groups.

For each question, students' responses in the experimental and the control groups are displayed in tables of frequency and percentage as well as in graphs to draw a conclusion about the participants' profiles.

#### VI.1.1.1. Participants' mother tongue.

Table 7

*Participants' Mother Tongue*

| Options | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Shawi | 15 | 46,9% | 14 | 43.8% |
| Arabic | 17 | 53,1% | 18 | 56.2% |
| Kabyle | 00 | 00% | 00 | 00% |
| Other | 00 | 00% | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
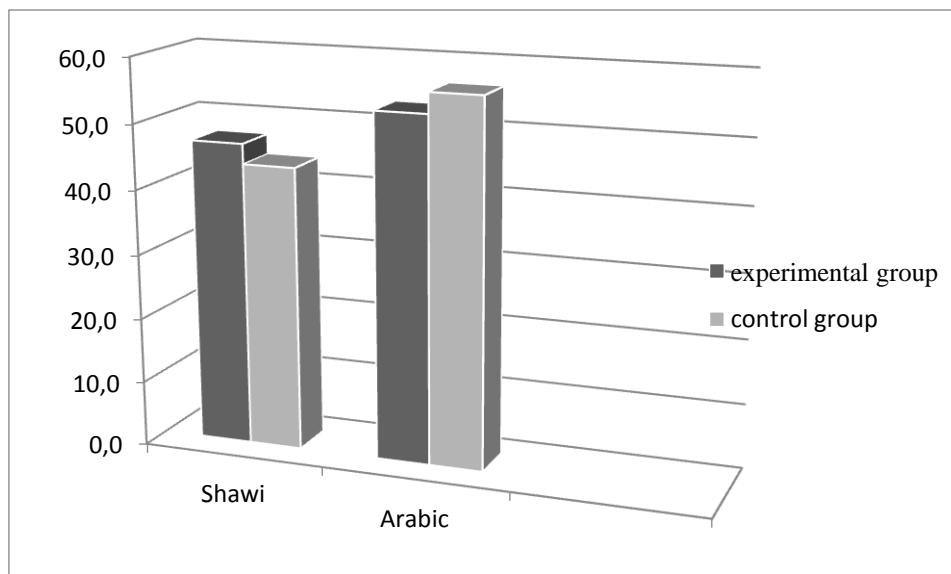
*Figure 4.* Participants' mother tongue.

As the study is conducted in a geographical region where the majority of inhabitants belong to the Shawi ethnic group, the participants' responses to this question show that a large number of the subjects in both groups consider Shawi as their mother tongue. A slightly higher proportion of the participants consider the colloquial Arabic as their mother tongue in both groups. The answers also reveal that both groups do not contain any kabyle speaker. Hence, we can notice a relatively equitable distribution of participants according to their mother tongue in both groups.

***VI.1.1.2.Gender of participants.***

Table 8

*Gender of Participants*

|  | Experimental group | | Control group | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Options | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Female | 24 | 75% | 27 | 84.4% |
| Male | 8 | 25% | 5 | 15.6% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
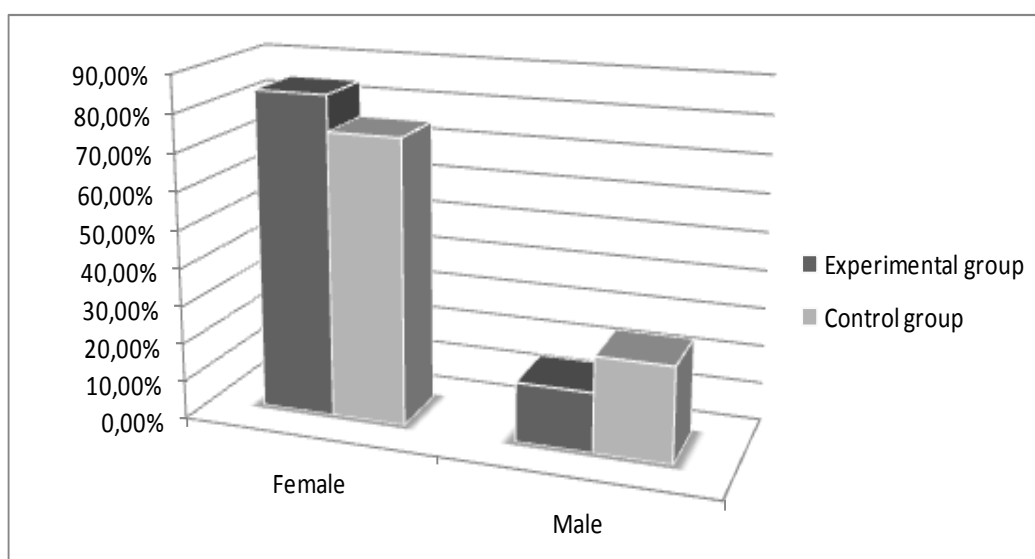


*Figure 5.* Gender of the participants.

The majority of participants in both groups are females. This result reinforces the stereotype that girls perform better in languages while boys are better in fields like mechanics and mathematics. Therefore, the majority of girls choose to study foreign languages like English.

*VI.1.1.3.Participants' age.*

Table 9

*Participants' Age*

| Options | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| 21 | 10 | 31,3% | 17 | 53,1% |
| 22 | 14 | 43,8% | 7 | 21,9% |
| 23 | 4 | 12,5% | 4 | 12,5% |
| 24 | 2 | 6,3% | 3 | 9,4% |
| 25 | 2 | 6,3% | 1 | 3.1% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
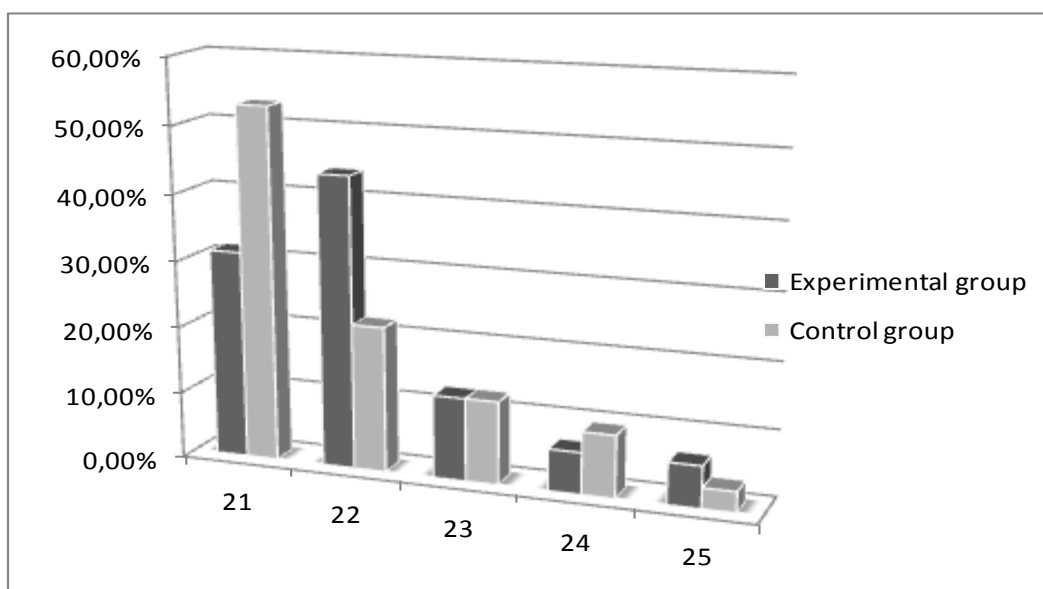


*Figure 6.* Participants' age.

The responses presented in the table (9) reveal that the majority of the participants belong to the same age group [21-22]. This result was expected because both groups are taken from the third-year level.

### VI.1.1.4. Student's understanding of authentic English.

Table 10

*Students' Understanding of Authentic English*

|  | Experimental group | | Control Group | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Options | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Poor | 2 | 6.2% | 3 | 9.4% |
| Average | 24 | 75% | 22 | 68,8% |
| Good | 6 | 18.8% | 7 | 21.9% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
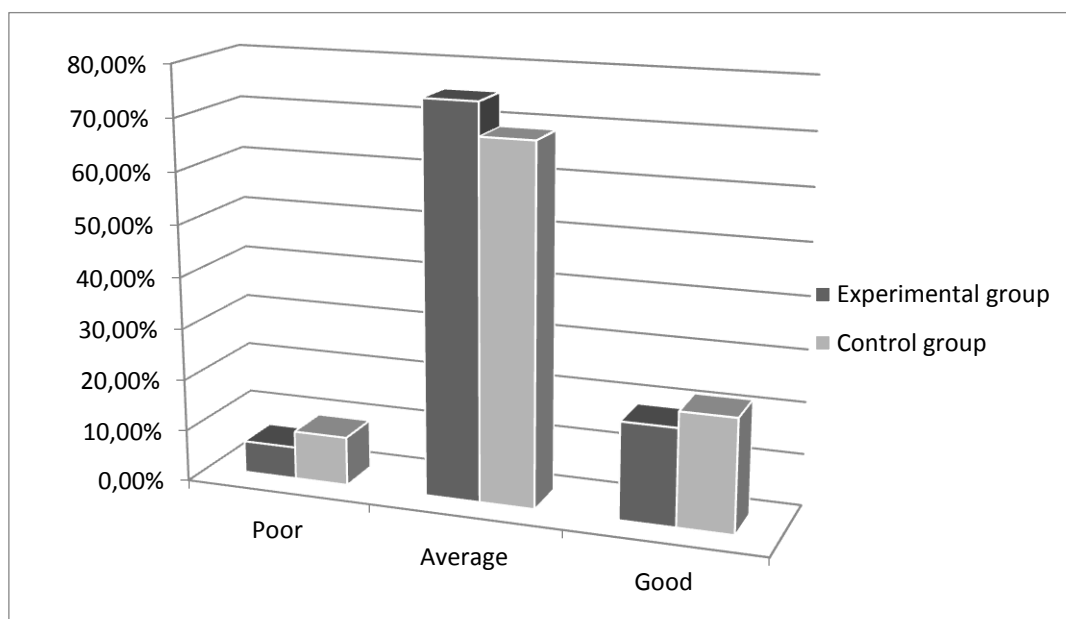
*Figure 7.* Students' understanding of authentic English.

A large proportion of learners from both groups claims that their ability to understand authentic English used in movies, videos, tapes and news is average. This means that these subjects face some problems in the use of authentic language. A smaller proportion qualifies their ability in understanding the authentic language as being good. Few learners in both groups can poorly understand the authentic language.

***VI.1.1.5.Learners experience of face to face communication with native speakers.***

Table 11

*Learners Experience of Face to Face Communication with Native Speakers*

|  | Experimental group | | Control group | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Option | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| NO | 30 | 93,8% | 27 | 84,4% |
| Yes | 2 | 6,2% | 5 | 15,6% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
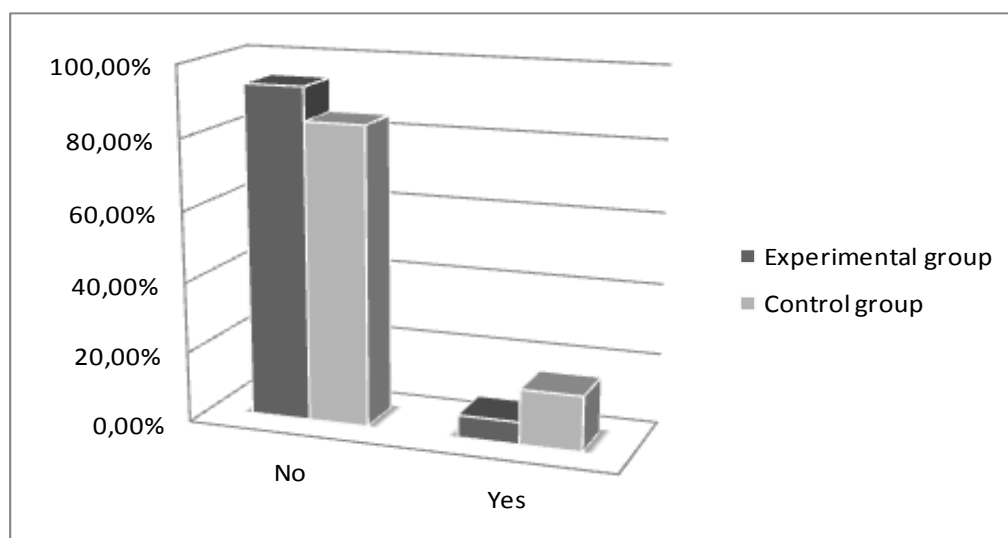


*Figure 8.* Learners' experience of face to face communication with native speakers.

The figure (8) and the table (11) reveal that just a few number of students from both groups have experienced face to face interaction with native speakers. This means that the majority of subjects who are selected in both groups have never communicated face-to-face

with native speakers. The balanced absence of such experience in both groups reduces its potential influence on learners' achievement and performance in the experiment.

### VI.1.1.6. *Learners experience of other forms of communication with native speakers.*

Table 12

*Learners Experience of Other Forms of Communication With Native Speakers*

| | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Options | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| No | 25 | 78,1% | 25 | 78,1% |
| Yes | 7 | 21,9% | 7 | 21,9% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
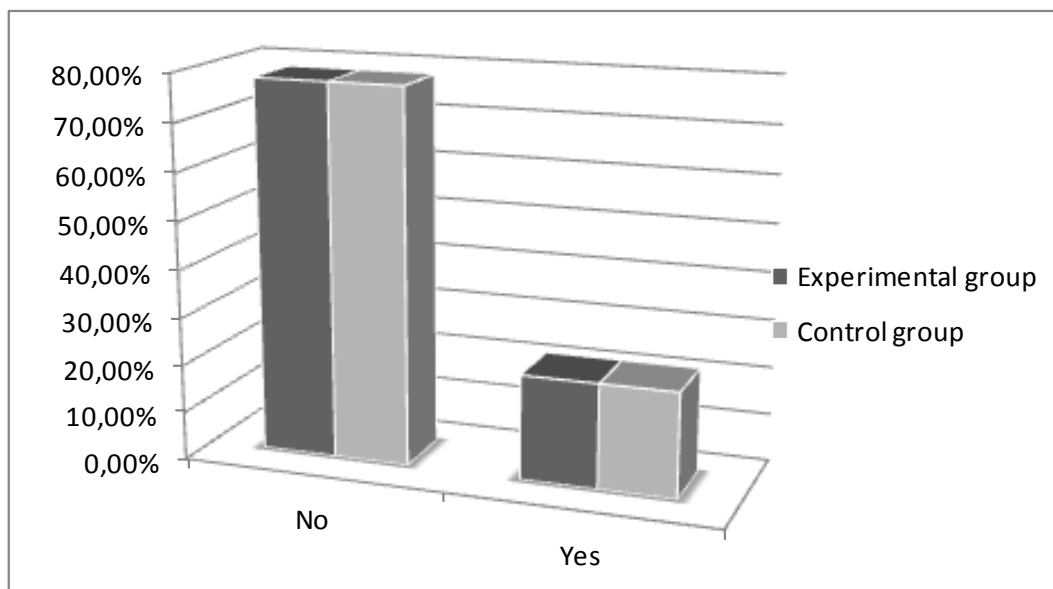


*Figure 9.* Learners experience of other forms of communication with native speakers.

The figure (9) shows that most participants (78,1%) in the experimental and the control groups have never had any form of communication with native speakers. The absence of the direct and the indirect contact with native speakers can be one of the reasons for learners' inability to understand the authentic language used by native speakers. The minority of participants (21.9%) who responded positively in both groups claimed that they have communicated with native speakers through virtual social networks like Facebook, Messenger and Skype using text chat (85.7% & 71.4% in experimental and control groups respectively) and video calling (14.3% & 28.6% in both groups).

### VI.1.1.7. Learners' evaluation of the difficulty of communication with native speakers

Table 13

*Learners Evaluation of the Difficulty of Communication with Native Speakers*

| Options | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Very easy | 0 | 00% | 1 | 3.1% |
| Easy | 7 | 21,9% | 6 | 18.8% |
| Difficult | 24 | 75% | 23 | 71.9% |
| Very difficult | 1 | 3,1% | 2 | 6.3% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
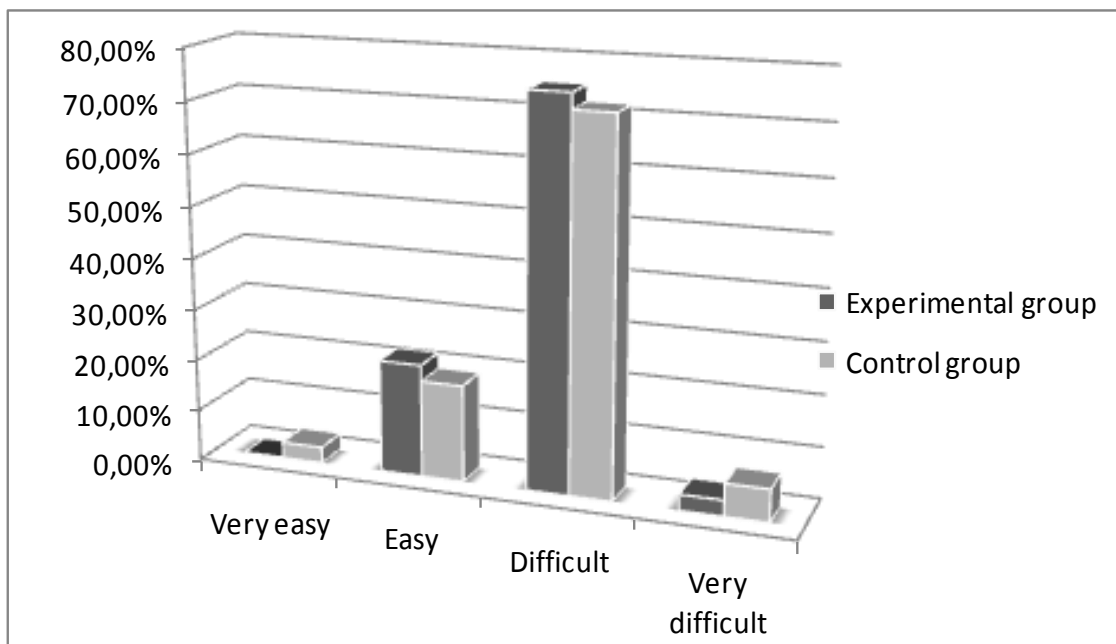
*Figure 10.* Learners' evaluation of the difficulty of communication with native speakers.

Figure (10) demonstrates that more than (70%) of the respondents from both groups view communication with native speakers as being difficult. This answer consolidates the previous results displayed in participants responses to questions four, five and six, and confirms that learners have serious communicative problems in both groups. To understand better the nature of these problems, students were asked to explain the reason(s) behind their choices. Their answers are categorized, organized and presented in the following table and illustrated in the next figure.

***VI.1.1.8. Learners explanations of the reasons of the difficulty or the easiness of communication with native speakers.***

Table 14

*Learners Explanations of the Reasons of the Difficulty or the Easiness of Communication with Native Speakers*

| Explanations | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| It is difficult because of: The insufficient command of English. | 5 | 15,6% | 5 | 15,6% |
| The deficiency of lexical items. | 4 | 12,5% | 3 | 9.4% |
| The existence of many spoken varieties of English. | 2 | 6,3% | 2 | 6.3% |
| The lack cultural knowledge. | 00 | 00% | 1 | 3.1% |
| Difficulties of phonological nature. | 9 | 28.1% | 9 | 28.1% |
| Difficulties of semantic nature. | 5 | 15.6% | 5 | 15.6% |
| It is easy because: The subject can understand and transmit the meaning. | 2 | 6,3% | 2 | 6.3% |
| The subject learned to communicate with them through practice in many occasions. | 1 | 3,1% | 1 | 3.1% |
| Both interlocutors are using the same language. | 00 | 00% | 1 | 3.1% |
| The subject knows the basic elements of language. | 1 | 3.1% | 1 | 3.1% |
| It is easy when interlocutors use simple language forms in communication. | 1 | 3,1% | 2 | 6.3% |
| The subject applies the conversational rules they learn in the classroom. | 1 | 3,1% | 00 | 00% |
| The subject learns communication through watching movies. | 1 | 3.1% | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
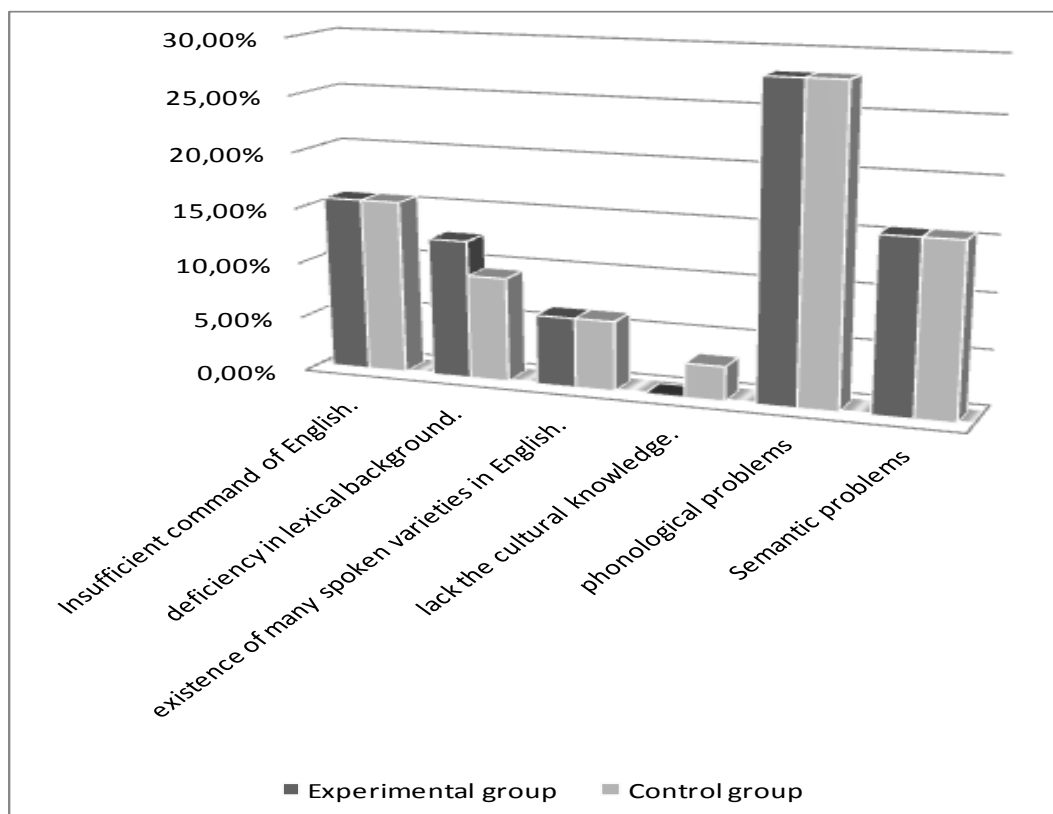
*Figure 11.* Reasons of the difficulty of communication with native speakers.


Concerning the participants who find communication with native speakers difficult, the majority of them attributed the difficulties to their linguistic deficiency, including phonological problems (such as accent variation, connected speech, wrong pronunciation of words), semantic problems (inability to understand the meaning of words) and lexical deficiency (inability to find words needed to express ideas). Some subjects (6.3% in both groups) believe that communication with native speakers is difficult because English does not exist in only one form. Native speakers use a myriad of dialects of English that learners do not master. Thus, they consider the dialectical variation as an obstacle in communication with native speakers. Some explanations provided by the participants did not specify the nature of the problem. They just mentioned that they lack the good command of English. It is worth mentioning that these explanations are almost identical in both groups. However, no one from

the experimental group referred to the difficulties caused by the absence of knowledge of the socio-cultural norms that affect the use of language while only one subject from the control group highlighted this problem which means that learners are nor aware of the effect of the intercultural differences on communication .
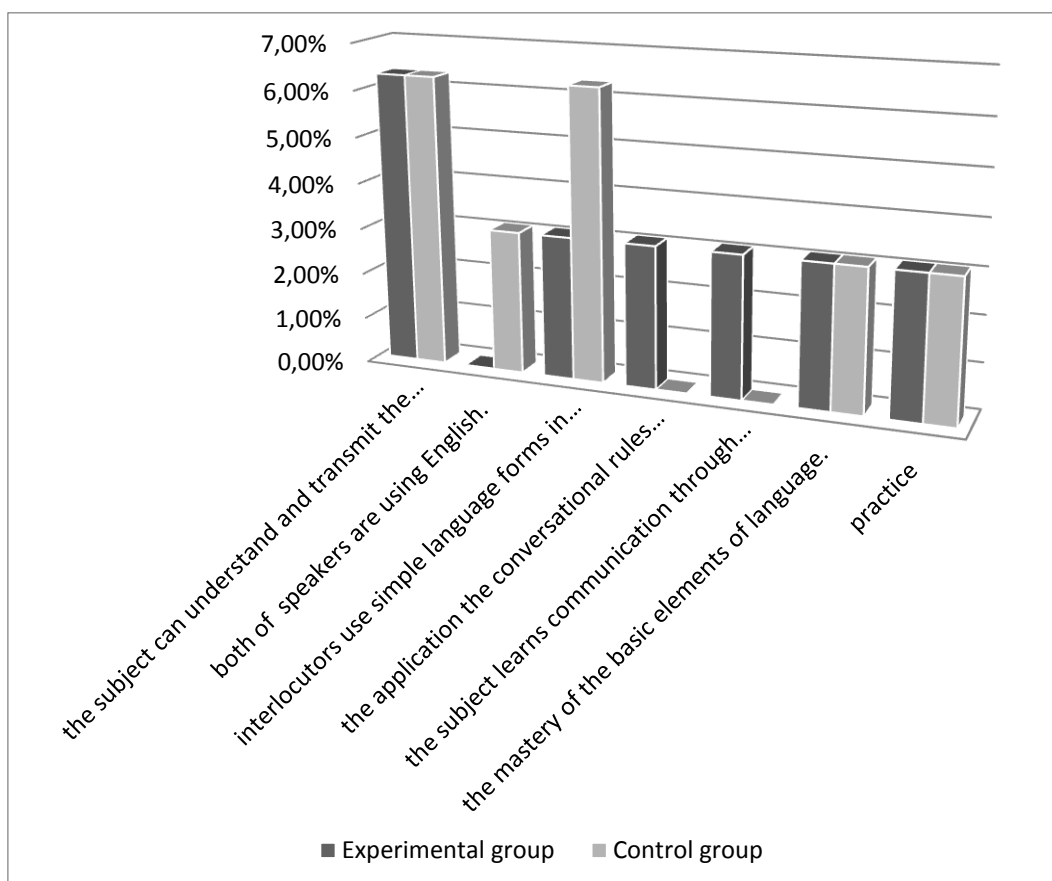


*Figure 12*. Reasons of the easiness of communication with native speakers.

We noted that (6%) of participants from both groups stated that communication with native speakers is easy simply because they believe that they are qualified enough to transmit and understand the meaning of the message using English. In addition, (3%) of the participants from both groups think that they master the basic elements of language which enables them to communicate with native speakers. Yet, they did not specify the skills they possess. Others believe that watching movies, practicing communication for several times,

and applying the conversational rules learned in the classroom helped them and facilitated the process of communication. On the other hand, some arguments suggested by a few number of participants reflect their very limited communicative experience as they supposed that communication is easy because both communicators speak English or because both of them use simple forms of language. These answers confirm again that learners are not aware of socio-cultural norms that govern the choice of speech patterns in the target speech community since they did not experience real-life communications with native speakers. Hence, they could not recognize the real difficulties or facilities that can characterize a communicative situation.

### VI.1.1.9.Differences between the English used by EFL learners and the one used by native speakers.

Table 15

*Differences Between the English Used by EFL Learners and the One Used by Native Speakers*

| Options | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| No | 2 | 6,3% | 4 | 12.5% |
| Yes | 30 | 93,8% | 28 | 87.5% |
| Total | 32 | 100,% | 32 | 100% |
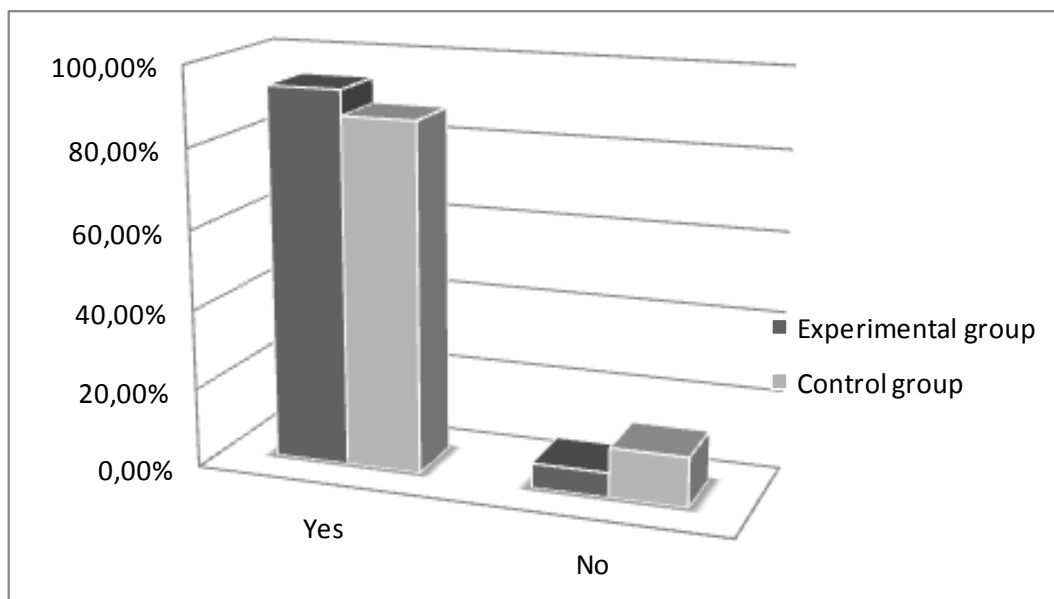
*Figure 13.* Differences between the English used by EFL learners and the one used by native speakers.

The figure (13) demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of the subjects in both groups believe that the English they use is totally different from the one used by native speakers. More details will be provided in the next question.

***VI.1.1.10.*** ***The nature of differences between the English used by EFL learners and the one used by native speakers.***

Table 16

*The  Nature of the Differences Between  the English Used by EFL Learners and the One Used by Native Speakers*

| Options | Experimental group | | Control group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Language form | 24 | 80,0% | 24 | 85,7% |
| Expressing meaning | 5 | 16,7% | 3 | 10.7% |
| Other | 1 | 3,3% | 1 | 3.6% |
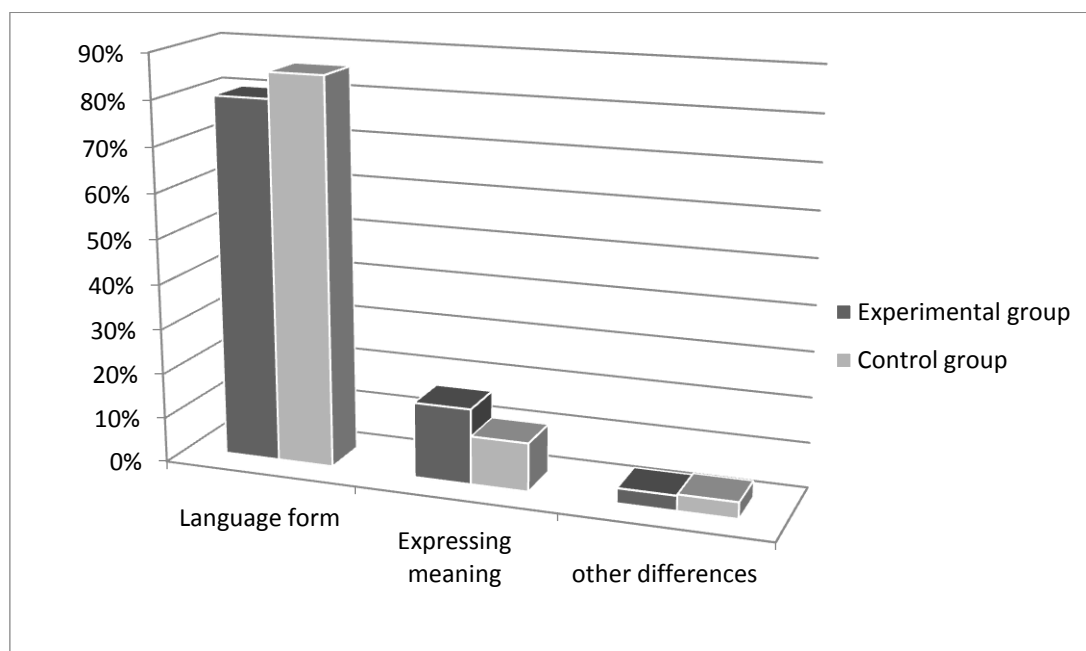


*Figure 14.* The nature of differences between the English used by EFL learners and the one used by native speakers.

Most of the respondents in both groups believe that the differences between the English they use as foreign language learners and the one used by native speakers are of structural nature. Besides, few subjects from both groups believe that the differences lie in the ways meaning can be expressed. On the other hand, only one subject from each group thinks that the differences appear in the way they use language in different situations. This means that the majority of respondents in both groups view language as a structure rather than a means of communication.

### VI.1.1.11.    The effect of cultural differences on the use of language.

Table 17

*The Effect of Cultural Differences on the Use of Language*

|  | Experimental group | | Control group | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Option | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| No | 5 | 15,6% | 3 | 9,4% |
| Yes | 27 | 84,4% | 29 | 90,6% |
| Total | 32 | 100% | 32 | 100% |
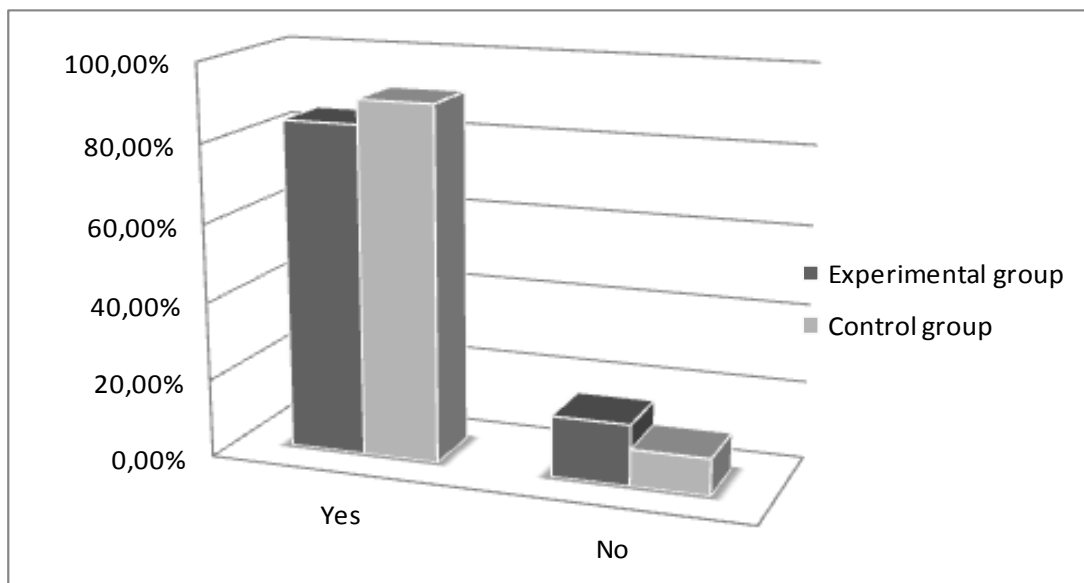
*Figure 15.* The effect of cultural differences on the use of language.

The figure (15) shows that more than (80%) of the respondents in both groups agree that the cultural differences affect the use of particular linguistic forms. This means that speakers of the same language do not use it in the same way because of the cultural differences. All the participants were asked to explain the choice they made. Some of them justify their answer by stating that communication problems can emerge because of cultural differences. Others believe that language cannot be used appropriately without cultural knowledge since each culture imposes its own rules of the use of language. Some subjects explained their choice by claiming that some words are considered taboo in one culture while they are not in another cultural group. Also, idioms are difficult to be understood because their meaning is bound to culture. Concerning those who believe that cultural differences cannot affect the use of language, they rejected any relationship between language and culture since they believe that the meaning expressed by language is universal.

So far, students' answers to these questions confirm that both groups are homogeneous because participants in both groups share common social and educational background, and they hold common perceptions about the relationship between language and culture. They have difficulties in understanding the authentic language as they have very limited communicative experience with native speakers. The next part was designed to compare the levels of intercultural communicative competence in both groups.

### VI.1.2. Scores of both groups in intercultural competence pretest

Since the components of intercultural competence require different test formats, each component was tested and assessed independently in one activity. The researcher analyzed learner's performance in knowledge, skills and attitudes separately. Then, she came out with the global assessment of each leaner's intercultural competence which includes the three components together. The final grade assigned to the intercultural competence ranges from 0 when the intercultural performance is poor to 10 when the intercultural performance is excellent.

Table 18

*Scores of the Subjects of the Experimental Group in the Pretest*

| Participants | Pretest scores | Participants | Pretest scores |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| *1* | 1 | *17* | 2 |
| *2* | 2 | *18* | 3 |
| *3* | 2 | *19* | 5 |
| *4* | 3 | *20* | 3 |
| *5* | 1 | *21* | 6 |
| *6* | 4 | *22* | 4 |
| *7* | 5 | *23* | 4 |
| *8* | 1 | *24* | 3 |
| *9* | 6 | *25* | 1 |
| *10* | 3 | *26* | 1 |
| *11* | 4 | *27* | 4 |
| *12* | 5 | *28* | 3 |
| *13* | 2 | *29* | 2 |
| *14* | 2 | *30* | 4 |
| *15* | 3 | *31* | 3 |
| *16* | 1 | *32* | 4 |
| $\Sigma X_E$ | | 107 | |
| $X_E$ | | 03,34 | |

*Note.* $X_E$ = the average of scores; $\Sigma X_E$ = the sum of the scores.

Table 19

*Scores of the Subjects of the Control Group in the Pretest*

| Participants | Pretest scores | Participants | Pretest scores |
|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | 3 | *17* | 1 |
| *2* | 4 | *18* | 2 |
| *3* | 1 | *19* | 3 |
| *4* | 2 | *20* | 4 |
| *5* | 3 | *21* | 4 |
| *6* | 2 | *22* | 2 |
| *7* | 6 | *23* | 1 |
| *8* | 5 | *24* | 3 |
| *9* | 7 | *25* | 2 |
| *10* | 4 | *26* | 5 |
| *11* | 5 | *27* | 2 |
| *12* | 2 | *28* | 2 |
| *13* | 5 | *29* | 4 |
| *14* | 4 | *30* | 7 |
| *15* | 3 | *31* | 3 |
| *16* | 4 | *32* | 4 |
| $\Sigma X_C$ | | 111 | |
| $X_C$ | | 03.47 | |

*Note.* $X_C$ = the average of scores; $\Sigma X_C$ = the sum of the scores.

According to the evaluation grid used by the researcher, the excellent intercultural performance equals the score of (10), the average intercultural performance corresponds the score of (5), while the poor intercultural competence is represented in the score of (0). The final grades obtained by participants for their overall intercultural performance in both groups and presented in tables (12) and (13) are far from being qualified as excellent (10) or even average (5). This means that learners' intercultural competence before starting the experiment is limited and poor in both groups. The detailed examination of learners' performance in each component revealed their weakness in intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the first activity designed for testing students' knowledge and understanding of the cultural practices and values expressed in idioms in the native and the target communities, students were requested to explain and translate cultural idioms. The evaluation of learners' performance in this task shows that the majority of learners failed to explain the cultural meaning of idioms and to suggest the exact equivalent in the mother tongue because of their poor intercultural knowledge. In the second activity, learners' skills of comparing, relating, interpreting and interacting were poor since they imposed the norms of their own culture. The linguistic behaviors of students reveal many examples of sociolinguistic transfer that can cause serious problems of misunderstandings. For instance, learners used some address terms like my mom, my grandma' that only Algerians use to express respect towards elderly people. Another evidence of the occurrence of sociolinguistic transfer is the use of expressions like "it was not between my hands" and "I'm so ashamed of you" which sound literal translations of Algerian expressions to justify and apologize for their lateness. The evaluation of learners' performance in this activity shows that they were not able to adjust their linguistic behavior to fit into the target community since they could not recognize the differences between the norms of speaking of the native and the target speech communities. The third activity was designed for testing attitudes towards the target culture. The evaluation of learners' performance in this

activity reveals that they hold negative images and stereotypes about the target culture because of their religious and political orientations. Also, the way they rejected the invitation to the Thanksgiving dinner reflects their ethnocentric attitudes and their intolerance towards the target cultural practices.

Table 20

*Means of Scores Obtained in the Pretest in Both Groups*

| Groups | Pretest means | Difference in the means |
|--------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Experimental group | 03.34 | |
| Control group | 03.47 | 0.13 |
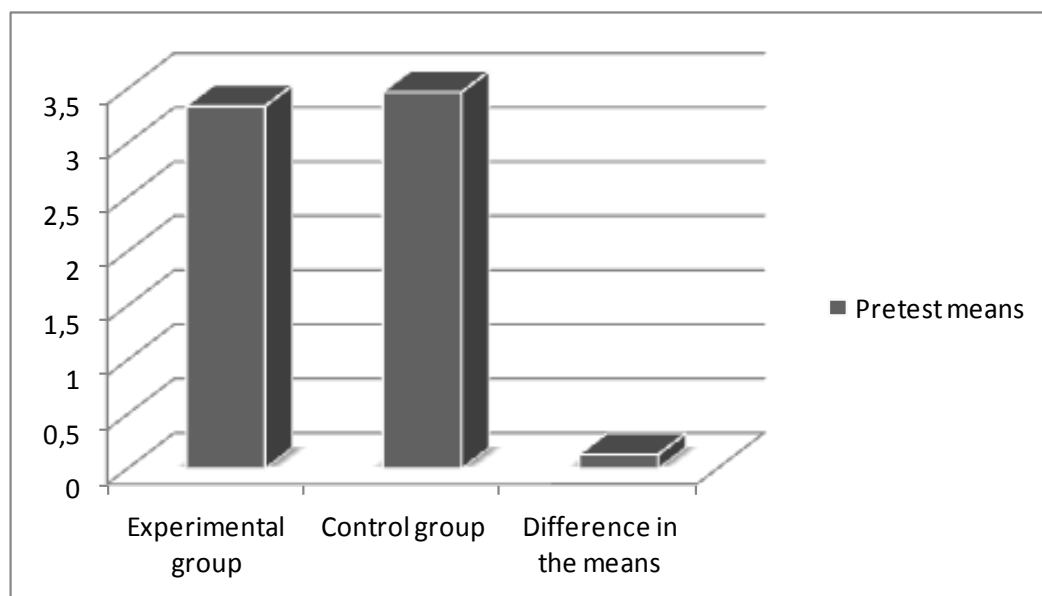


*Figure 16.* Means of scores obtained in the pretest in both groups.

Although the answers of the participants are not identical in both groups, all of them have intercultural problems. The Figure (16) indicates that there is a slight difference between the means calculated in the experimental group and the control one. This difference (0.13) is insignificant to the extent that we come to the conclusion that the initial intercultural competence of learners in both groups before receiving the treatment is nearly identical. The analysis of the pretest results demonstrates that participants' intercultural competence is limited and poor in both groups since the foreign language pedagogy focuses on the teaching of cultural facts related to history, politics and literature. On the other hand, the cultural rules of interaction and communication inside the target community are neglected. Teaching abstract cultural facts within the Landeskunde approach is not enough to develop the intercultural competence among EFL learners. They should also learn how to make more efforts to understand the other culture, to compare their cultural behaviors to those of the target community, and to correct their stereotypes about the target culture. We must transcend the abstract description of cultural facts and shift our attention towards the reflection on the differences and the similarities between the modes of cultural interaction in the native and the target communities.

**VI.2. Progress Test No 1**

The teacher taught the first chapter in sociolinguistics to the experimental as well as the control group for two weeks. Nevertheless, a part of the treatment has been introduced within this chapter to the experiential group while the control group has undergone the traditional way of teaching the subject without any cultural emphasis. The teacher selected the topic of nonverbal communication to be taught within the course of communicative competence with reference to the native and the target speech communities. She highlighted how communication problems often arise because of the deficiency in the socio-cultural knowledge of the use of nonverbal behaviors in particular situations through the use of

simulations, pictures and videos as teaching materials (Appendix A). In this course of communicative competence, she grabbed learners' attention to the fact that the mastery of the grammatical rules of language is not enough for effective communication, and that they need to learn the appropriate use of language which also entails the appropriate use of nonverbal forms along with the verbal ones in socio-cultural contexts. Thus, nonverbal communication has been highlighted in the strategic competence that is related to verbal and nonverbal strategies needed for successful communication and the sociolinguistic competence which is also important for people since the appropriateness of nonverbal behaviors like proxemics, eye contact, gestures and postures is linked to the socio-cultural norms that govern the native and the target speech communities. At the end of this phase of the experiment, the learners have been tested to assess their progress in one of the components of intercultural competence to check whether their intercultural knowledge has been improved or not. The progress test consisted of ten true /false statements on nonverbal behaviors in the target speech community and the native one. For each correct answer, the learner was given one point (Appendix E).

### VI.2.1. Results of progress test No1.

Learners' scores obtained in the progress test 1 are presented in the following table.

Table 21

*Scores of the Participants From the Experimental Group in Progress Test No1*

| Participants | Scores | Participants | Scores |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | 7 | 17 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 18 | 3 |
| 3 | 5 | 19 | 5 |
| 4 | 8 | 20 | 3 |
| 5 | 6 | 21 | 7 |
| 6 | 7 | 22 | 10 |
| 7 | 10 | 23 | 8 |
| 8 | 8 | 24 | 5 |
| 9 | 7 | 25 | 7 |
| 10 | 6 | 26 | 6 |
| 11 | 2 | 27 | 9 |
| 12 | 5 | 28 | 7 |
| 13 | 4 | 39 | 9 |
| 14 | 5 | 30 | 5 |
| 15 | 6 | 31 | 7 |
| 16 | 7 | 32 | 3 |
| $\Sigma X_E$ | | | 190 |
| $X_E$ | | | 5.94 |

*Note.* $X_E$ = the average of scores; $\Sigma X_E$ = the sum of the scores.
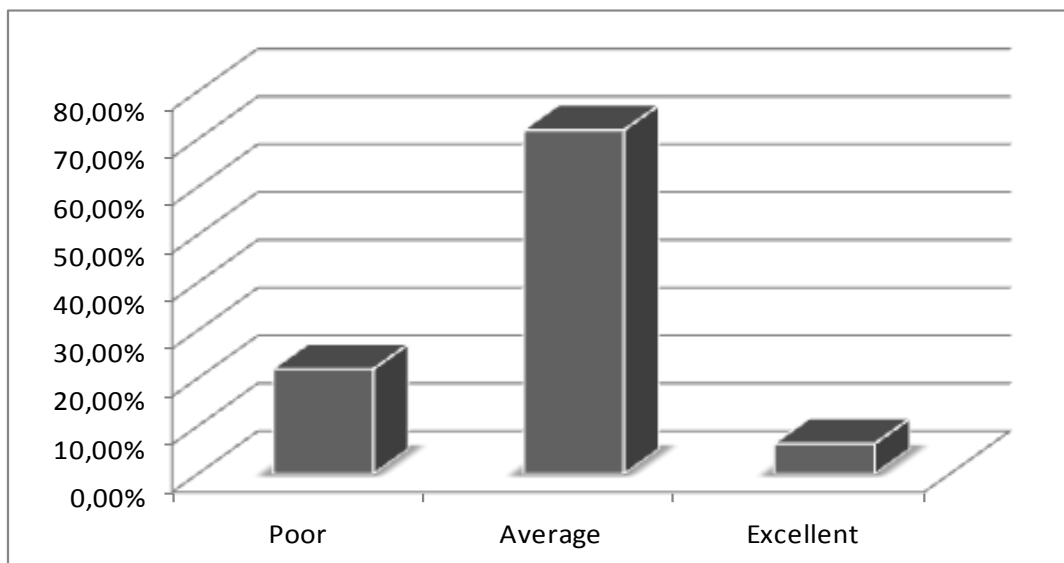
*Figure 17*. The statistical distribution of the scores obtained in  progress test 1 in the evaluation grid**.**

The scores obtained by learners from the experimental group in progress test one indicate a significant progress in their performance at the level of the intercultural knowledge. The use of teaching materials like videos, pictures and simulations in the classroom illustrated how the appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors is governed by the socio-cultural norms of the native and the target speech communities. Such teaching experience that attempted to recompense the absence of the direct interaction with native speakers has a positive impact on learners' ability to understand different cultural behaviors. We evaluated the learners' intercultural knowledge and cultural understanding of both communities through their ability to recognize statements that are true or false. Their understanding of the similarities and the differences in the use of the socio-cultural norms is manifested through their answers in the progress test. The results demonstrate that learners have assimilated some of the socio-cultural rules of nonverbal communication in both communities.  Although they did not possess the same level of intercultural knowledge about the socio-cultural norms of nonverbal interaction in both communities, since they did not obtain the same scores,  the performance of the

majority of learners (71.9%) in terms of intercultural knowledge is, as shown in the figure (17), average. The cultural knowledge they acquired from the treatment helped them identify many true and false statements. Moreover, the average score attained (5.94) which corresponds to the intermediate level on the scale. We conclude that learners gained more Knowledge and more understanding of the socio-cultural contexts and the cultural practices of the target community  and the native one in the course of nonverbal communication.

## VI.3. Progress Test No2

When teaching the fourth chapter in sociolinguistics that dealt with language and culture for three weeks, the teacher explained theories that support the reciprocal influence between language and culture like Sapir-Whorf hypothesis for both groups. However, the teacher introduced two basic concepts that illustrate how culture is implied in language and communication to the experimental group. Learners have been taught that taboo and euphemism vary from one culture to another and from one society to another. They have understood that in each cultural group,  there exist some words that have negative associations and offensive connotations. The teacher views that knowledge about such sensitive matters is of paramount importance in developing intercultural skills. Therefore, as foreign language learners, they need to be aware of the fact that there are some issues that they should not talk about as they need to be aware of the differences in the use of euphemism as a polite strategy in the target as well as the native speech communities to avoid sensitive issues like taboos and to be less offensive. Thus, the teacher introduced the concept of euphemism as a linguistic trickery that people use to avoid misinterpretation, conflict, embarrassment and offense and to ensure politeness with a special focus on the native and the target speech communities, using a comparative teaching approach. Learners were assigned to bring texts written by native speakers in any field where euphemistic expressions were used to be discussed in the classroom.  They were also asked to reflect on the use of euphemism in the Algerian society.

At the end of the course, learners were asked to write ten sentences that can be said or written in intercultural situations using euphemism about particular concepts like death and age to test their skills in practicing and functioning in the target culture using appropriate linguistic forms in intercultural situations (Appendix F). For each correct use of euphemistic expression, the learner obtained one point.

### VI.3.1. Results of progress test No2.

The scores attained by learners from the experimental group in this test are presented in table (22) and their performance is statistically represented in the figure (18).

Table 22

*Scores of the Participants From the Experimental Group in Progress Test No 2*

| Participants | Scores | Participants | Scores |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *1* | 8 | *17* | 5 |
| *2* | 10 | *18* | 6 |
| *3* | 4 | *19* | 2 |
| *4* | 3 | *20* | 10 |
| *5* | 7 | *21* | 9 |
| *6* | 5 | *22* | 5 |
| *7* | 8 | *23* | 10 |
| *8* | 5 | *24* | 7 |
| *9* | 9 | *25* | 8 |
| *10* | 6 | *26* | 5 |
| *11* | 6 | *27* | 9 |
| *12* | 7 | *28* | 7 |
| *13* | 9 | *39* | 7 |
| *14* | 6 | *30* | 6 |
| *15* | 7 | *31* | 6 |
| *16* | 4 | *32* | 8 |
| $\Sigma X_E$ | | 214 | |
| $X_E$ | | 6.69 | |

*Note.* $X_E$ = the average of scores; $\Sigma X_E$ = the sum of the scores.
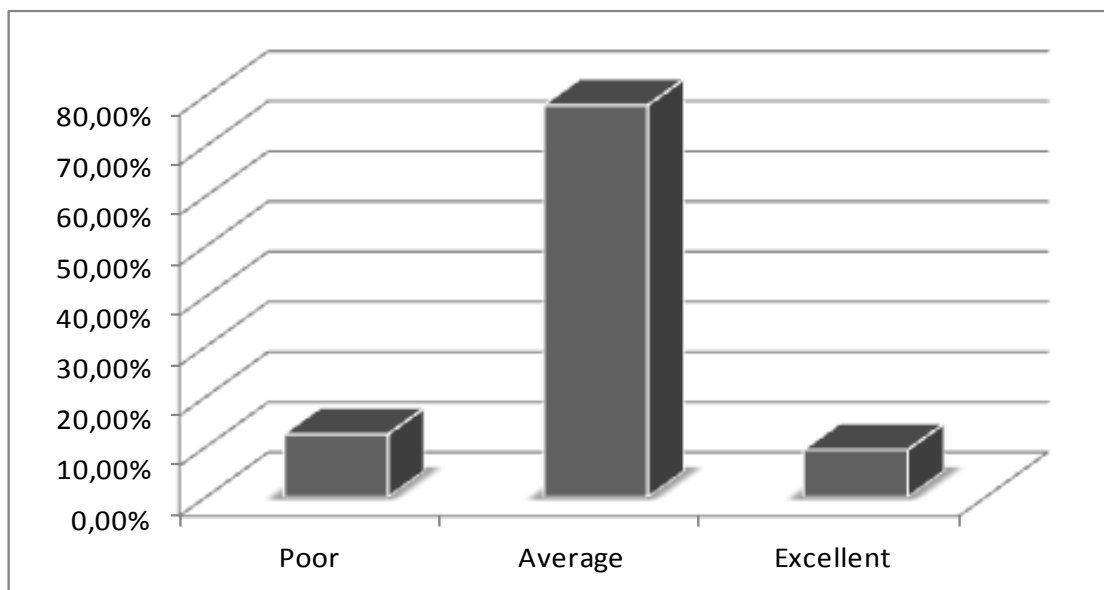
*Figure 18.* The statistical distribution of the scores obtained in progress test 2 in the

evaluation grid**.**

The scores of learners' performance in this test reveal that learners' intercultural skills

were improving in the experimental group. The majority of them learned that, in intercultural

communication, they have to adjust their behaviors to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings.

They became more flexible and more able to interact using the right euphemistic expressions

as a polite strategy to communicate with people from the target culture. Although they did not

exhibit the same degree of flexibility in their performance reflected in their scores, the

majority of them were not only ready to adjust their behaviors to the requirements of the

target culture as shown in classroom observation of their attitudes, but they also learned to

adapt their behaviors in intercultural communication as the average score reached (6.69)

which means that the overall  performance of the group was intermediate.

When we evaluated learners' practices of euphemism in intercultural situations, we

found that the majority of learners (78.1%)  succeeded in relating the choice of the linguistic

forms to the socio-cultural norms of the target culture in many situations. This result is

significant since it reflects a positive change in their skills after receiving a part of the treatment. Learners became to some extent able to function in the target culture and to adjust their linguistic behaviors to the target cultural context. Besides, (9.4%) of learners were excellent in their performance because they knew how to adjust their behaviors where they had to. On the other hand, only (12.5%) of learners displayed poor performance, which means that some learners still had some difficulties since they were less flexible to adjust their behaviors and more resistant to the target cultural practices. They may need more intercultural training and learning.

## VI.4. Self Assessment Instrument

To assess the progress and the change in learners' attitudes during the experiment, a self-assessment instrument has been designed to collect the needed data about learners' attitudes that are defined, in this study, in terms of their acceptance, openness,  respect for otherness, tolerating ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability, and empathy. These elements have been selected and defined after reviewing the literature existing in the field of intercultural competence. The researcher suggested seven statements formulated from these concepts that reflect learners' individual abilities in one of the elements that constitute their intercultural attitudes. Each statement is directly and explicitly linked to the operational definitions of each one of these elements to avoid misinterpretation of the meaning of the statements and ambiguity. Learners from the experimental group were required to rate their abilities in each component using Likert scale (from 0 to 3) during four sessions to deduce the progress and the change in their attitudes because one session is not sufficient to assess such abstract concept (Appendix G). The results obtained from the answers of learners are quantitatively analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS. 20).

**VI.4.1. Self-assessment survey number one.**

The teacher introduced the topic of nonverbal communication to the experimental group in sociolinguistics course, highlighting the differences between proxemics and gestures used in the native and the target cultures. After watching videos and pictures about the topic and having a classroom discussion, the teacher wanted the assess the change in learners' attitudes.  A self-assessment survey (SAS) that consisted of seven items has been administered at the end of the session to assess learners' acceptance, openness,  respect for otherness, tolerating ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability, and empathy. The results obtained from the self-assessment tool are presented in the following tables and figures:

*VI.4.1.1. Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS1.*

Table 23

*Learners Acceptance of Cultural Differences in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| 1 | 5 | 15.6% | 1.78 |
| 2 | 20 | 62.5% | |
| 3 | 4 | 12.5% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
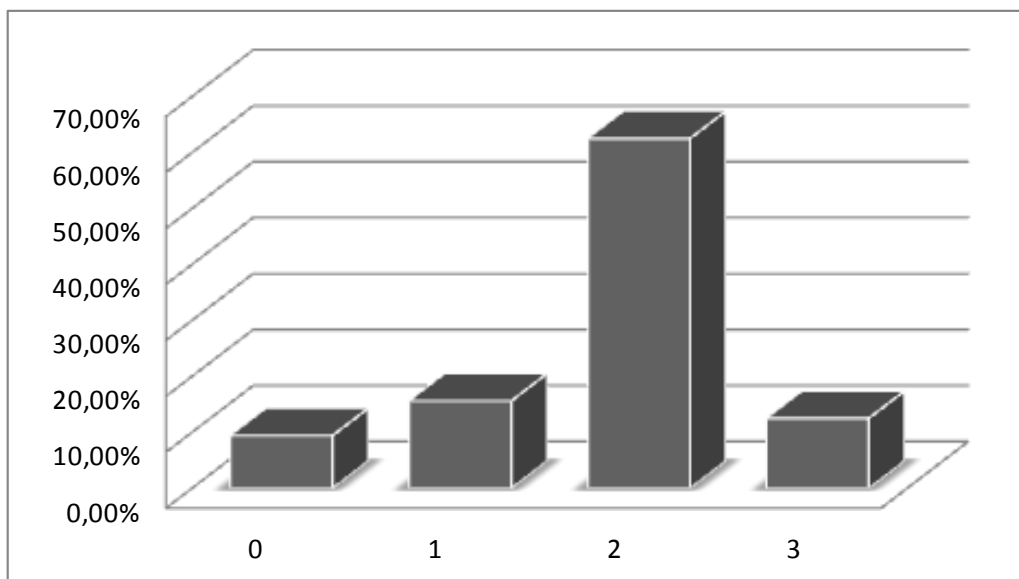
*Figure 19.* Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS1.

The table shows that the minority (9,4%) denies the differences in cultural perspectives, behaviors and values. This means that these subjects believe that the world should always be seen through their eyes. Some subjects (15,6%) express their slight tendency to accept the other worldview. The answers of the majority of learners (62.5%) show that they accept the validity of viewpoints, beliefs, values, and behaviors of the new world in some cases. Only (12.5%) of the subjects rated their tendency to believe in the target cultural values, perspectives and beliefs as being high (which corresponds to 3).

### VI.4.1.2.Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS1.

Table 24

*Learners Ability to Avoid Stereotypes in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 9 | 28.1% | |
| 1 | 9 | 28.1% | 1.19 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 1 | 3.2% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
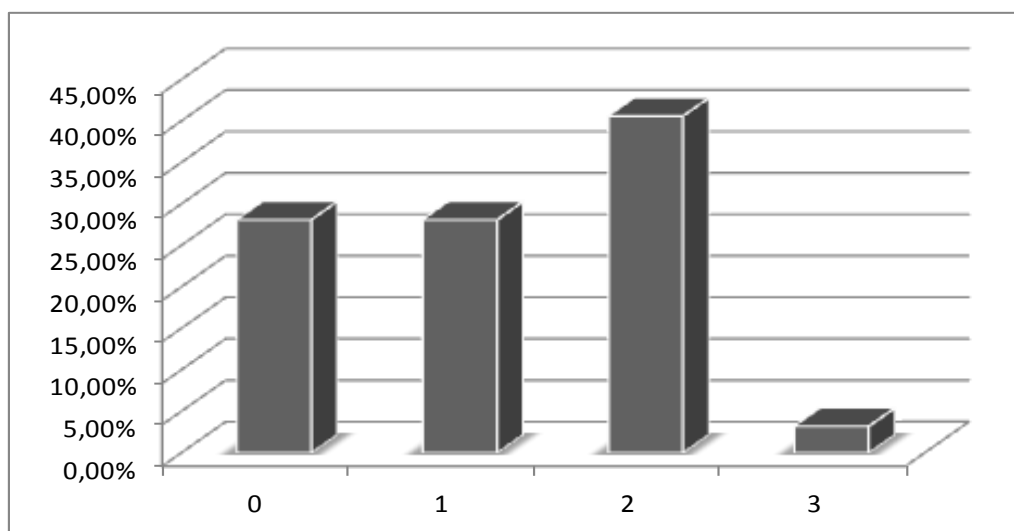


*Figure 20.* Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS1.

As shown in table (24), (28.1%) of learners hold negative attitudes influenced by prejudice and stereotypes about the target culture. Another similar proportion of learners (28.1%) rarely avoid the reliance on their existing stereotypes and prejudice in their attitudes towards the target culture. A high proportion of learners (40.6%) reveal their intermediate

ability to withhold the fabricated images in some situations. On the other hand, only (3.2%) of subjects believe that their attitudes are highly free of prejudice and stereotypes.

### VI.4.1.3. Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS1.

Table 25

*Learners Respect of Cultural Diversity in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 6 | 18.8% | |
| 1 | 7 | 21.8% | 1.5 |
| 2 | 16 | 50% | |
| 3 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
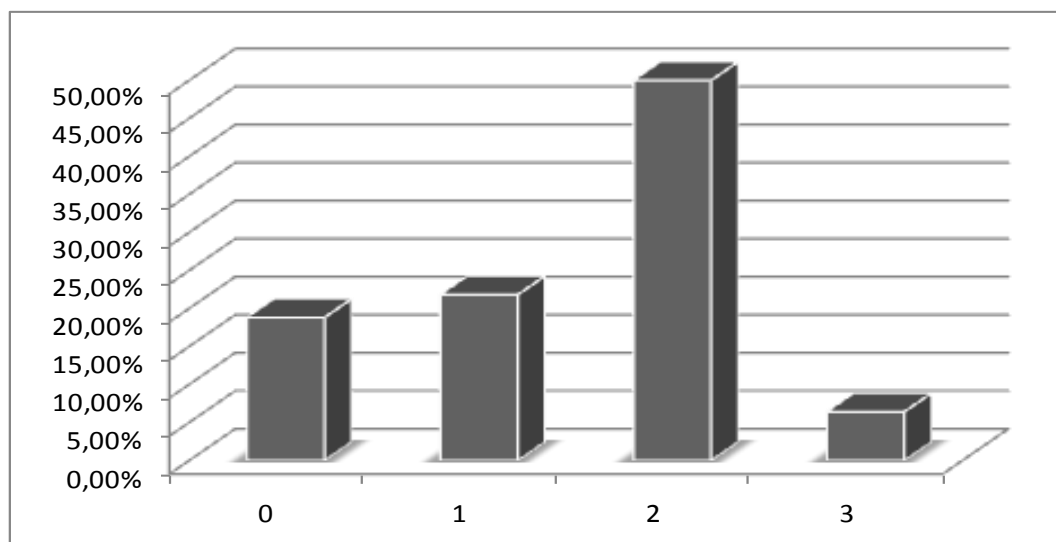


*Figure 21.* Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS1.

The figures displayed in table (25) demonstrate that (18.8%) of learners do not value the diversity in cultural values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Although some of them may

accept the cultural differences, they do not respect them. A proportion that constitutes (21.8%) of subjects hardly value the viewpoints and behaviors prevailing in the target cultural community. The half of the sample (50%) adopt a moderate stance by valuing and respecting some of the target cultural practices and behaviors. A small proportion of learners ( 9.4%) think that all the target cultural values, beliefs and practices are not only accepted, but also worth respect.

### VI.4.1.4. Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in SAS1.

Table 26

*Learners Management of Their Emotions in Ambiguous Intercultural Situations in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 9 | 28.1% | |
| 1 | 9 | 28.1% | 1.5 |
| 2 | 12 | 37.5% | |
| 3 | 2 | 6.3% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
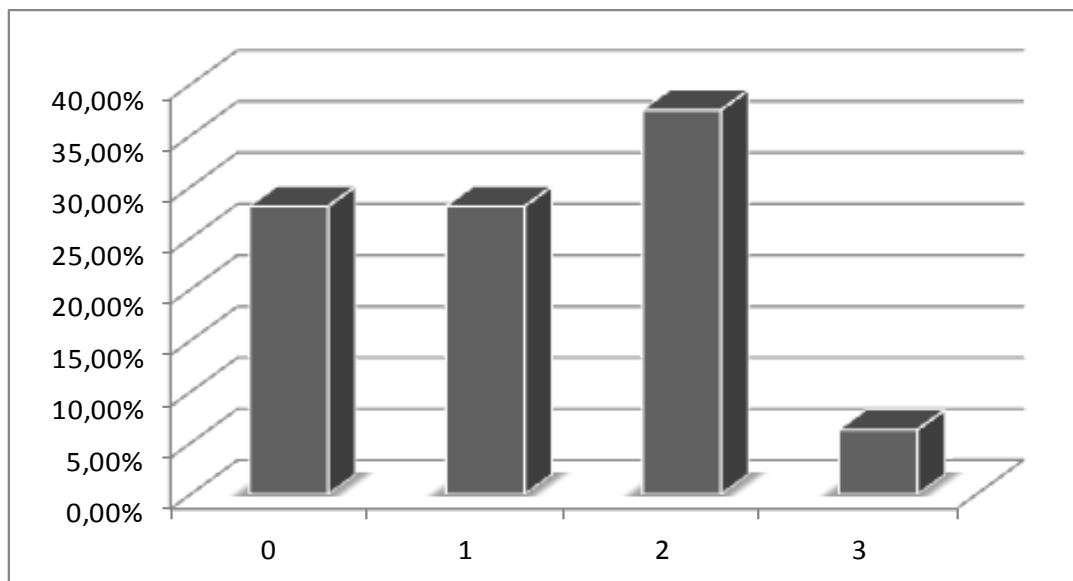
*Figure 22.* Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in   SAS1.

As shown in table (26), (28.1%) of learners cannot manage their emotions and frustration in ambiguous intercultural situations. Another similar proportion (28.1%) of learners rate their ability to manage their emotions and frustration as being low. A higher proportion (37.5%) of subjects see that they are able to manage and control themselves in some ambiguous intercultural situations. Only (6.3%) of subjects are highly able to manage emotions like discomfort, tension and frustration in vague situations.

*VI.4.1.5.Learners curiosity to learn more about the target culture in SAS1.*

Table 27

*Learners Curiosity to Learn more About the Target Culture in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 7 | 21.9% | |
| 1 | 9 | 28.1% | 1.38 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 3 | 9.6% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
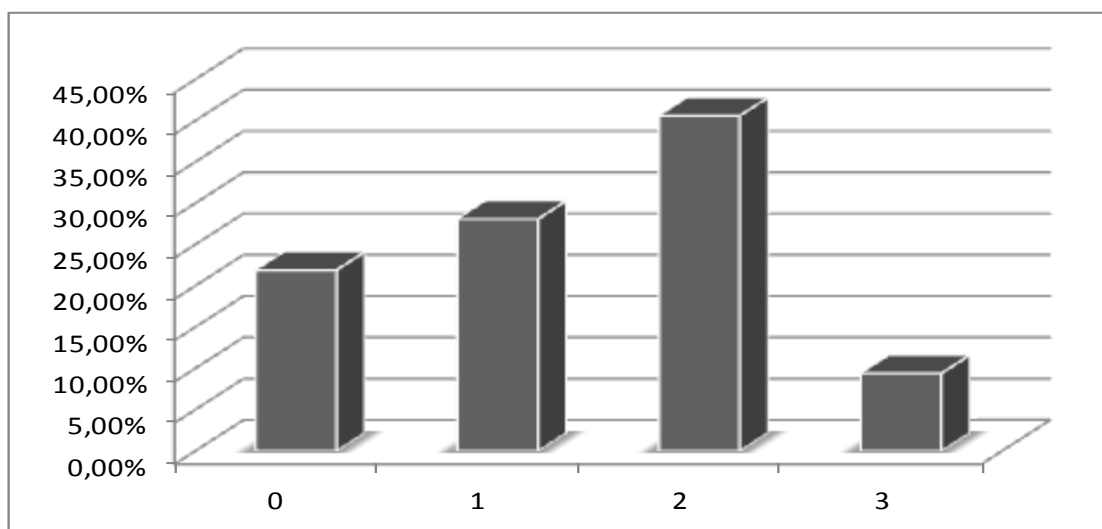


*Figure 23.* Learners curiosity to learn more about the  TC in SAS1.

The table (27)  shows that (21.9%) of learners are not curious at all to learn more about

the target culture's values,  beliefs and behaviors probably because they do not value the target

cultural aspects as revealed in item (3) or because their inability to manage unclarity and

vagueness in intercultural situations dampens their curiosity and their willingness to know

more about the target culture. Other learners that represent (28.1%) of the sample rate their

willingness to learn cultural issues as being low. Yet, (40.6%) of learners express their

moderate willingness and interest in learning some cultural aspects from the target

community. Moreover, a small proportion of learners (9.4%) possess a high willingness to

know everything about the target culture.

### VI.4.1.6. Learners ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target cultural situations in SAS1.

Table 28

*Learners Ability to Adapt Their Behaviors to the Requirement of TC in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 15 | 46.9% | |
| 1 | 13 | 40.6% | 1.38 |
| 2 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| 3 | 1 | 3.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
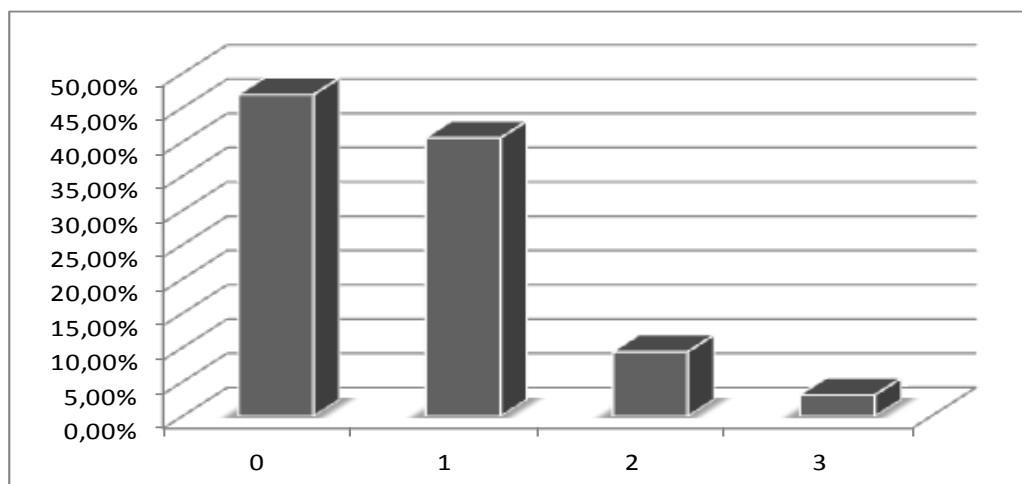


*Figure 24.* Learners ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of TC in SAS1.

The figures presented in the table demonstrate that the majority of learners (46.9%) are not ready to adjust their behaviors to communicate in the target cultural situation. Also, a high proportion of learners (40.6%) are hardly able to adapt their behaviors. On the other hand, (9.4%) of subjects rate their ability to adapt their behaviors to communicate appropriately as intermediate while only (3.1%) of subjects state that they communicate and behave in the ways that are completely appropriate to the target culture in intercultural encounters.

### VI.4.1.7. Learners ability to see things from different perspectives in SAS1.

Table 29

*Learners Ability to See Things and Situations From Different Perspectives in SAS1*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 17 | 53.1% | |
| 1 | 13 | 40.6% | 0.53 |
| 2 | 2 | 6.3% | |
| 3 | 0 | 0% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
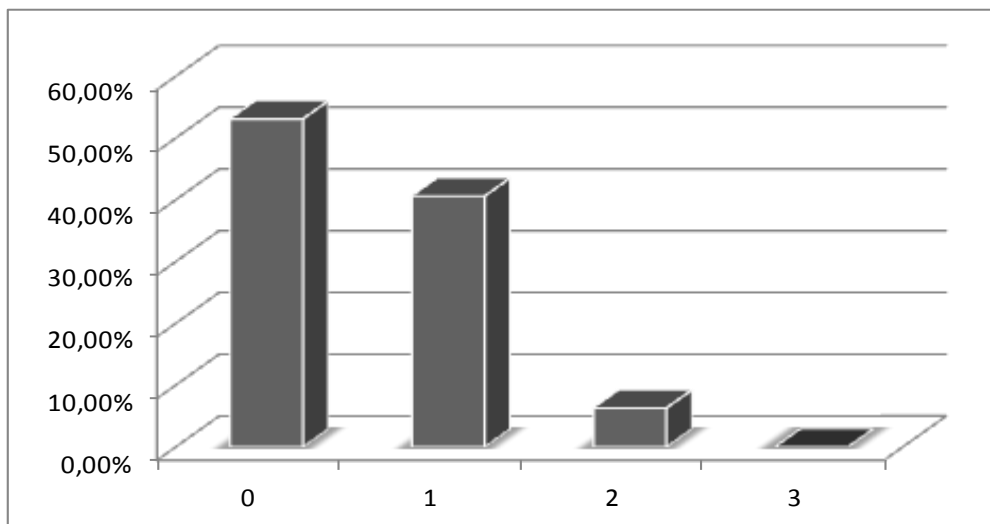
*Figure 25.* Learners ability to see things and situations from different perspectives in SAS1.

The table shows that more than the half of the sample (53.1%) are completely unable to put themselves in other people's shoes. Besides, (40.6%) of subjects are scarcely able to see situations through the eyes of other people from the target community. Yet, a small proportion of learners (6.3%) can understand some of other people's thoughts and feelings, and no one is able to fully put themselves in other people's shoes.

***VI.4.1.8.Comparison of the Means in all the Components of Attitudes in SAS1***

Table 30

*Comparison of the Means of all the Components of Attitudes in SAS1*

| Components of Attitudes | Means |
|---|---|
| Acceptance | 1.78 |
| Openness | 1.19 |
| Respect for Otherness | 1.5 |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | 1.22 |
| Curiosity | 1.38 |
| Adaptability | 0.69 |
| Empathy | 0.53 |
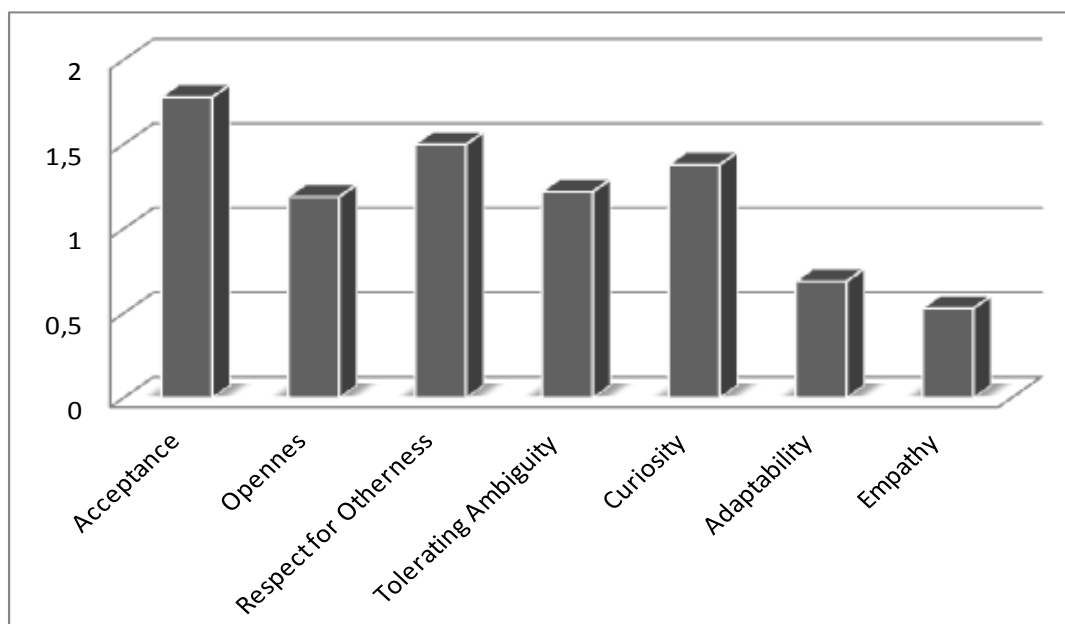


*Figure 26.* Comparison of the means of all the components of attitudes in SAS1.

The figure (26) shows that the majority of learners' defensive attitudes and rejection of the target culture are decreasing and positively changing to be close to reach the intermediate level of the acceptance represented by (2) in the scale. However, they still think that their cultural viewpoints are more valid than the others'. Moreover, they have some difficulties to Withhold judgments and stereotypes. In addition, learners' overall readiness to respect the target cultural practices and beliefs is situated between the low and the intermediate levels probably because they do not sufficiently accept the cultural differences, nor are they fully aware of the necessity to overcome their negative prejudice and stereotypes. Learners from the same sample display low tolerance for ambiguity in intercultural communication. Hence, they view intercultural situations less enjoyable. Consequently, they show low readiness and minor interest in learning about the target culture. Besides, they are not able to adjust their behaviors and integrate different beliefs and values from the other culture to communicate in intercultural situations as they cannot understand other people's thoughts and feelings to see and feel a situation through their eyes. These results reveal that the attitude component that obtained the highest score is acceptance while the weakest scores are observed in the adaptability and the empathy of learners.

### VI.4.2. Self-assessment survey number two (SAS2).

In the second session, the teacher tackled the link between gender differences and the use of certain linguistic forms with reference to the native as well as the target speech communities. At the end, another self-assessment survey has been administered to evaluate and check any change in their attitudes in terms of acceptance, openness, respect for otherness, tolerating ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability, and empathy. The results obtained from the seconf self-assessment survey are presented in the following tables and figures :

*VI.4.2.1.Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS2.*

Table 31

*Learners Acceptance of Cultural Differences in SAS2*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 1 | 3.1% | |
| 1 | 3 | 9.4% | 2.13 |
| 2 | 19 | 59.4% | |
| 3 | 9 | 28.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
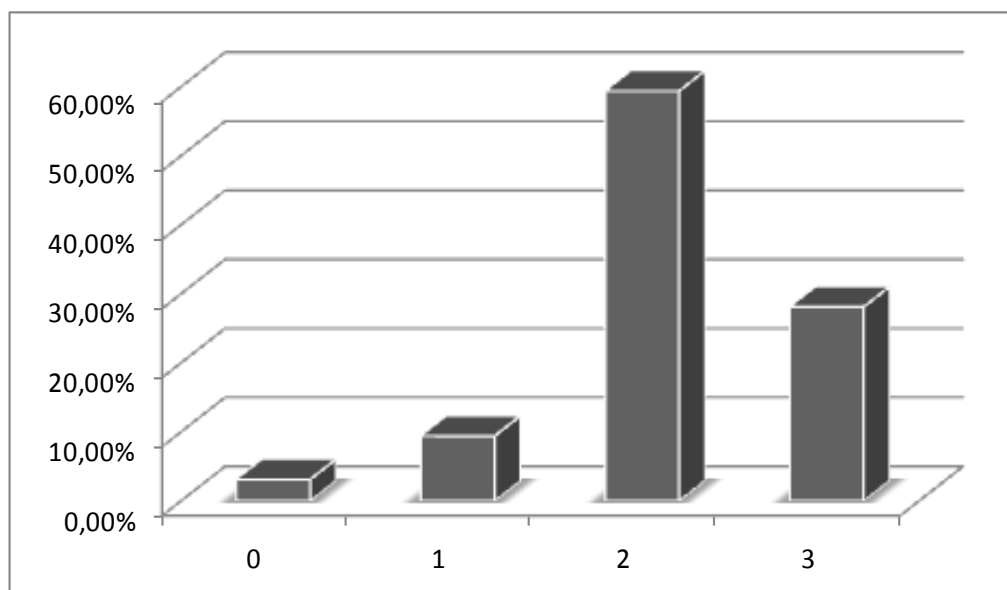


*Figure 27.* Learners' acceptance of cultural differences in SAS2.

The table reveals that, unlike the results of the first self-assessment survey, only one learner (3.1%) rejects the cultural diversity of perspectives, behaviors and values. This means that this learner believes that people share the same values and perspectives. Besides, (9.4%)

of learners rate their readiness to accept the cultural differences as being low since they try to minimize the possible cultural differences. On the other hand, a high proportion of subjects (59.4%) accept the cultural differences in some situations, but they still deny some differences. Moreover, (28.1%) of learners highly accept and recognize how perspectives, behaviors and values function differently in the target culture since they gained more cultural understanding.

### VI.4.2.2.Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS2.

Table 32

*Learners Ability to Avoid Stereotypes in SAS2*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 5 | 15.6% | |
| 1 | 6 | 18.8% | 1.75 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 8 | 25% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
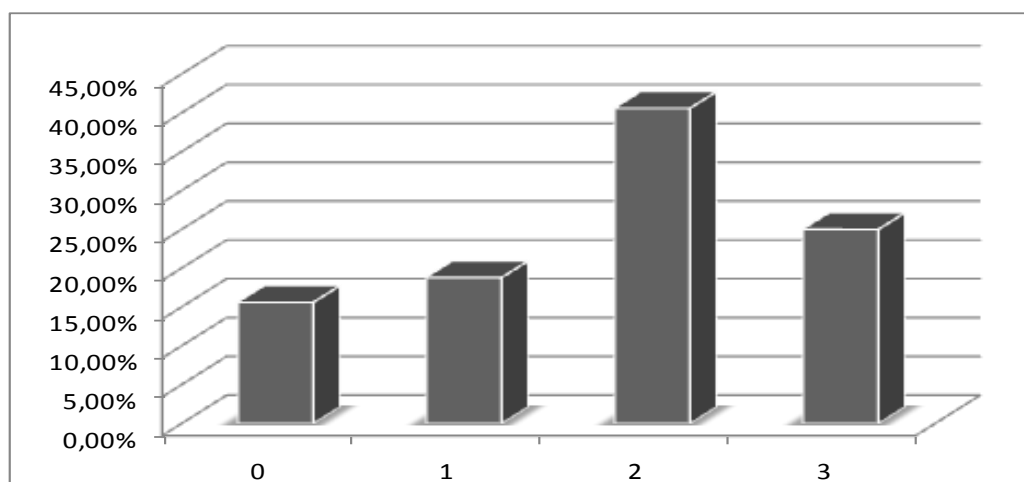


*Figure 28.* Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS2**.**

The results presented in the table show that (15.6%) of learners are still holding negative attitudes towards the target culture. They act in an ethnocentric way since they do not suspend the stereotypes and the prejudice they already internalized in their minds. A slightly higher proportion of learners (18.8%) rarely avoid dealing with the target culture in a judgmental way. Furthermore, the majority of learners (40.6%) sometimes suspend prejudice and stereotypes when valuing and perceiving the target culture. Moreover, (25%) of learners claim that they are highly able to respond positively to the target culture without relying on misleading generalizations like stereotypes and prejudice.

### VI.4.2.3. Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS2.

Table 33

*Learners  Respect of Cultural Diversity*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 2 | 6.3% | |
| 1 | 4 | 12.5% | 2 |
| 2 | 18 | 56.2% | |
| 3 | 8 | 25% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |

.
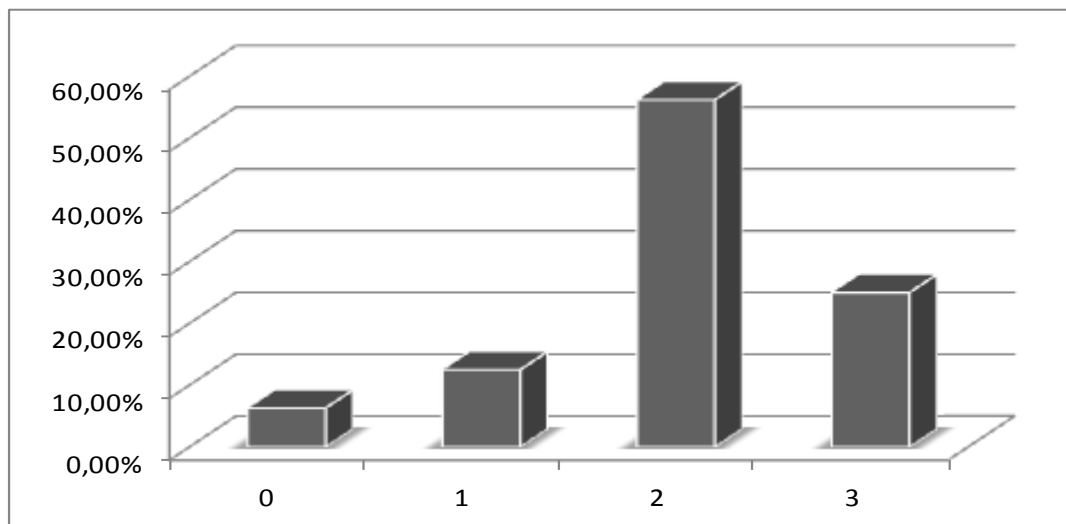
*Figure 29.* Learners' respect of cultural diversity in SAS2.

As shown in the table, (6.3%) of learners do not appreciate the cultural diversity in terms of values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Besides, (12.5%) of learners evaluate their respect and appreciation of the target cultural beliefs and behaviors as being low. In contrast, the majority of learners (56.2%) display a moderate level of respect towards some of the target cultural practices and behaviors while (25%) of learners display a high level of respect and positive regard towards the diverse cultural perspectives.

### VI.4.2.4.Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in SAS2.

Table 34

*Learners Management of Their Emotions in Ambiguous Intercultural Situations in SAS2*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 5 | 15.6% | |
| 1 | 6 | 18.8% | 1.66 |
| 2 | 16 | 50% | |
| 3 | 5 | 15.6% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
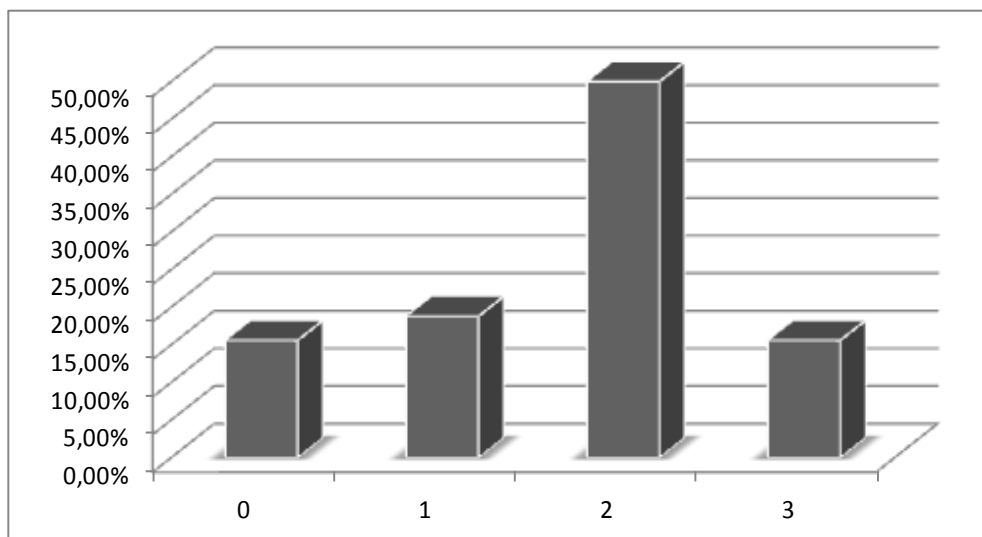


Figure 30. Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in  SAS2.

The figures displayed in the table demonstrate that (15.6%) of learners are completely unable to manage their emotions and frustration in ambiguous intercultural situations. Another similar proportion (18.8%) of learners are barely able to manage stress and frustration in unfamiliar situations. Yet, a higher proportion of subjects (50%) try to cope with some ambiguous and challenging intercultural situations while (15.6%) of subjects are highly able to cope with vague intercultural situations with less discomfort.

### VI.4.2.5. Learners curiosity to learn more about the target culture in SAS2.

Table 35

*Learners Curiosity to Learn more about the TC in SAS2*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| 1 | 5 | 15.6% | 1.97 |
| 2 | 14 | 43.8% | |
| 3 | 9 | 31.2% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |

*Note. TC= Target culture*
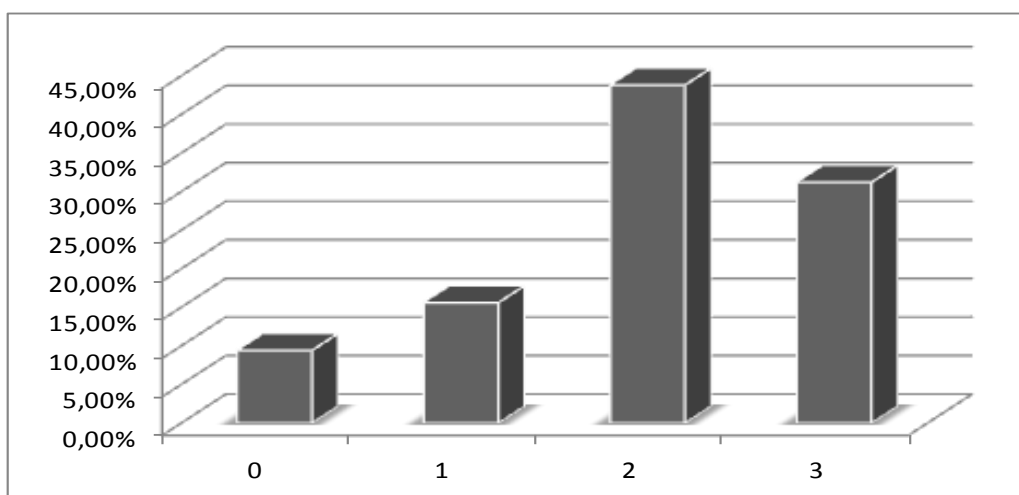


*Figure 31*. Learners curiosity to learn more about the TC in SAS2.

The table reveals that (9.4%) of learners show no interest in learning the target culture's values,  beliefs and behaviors. Such ethnocentric attitude can be justified by the rejection of the cultural differences (as shown in item 1), the denigration of the target culture (as shown in item 2 & 3) or the avoidance of unfamiliar situations (as shown in item 4). Besides, (15.6%) of learners show low willingness to learn more about the target culture. However, (43.8%) of learners have a moderate willingness and desire to learn some cultural behaviors, values and beliefs, and  (31.2%) of subjects demonstrate a high willingness and interest in learning everything about the target culture.

***VI.4.2.6. Learners ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target cultural situations in SAS2.***

Table 36

*Learners Ability to Adapt Their Behaviors to the Requirement of the TC in SAS2.*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 10 | 31.2% | |
| 1 | 11 | 34.4% | 1.13 |
| 2 | 8 | 25% | |
| 3 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
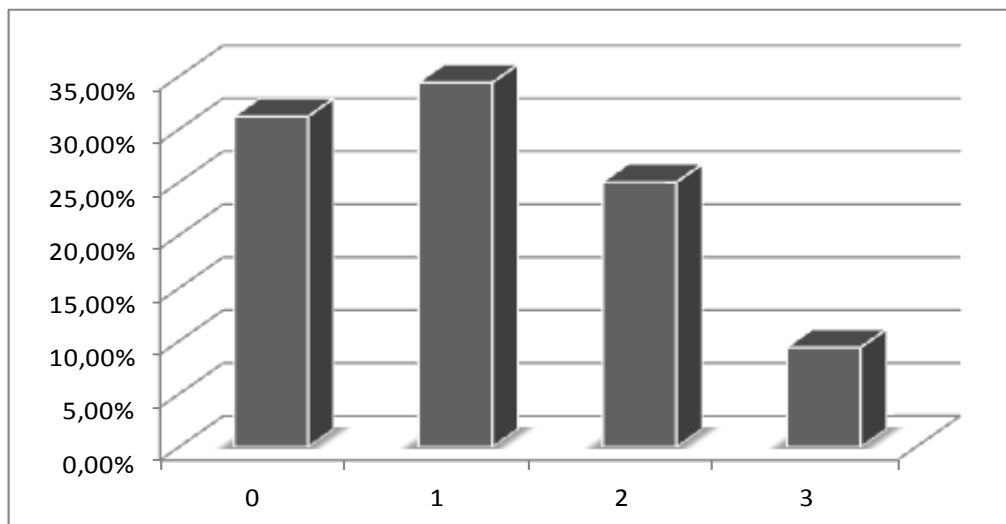
*Figure 32.* Learners ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the TC in

SAS2.

The table shows that (31.2%) of learners refuse to change and adjust their behaviors to

communicate with people from the target culture. Furthermore, a high proportion of learners

(34.4%) hardly adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target culture. On the other

hand, (25%) of learners rate their ability to adapt their behavior as being intermediate while

only (9.4%) of subjects state that their ability to communicate and behave in ways that are

completely appropriate to the target culture is high.

***VI.4.2.7.Learners ability to see things and situations from different perspectives in***

   ***SAS2.***

Table 37

*Learners* Ability to See Things and Situations From Different Perspectives in SAS2

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 14 | 43.8% | |
| 1 | 11 | 34.4% | 0.84 |
| 2 | 5 | 15.5% | |
| 3 | 2 | 6.3% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
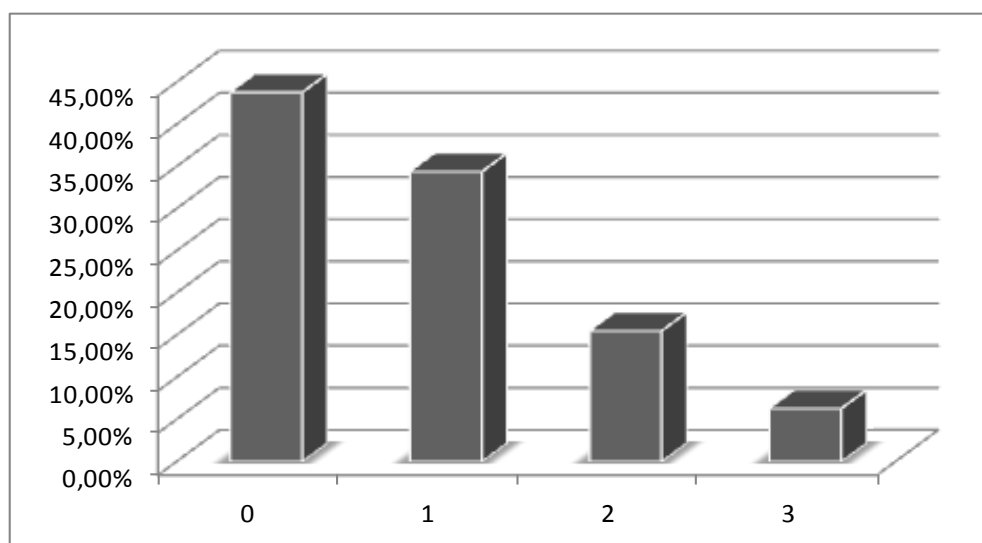


Figure 33. Learners ability to see things and situations from different perspectives in

SAS2.

The table shows that (43.8%) of learners are completely unable to perceive situations

through the eyes of individuals from target cultures. Consequently, they respond in all

situations according to their own worldviews. Besides, (34.4%) of learners are hardly able to understand and interpret situations as other people from the target community do. In contrast, (15.5%) of learners can understand some of other people's thoughts and feelings while only (6.3%) of learners are able to put themselves in other people's shoes by recognizing their feelings and their thoughts.

### VI.4.2.8. Comparison of the means of all the components of attitudes in SAS2.

Table 38

Comparison of the Means of all the components of Attitudes in SAS2

| Components of Attitudes | Means |
|---|---|
| Acceptance | 2.13 |
| Openness | 1.75 |
| Respect for Otherness | 2 |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | 1.66 |
| Curiosity | 1.97 |
| Adaptability | 1.33 |
| Empathy | 0.84 |
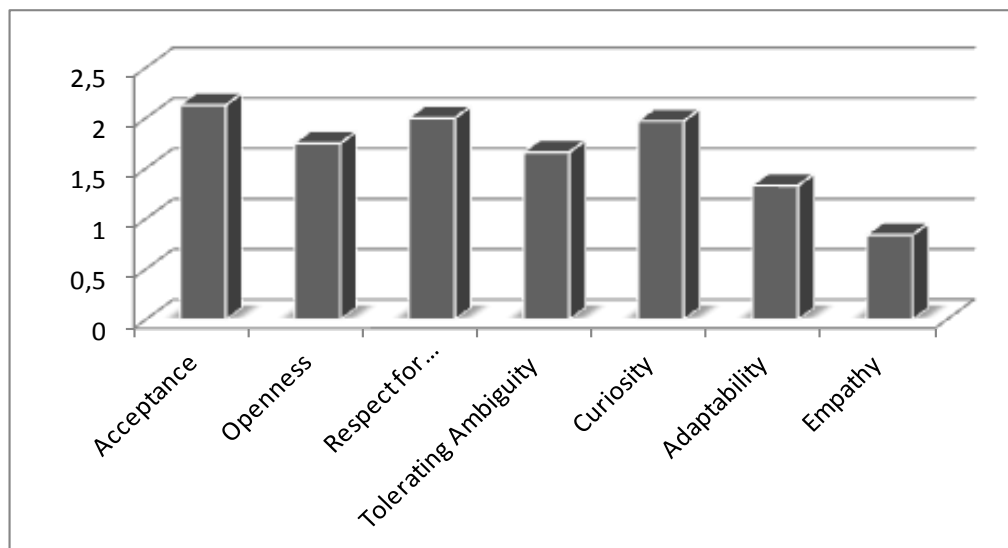
*Figure 34.* Comparison of the means of all the components of attitudes in SAS2.

The results of the second self-assessment survey reveal a general upward change and progress in each of the components that constitute learners' attitudes. Learners' answers to Item (1) indicate a positive development in their acceptance of the cultural differences as compared to the results of the first survey. The majority of learners start to recognize that people from different cultures do not necessarily share the same beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and perspectives. Yet, they still believe that some aspects can only be seen from their own worldview. Thus, learners succeeded in reaching the intermediate level as far as acceptance is concerned. Furthermore, learners' readiness to develop less judgmental attitudes when dealing with the target culture is also increasing to be close to the intermediate level, but in some situations, they fail to avoid many stereotypes and prejudice. Moreover, the majority of learners reached an intermediate level of respect and appreciation of the foreign cultural values, beliefs, behaviors and perspectives, but they also hold some negative attitudes towards the target culture that may be caused by their internalized prejudice and stereotypes. The results of item (4) demonstrate that learners are more able to tolerate and manage their discomfort, frustration and stress when they find themselves in vague intercultural situations,

but they did not reach the intermediate level because they find that such situations are not very enjoyable. In addition, their willingness and their desire to learn some cultural knowledge approximate the intermediate level. Also, we noticed that learners' ability to adjust their behavior is progressing, but it is low as they are still responding to cultural situations according to their perceptions without taking into account other people's feelings and beliefs. The results of the second self-assessment instrument reveal that some components like acceptance, openness, respect, tolerance and curiosity are highly developed than other components like adaptability and empathy.

### VI.4.3. Self-assessment survey number three (SAS3).

The third self-assessment tool has been administered to assess learners' progress in their acceptance, openness, respect, tolerance, curiosity, adaptability and empathy after introducing and discussing gender stereotypes, sexism and address terms used by both genders in the native and the target speech communities. The results are reported and analyzed in the following tables and figures.

#### VI.4.3.1. *Learners acceptance of differences in cultural perspectives, behaviors, and values in SAS3.*

Table 39

*Learners Acceptance of Cultural Differences in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.56 |
| 2 | 14 | 43.8% | |
| 3 | 13 | 56.2% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
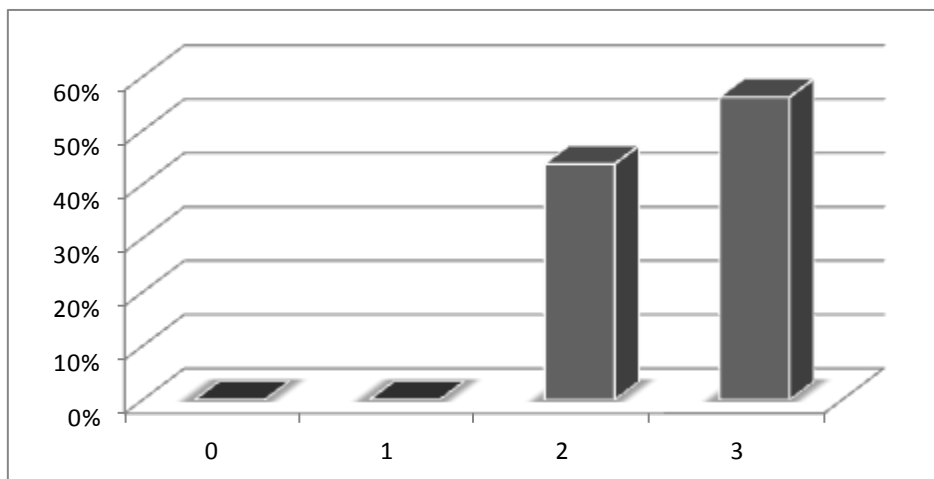
*Figure 35*. Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS3.

The table reveals that learners' degree of acceptance changed positively since no one still extremely denies the cultural differences. While (43.8%) of learners have an intermediate ability to accept the differences in cultural perspectives, behaviors and values, (56.2%) of learners are highly able to accept cultural diversity.

### VI.4.3.2. Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS3.

Table 40

*Learners Ability to Avoid Stereotypes in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 1 | 3.1% | |
| 1 | 1 | 6.3% | 2.35 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 16 | 50% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
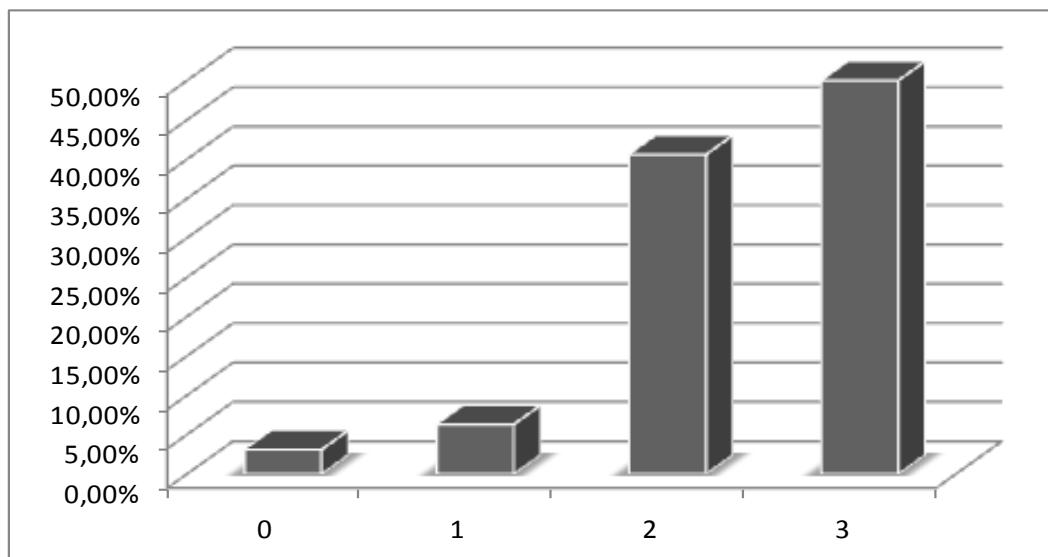
*Figure 36.* Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS3.

The table shows that only one subject (3.1%) is still sticking to the prejudice and the stereotypes he/she holds about the foreign culture and two subjects (6.3%) can hardly avoid them. Nevertheless, (40.6%) of learners are able to suspend these misleading images in many cultural occasions while (50%) of learners are highly able to avoid and discard them.

### VI.4.3.3. Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS3.

Table 41

*Learners Respect of Cultural Diversity in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 2 | 6.3% | 2.47 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 17 | 53.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
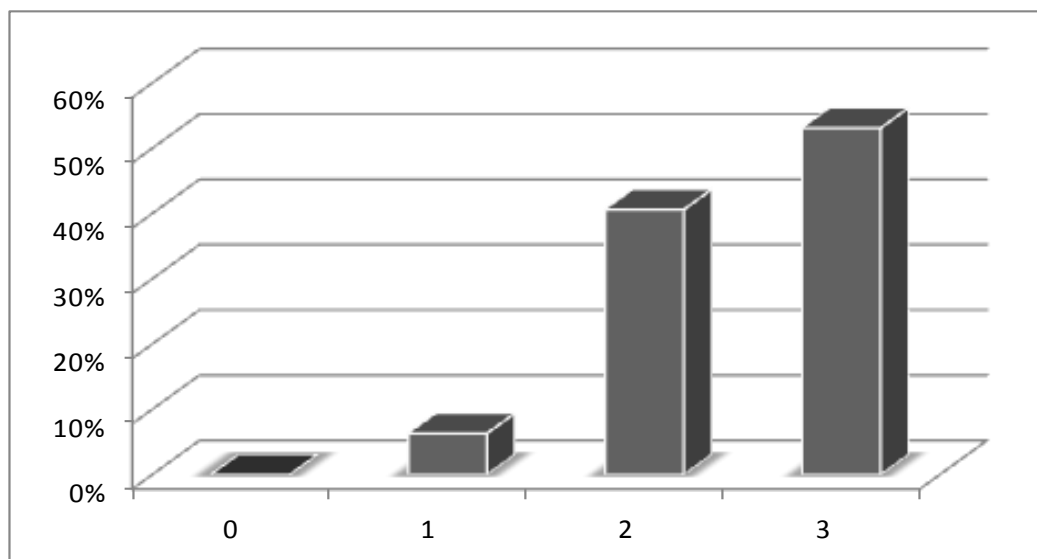
*Figure 37.* Learners' respect of cultural diversity in SAS3.

The table reveals that all students appreciate and value some aspects of the target culture with different degrees. At this stage, (6.3%) of learners state that their appreciation of cultural diversity is low. Yet, (40.6%) of learners regard their appreciation of the cultural differences in terms of attitudes, behaviors and beliefs as being intermediate. Besides, the proportion that represents those who highly value and respect the cultural diversity has increased to reach (53.1%).

### VI.4.3.4.Learners' management of their emotions and frustration in ambiguous intercultural situations in SAS3.

Table 42

*Learners' Management of Their Emotions in Intercultural Situations in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 1 | 3.1% | |
| 1 | 3 | 9.4% | 2.31 |
| 2 | 17 | 53.1% | |
| 3 | 11 | 34.4% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
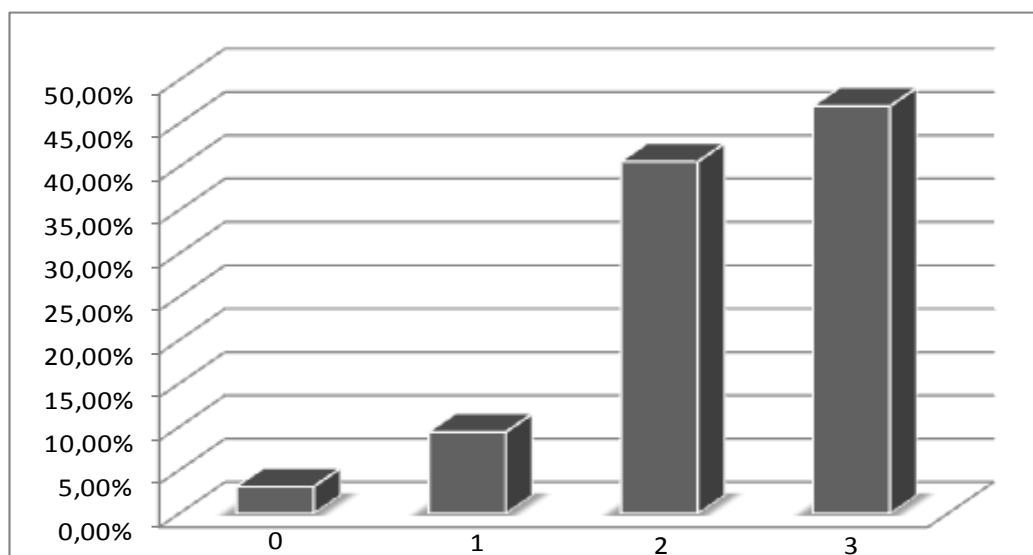


*Figure 38.* Learners' management of their emotions in intercultural situations in SAS3.

As shown in figure (38), the third self-assessment reveals that learners start enjoying ambiguities since only (3.1%) of learners cannot manage their emotions and frustration in

ambiguous intercultural situations while (9.4%) of learners can hardly respond to ambiguity with less frustration and negative emotions. On the other hand, (40.6%) of learners start to learn how to cope with ambiguous situations, and (46.9%) are highly tolerant for unclear situations.

### VI.4.3.5. Learners' curiosity to learn more about the target culture in SAS3.

Table 43

*Learners' Curiosity to Learn more about the Target Culture in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 2 | 6.3% | 2.47 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 17 | 53.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
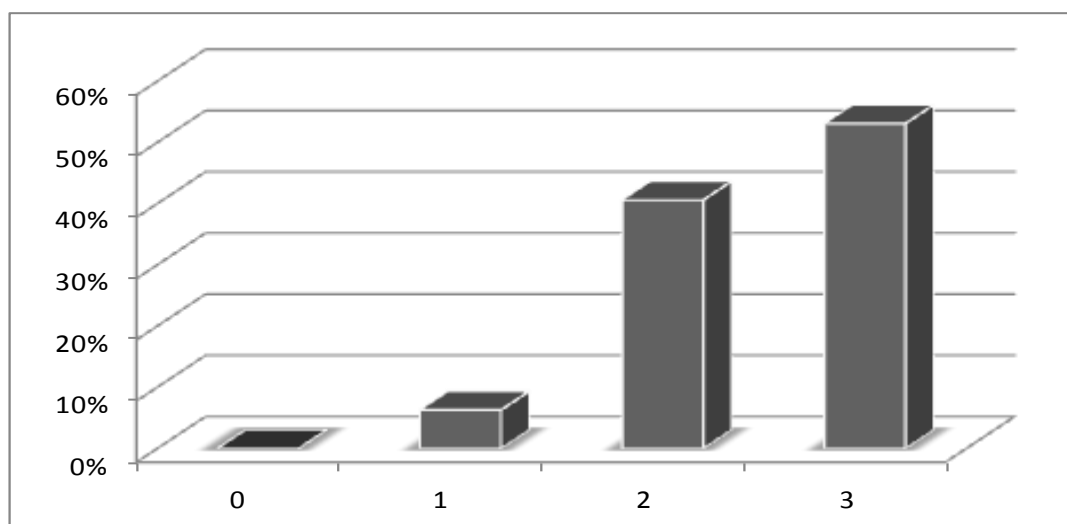


*Figure 39.* Learners' curiosity to learn more about the TC in SAS3.

Learners' answers in item (5) demonstrate that they are less ethnocentric and more curious to learn the target cultural practices, values and behaviors since only (6.3%) of learners displayed a limited willingness to learn about and low interest in the target culture. Nevertheless, (40.6%) of learners assess their curiosity to know more about the target culture as being intermediate while (53.1%) of learners are highly eager to learn the different aspects of the target culture.

### VI.4.3.6. Learners' ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target cultural situations in SAS3.

Table 44

*Learners' Ability to Adapt Their Behaviors to the Requirement of TC in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 4 | 12.5% | |
| 1 | 7 | 21.9% | 1.81 |
| 2 | 12 | 37.5% | |
| 3 | 9 | 28.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
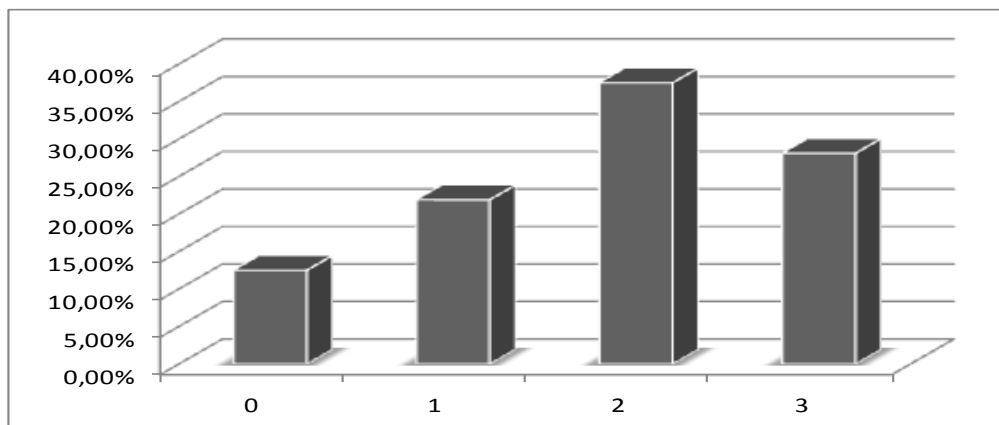
*Figure 40.* Learners' ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of TC in SAS3**.**

Table (44) demonstrates that the proportion of learners who refuse to adjust their behaviors when they communicate with people from the target culture decreased to (12.5%) beside the proportion of those who hardly adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target culture that decreased to (21.9%). On the other hand, a high proportion of learners (37.5%) have an intermediate ability to adapt their behavior while (28.1%) of learners rate their ability to communicate and behave in the ways that are completely appropriate to the target culture as being high.

### VI.4.3.7.Learners ability to see things and situations from Different Perspectives in SAS3.

Table 45

*Learners Ability to See Things and Situations From Different Perspectives in SAS3*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 5 | 15.6% | |
| 1 | 6 | 18.8% | 1.75 |
| 2 | 13 | 40.6% | |
| 3 | 8 | 25% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
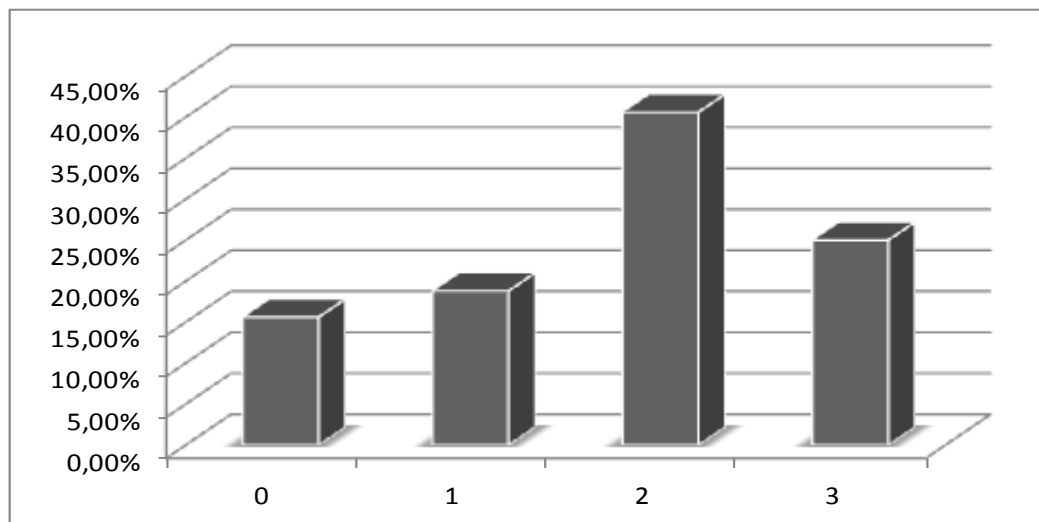
*Figure 41.* Learners ability to see things and situations from different perspectives in

SAS3.


The figure (41) shows that learners are developing empathetic attitudes towards people

from other cultures reflected in the decreased proportion of learners who are totally unable to

perceive situations through the eyes of individuals from the target cultures (15.6%) as well as

learners who are hardly able to understand and interpret situations as other people from the

target community do (18.8%). On the other hand, (40.6%) of learners try to understand some

of other people's thoughts and feelings, and (25%) of learners are highly able to put

themselves in other people's shoes by taking into account their feelings and their thoughts.

### VI.4.3.8. *Comparison of the calculated means in all the components of attitudes in SAS3.*

Table 46

*Comparison of the Means of all the components of Attitudes in SAS3*

| Components of Attitudes | Means |
|:---:|:---:|
| Acceptance | 2.56 |
| Openness | 2.38 |
| Respect for Otherness | 2.47 |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | 2.31 |
| Curiosity | 2.47 |
| Adaptability | 1.81 |
| Empathy | 1.75 |
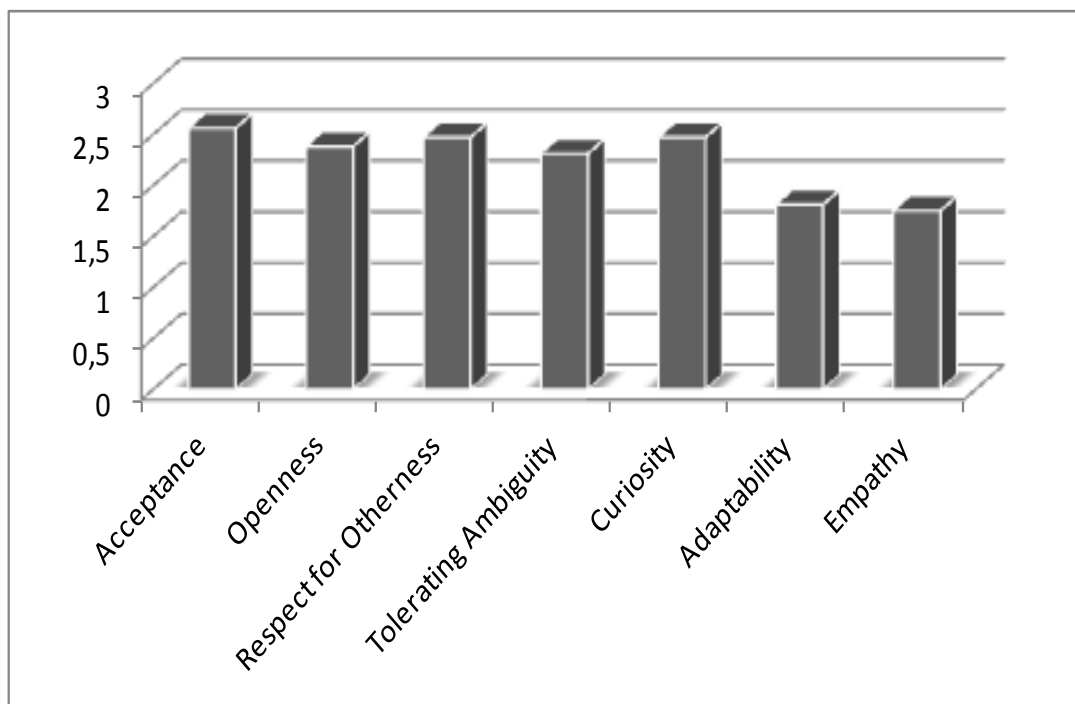
*Figure 42.* Comparison of the means in all the components of attitudes in SAS3.

The results obtained from the third self-assessment survey reveal that learners' attitudes have positively progressed during this stage. Their ethnocentric and defensive views have been reduced as they have become more familiar with the target cultural aspects. They accept more the fact that people have different worldviews, perceptions, behaviors and beliefs because of their cultural differences. They show more openness and readiness to respond to the target cultural group in a less judgmental way as they start enjoying challenges that can be caused by the potential ambiguities that characterize intercultural situations. Besides, they become more curious to discover new aspects related to the target culture. Furthermore, they start to adapt their behaviors to be appropriate in intercultural situations, and they develop some empathic attitudes towards the target culture. Nevertheless, the progress of these qualities (adaptability and empathy) is, relatively, delayed as compared to other components like acceptance. We believe that these complicated elements need further time and further exposure to the target culture to achieve a high level.

### VI.4.4. Self- assessment survey number four (SAS4).

Since the development of attitudes is a continuous process,  a fourth self-assessment survey has been administered to students in the experimental group after highlighting the concept of euphemism, explaining how and when it is used in the native as well as in the target speech communities and practicing some euphemistic expressions in different situations. The results obtained from this instrument are organized and presented in the following tables.

***VI.4.4.1.Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS4.***

Table 47

*Learners Acceptance of Cultural Differences in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.88 |
| 2 | 4 | 12.5% | |
| 3 | 28 | 87.5% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |

.
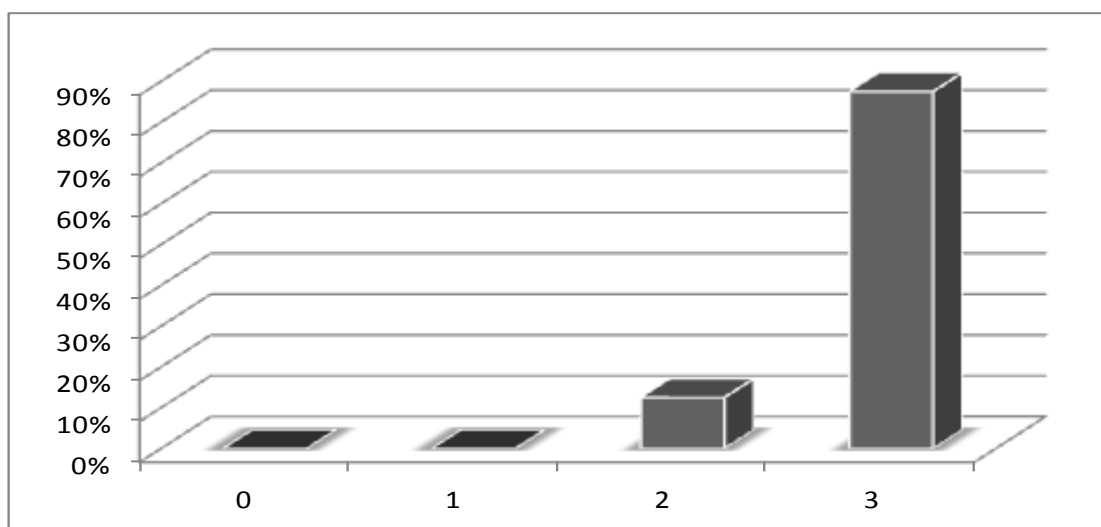


*Figure 43*. Learners acceptance of cultural differences in SAS4.

As shown in the table, the overwhelming majority of learners (87.5%) highly accept the idea that people have different perspectives, behaviors, beliefs and values because they represent different cultures whereas only (12.5%) of learners still think that some cultural differences are not acceptable.

### VI.4.4.2. *Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS4.*

Table 48

*Learners Ability to Avoid Stereotypes in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.75 |
| 2 | 8 | 25% | |
| 3 | 24 | 75% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
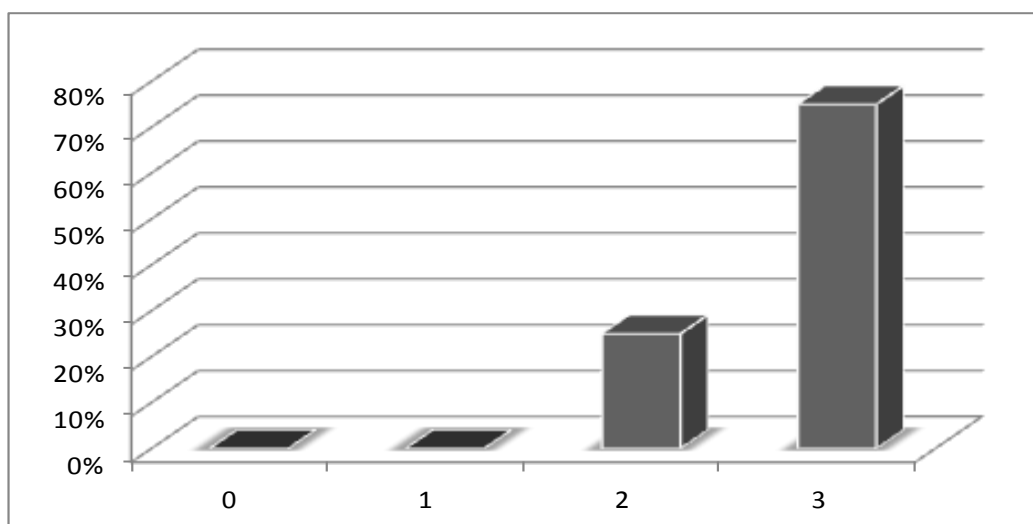


*Figure 44.* Learners ability to avoid stereotypes in SAS4.

The table shows that, at this stage, the majority of learners (75%) highly succeeded in suspending the influence of prejudice and stereotypes on their perceptions of the cultural otherness. However, there is a small proportion of learners (25%) who have an intermediate ability to avoid these misguiding judgments.

*VI.4.4.3.Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS4.*

Table 49

*Learners Respect of Cultural Diversity in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.78 |
| 2 | 7 | 21.9% | |
| 3 | 25 | 78.1% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
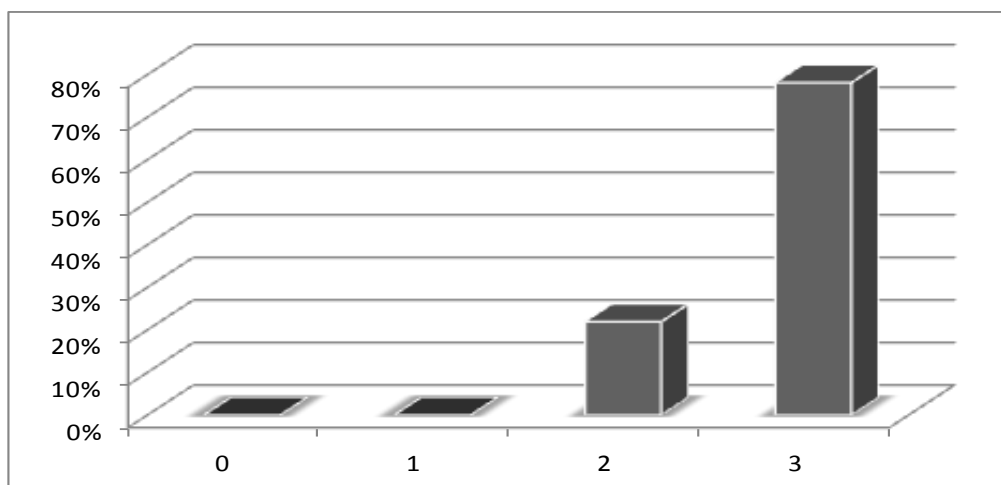


*Figure 45.* Learners respect of cultural diversity in SAS4.

The table reveals that (78.1%) of learners highly appreciate and value cultural diversity whereas (21.9%) of learners state that their appreciation of cultural diversity is intermediate. Such positive progress in learners' attitudes demonstrates that they do not have an ethnocentric perception of the target culture.

### VI.4.4.4. Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in SAS4.

Table 50

*Learners' Management of Their Emotions in Ambiguous Intercultural Situations in SAS4.*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.84 |
| 2 | 5 | 15.6% | |
| 3 | 27 | 84.4% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
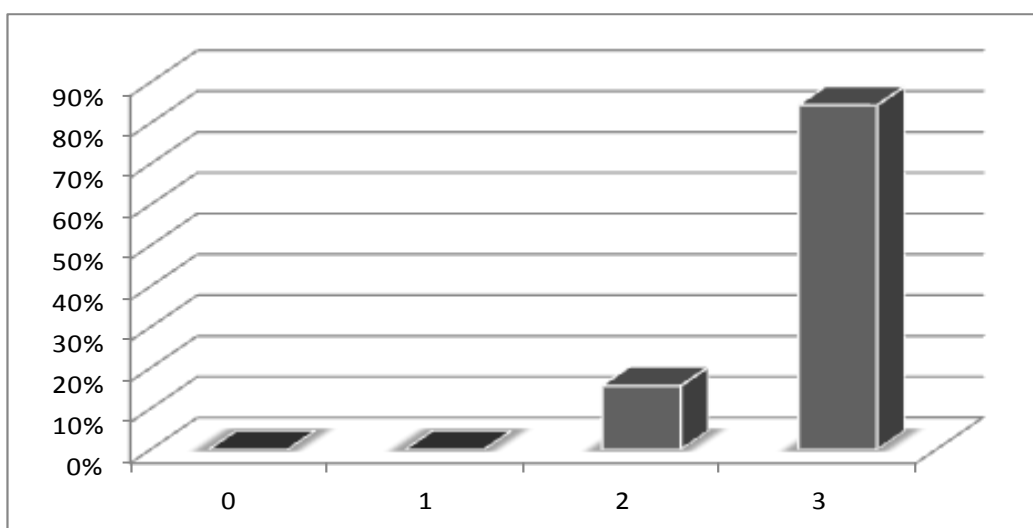


*Figure 46.* Learners' management of their emotions in ambiguous intercultural situations in SAS4.

As shown in table (50), the majority of learners are now able to deal with ambiguous intercultural situations with little discomfort since they find these unfamiliar situations

enjoyable and challenging opportunities. On the other hand, only (15.6%) of learners still

have an intermediate ability to cope with ambiguous situations.

### VI.4.4.5. Learners' curiosity to learn more about the target culture in SAS4.

Table 51

*Learners' Curiosity to Learn more About the T C in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 0 | 0% | 2.91 |
| 2 | 3 | 9.4% | |
| 3 | 29 | 90.6% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
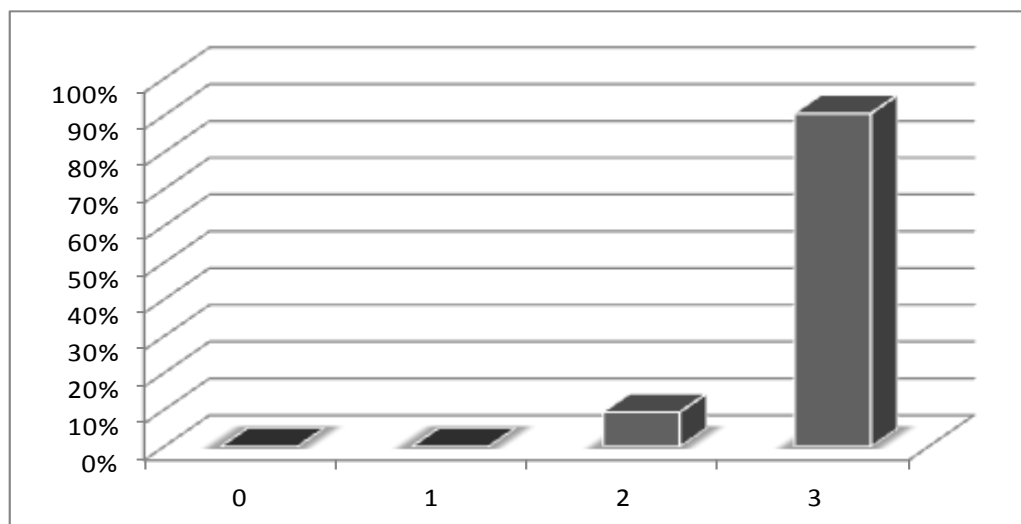


*Figure 47.* Learners' curiosity to learn more about the TC in SAS4.

At this stage, the overwhelming majority of learners (90.6%) are highly curious to

learn more about the target cultural practices, values, behaviors and attitudes while only

(9.4%) of learners assess their curiosity to know more target culture as being intermediate

probably because some depreciated aspects in the target culture affect negatively their

acceptance, openness, respect and curiosity.

### VI.4.4.6. Learners' ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target cultural situations in SAS4.

Table 52

*Learners Ability to Adapt Their Behaviors to the Requirement of the T C in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 1 | 3.1% | 2.69 |
| 2 | 8 | 25% | |
| 3 | 23 | 71.9% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
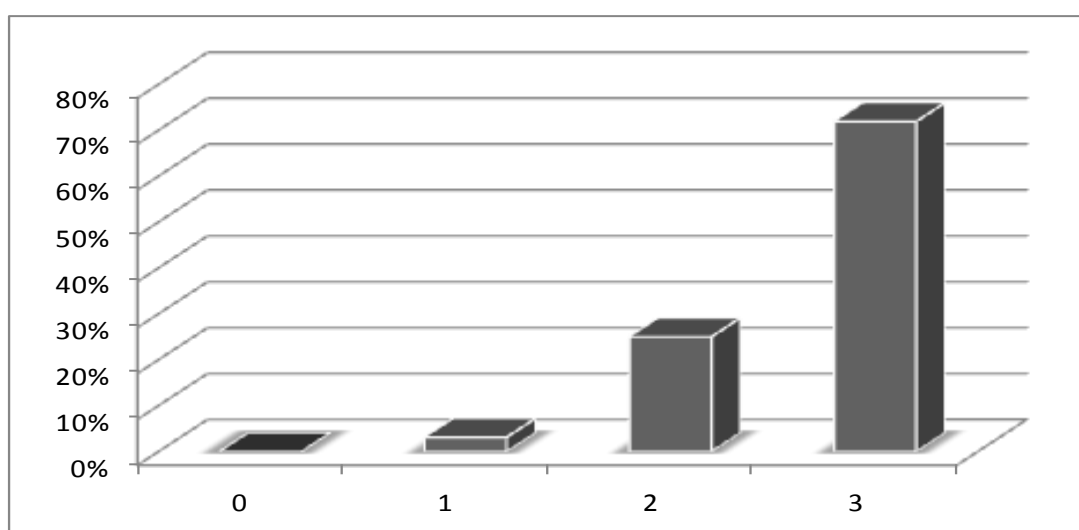


*Figure 48.* Learners' ability to adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the TC in SAS4.

The results obtained from students answers indicate that learners' ability to behave appropriately in the target cultural situations has positively been improved since (71.9%) of learners are, to a great extent, able to communicate and behave in ways that are appropriate to the target culture in intercultural encounters while (25%) of learners have an intermediate ability to adapt their behavior. On the other hand, a very small proportion of learners (3.1%) can hardly adapt their behaviors to the requirement of the target culture.

### VI.4.4.7. Learners ability to see things from different perspectives in SAS4.

Table 53

*Learners Ability to See Things From Different Perspectives in SAS4*

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage | Mean |
|-------|-----------|------------|------|
| 0 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1 | 2 | 6.3% | 2.56 |
| 2 | 10 | 31.2% | |
| 3 | 20 | 62.5% | |
| Total | 32 | 100% | |
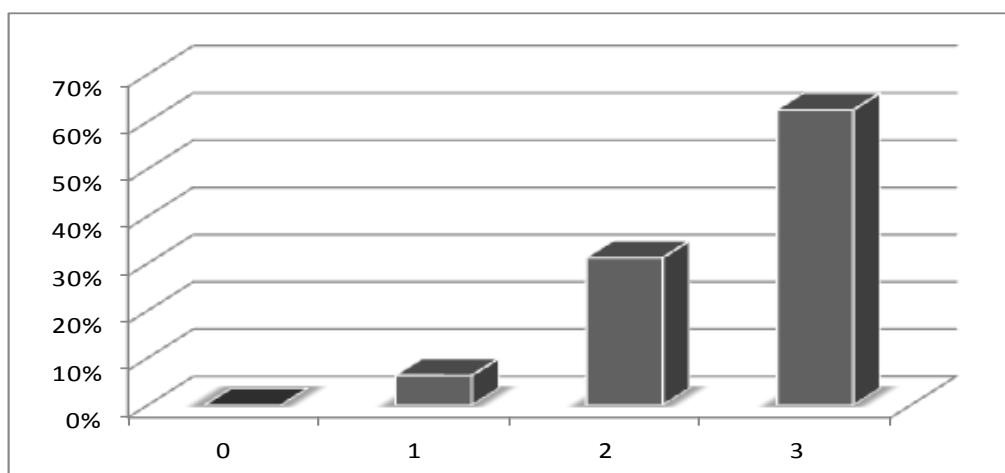


*Figure 49.* Learners' ability to see things from different perspectives in SAS4.

The table shows that learners' ability to perceive things and situations from the other's points of view increased. For instance, (62.5%) of learners are, to a great extent, able to see situations through the eye of the others, and (31.2%) of learners try to understand some of other people's thoughts and feelings. Nevertheless, (6.3%) of students are hardly able to perceive situations as people from the target culture do.

### VI.4.4.8. Comparison of the means of all the components of attitudes in SAS4.

Table 54

*Comparison of the Means of all the components of Attitudes in SAS4*

| Components of Attitudes | Means |
|---|---|
| Acceptance | 2.88 |
| Openness | 2. 75 |
| Respect for Otherness | 2.78 |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | 2.84 |
| Curiosity | 2.91 |
| Adaptability | 1.69 |
| Empathy | 1.56 |
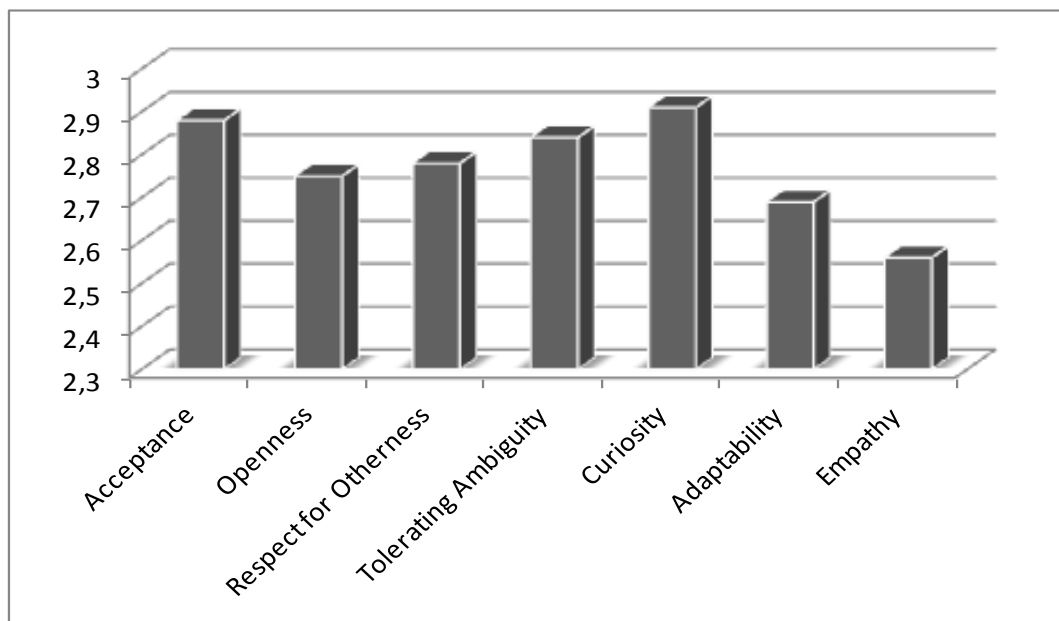
*Figure 50*. Comparison of the means of all the components of attitudes in SAS4.

The answers of the fourth self-assessment survey reflect a significant progress in learners' attitudes during this stage. The majority of them strongly support the validity of different viewpoints, beliefs, values and behaviors of individuals from a different culture. Consequently, they appreciate and respect the target cultural practices and beliefs to a great extent. Furthermore, they highly become more objective as they withhold biased judgments like stereotypes and prejudice that could prevent them from perceiving the real meaning of the world. Moreover, they are more able to react to ambiguous intercultural situations with less visible discomfort and stress because they view that such situations are enjoyable and challenging experiences. Besides, the majority of subjects express their strong willingness and interest to expand their cultural knowledge to use it in real intercultural situations. In addition, they become more able to change and adapt their behaviors to fit into the requirements of intercultural situations as they can understand and interpret the meaning of the world as people from different cultures do.

### VI.4.4.9. Summary of the results obtained from the four self-assessment surveys.

Table 55

*Summary of the Results Obtained From the Four Self-Assessment Surveys*

| Attitudes | Survey 1 | Survey 2 | Survey 3 | Survey 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acceptance | 1.78 | 2.13 | 2.56 | 2.88 |
| Openness | 1.19 | 1.75 | 2.38 | 2.75 |
| Respect for Otherness | 1.5 | 2 | 2.47 | 2.78 |
| Tolerating Ambiguity | 1.22 | 1.66 | 2.31 | 2.84 |
| Curiosity | 1.38 | 1.97 | 2.47 | 2.91 |
| Adaptability | 0.69 | 1.33 | 1.81 | 2.69 |
| Empathy | 0.53 | 0.84 | 1.75 | 2.56 |
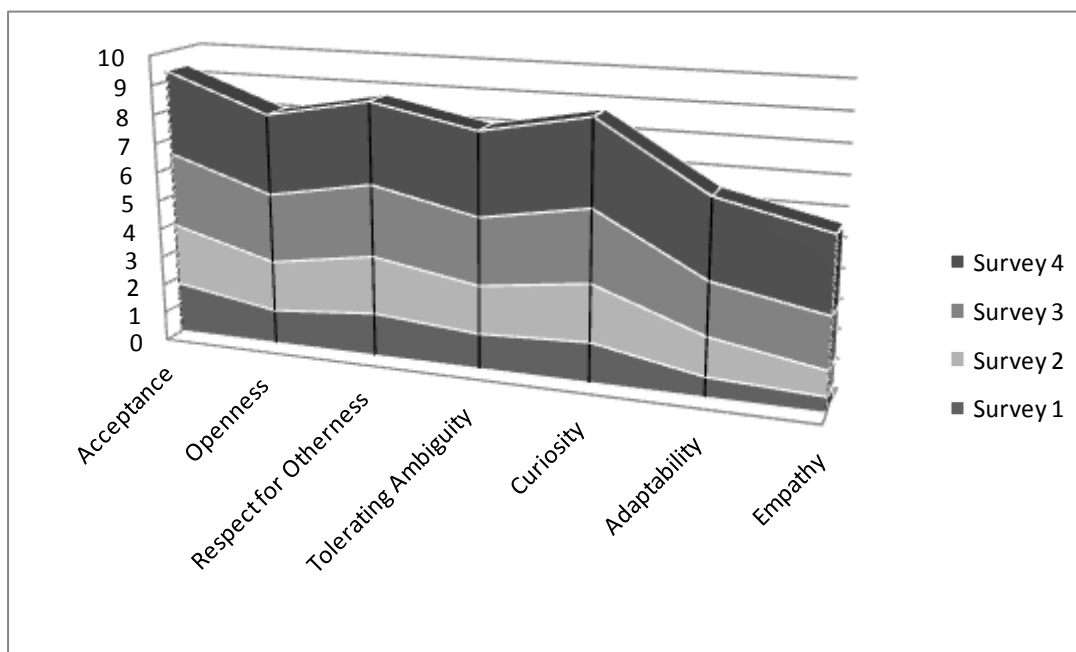


*Figure 51.* Summary of the results obtained from the four self-assessment surveys.

We compared the results obtained from the self-assessment surveys during four sessions to reach a conclusion about learners' attitudes. The figure (51) shows a continuous and a gradual progress in the seven components during the four surveys. The analysis of data gathered by the self-assessment instruments indicated that some elements have been developed at an early stage to a higher degree while others have appeared later. Also, we noticed that some elements like acceptance, openness and respect overlap and consolidate each other. In the last survey, learners displayed less ethnocentric, defensive and biased attitudes and more open-minded, respective, tolerating and empathic attitudes as compared to the first one. They became more aware of the fact that our behaviors, perceptions, beliefs, values and practices are culturally conditioned.

## VI.5. Classroom Observation

Along with the use of a self-assessment instrument, the researcher used a classroom observation rating scale for four sessions to assess the progress of learners' attitudes in terms of acceptance, openness, respect, tolerating ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability and empathy to see how learners recognize and perceive cultural differences.

### VI.5.1. Session one.

In the first session that lasted for three hours, the teacher introduced examples of intercultural communication where the understanding of the nonverbal behavior is of a significant importance. The teacher used materials like sharing videos and pictures on proxemics, eye contact, greeting, postures and hand gestures with their students. Learners were encouraged to comment on these videos and pictures and discuss issues related to the same topic. The teacher took into account learners' reactions, behaviors and opinions to evaluate their attitudes. The observed elements are explained in the following part.

### VI.5.1.1. Acceptance.

The majority of learners were able to recognize and identify some cultural differences in the use of the nonverbal communicative forms. They were aware of the validity of some cultural beliefs, behaviors and practices in the target culture. However, they rejected some postures and hand gestures because they are not acceptable in their native culture. They believed that their negative attitudes toward these postures and gestures must always be universal because their worldview is more valid than others. They claimed that postures that are not acceptable in their culture must also be rejected in the target one. Consequently, the researcher rated the learner's ability to accept the cultural differences as being intermediate.

### VI.5.1.2. Openness.

Learners' openness was low since their behaviors reflected a limited awareness of the inappropriateness of using stereotypes and prejudice to value and perceive the target culture. For instance, some learners believed that Americans use some proxemics because they are arrogant. They accepted some cultural differences, but they relied on some taken for granted negative attitudes without making significant efforts to overcome biased judgments.

### VI.5.1.3. Respect.

Teacher's observation found that learners' readiness to value cultural diversity was relatively low because their attitudes were influenced by negative prejudice and stereotypes. They believed that other people's values, beliefs, and behaviors can be different from their own, but they are not always worthwhile since they are not acceptable in their society. They did not appreciate how Americans greet each other because such practices contradict with their cultural and religious beliefs.

### *VI.5.1.4. Tolerating ambiguity.*

We observed that learners' reactions in the classroom often reflected feelings of discomfort and stress in vague and unfamiliar situations where misunderstanding can arise. Their ability to solve problems that may emerge in such situations was low since they held some defensive and ethnocentric attitudes as they did not expect that intercultural communication could lead to some problems of misunderstanding. They needed further intercultural experiences to develop a high tolerance for uncertainty.

### *VI.5.1.5. Curiosity.*

The researcher found that learners' interest in learning the target culture was low because they asked few simple questions about the new cultural aspects. We proposed on learners to conduct further research on non-verbal communication in intercultural communication, but they showed a very limited enthusiastic reaction may be because they did not appropriately value the cultural diversity.

### *VI.5.1.6. Adaptability.*

The majority of learners were not able to adjust their behaviors, beliefs and values into the different requirements of the intercultural situations. They did not possess any ability to adapt their nonverbal behaviors and to decentre.

### *VI.5.1.7. Empathy.*

The ability to see things and situations from the other's point of view was not observed in the majority of learners' attitudes since they could identify aspects of the target cultural perspective, but they responded in all situations with their own cultural worldview, and they did not try to understand the values that are contradicted to their owns. They preferred to show respect and interest in intercultural communication through asking

questions rather than the use of direct eye contact which is very important for people from the target culture.

### VI.5.2. Session two.

The teacher explained the relationship between gender and language. The linguistic and the stylistic features that characterize the speech of one gender in the native speech community and the target one have been emphasized and illustrated. In this session, the teacher assessed learners' attitudes during their participation in classroom discussion after listening to a recording of the American linguist Deborah Tannan about gender differences in the American society.

### VI.5.2.1. Acceptance.

The researcher observed a positive change in learners' acceptance. The majority of learners accepted the idea that people differ in their attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors because of the cultural differences. Thus, they realized that the same objects cannot be perceived in the same way in all cultures. On the other hand, they tried to minimize some cultural differences by focusing more on the similarities. Although learners' ability to accept the cultural differences was improving, it remained intermediate.

### VI.5.2.2. Openness.

Learners' openness was also low during the second classroom observation. They could not suspend prejudice and stereotypes about the target culture. They thought that the generalizations of fabricated images are helpful to understand the target culture. In some situations, they used negative stereotypes to denigrate the target culture as a defensive strategy.

### VI.5.2.3. Respect.

Learners' appreciation of the target cultural practices, beliefs and values have increased during the second session. They started to perceive the other as a cultural entity that is worth respect. On the other hand, their rejection of some cultural practices as well as the negative stereotypes they held affected their appreciation of the target culture. Therefore, the researcher evaluated their ability to respect the other culture as being intermediate.

### VI.5.2.4. Tolerating ambiguity.

Learners feelings of discomfort and tension in ambiguous situations were also observed in the second session. Their reactions to unfamiliar situations proved that they did not enjoy the uncertainty and the unclarity that characterize intercultural situations. The teacher rated their ability to tolerate ambiguity as being low.

### VI.5.2.5. Curiosity.

Learners interest in the target culture increased during the second session. They asked more questions about the target culture to expand their cultural knowledge. Yet, they tried to avoid discussions about some unfamiliar situations because of their defensive ethnocentric reactions. The teacher observed that learners' rejection of some cultural practices, intolerance for ambiguity affected negatively their desire to know more about the target cultural practices. Hence, their curiosity was intermediate in this session.

### VI.5.2.6. Adaptability.

Learners inflexible attitudes were still persisting during the second session. They refused to change and adjust the way they were behaving as they were expecting from others to take the initiative to change their behaviors and make efforts to understand them. Their ethnocentric reactions demonstrated that their ability to adapt their behaviors was low.

### *VI.5.2.7. Empathy.*

Although learners showed readiness to accept and respect some cultural practices, the way they perceived the world was limited to their conceptions. Their discussions in the classroom revealed a huge gap between the two worlds. They did not make any efforts to understand how the cultural other might feel or think in intercultural situations. Hence, the teacher rated their empathy towards the target culture as being low.

### **VI.5.3. Session three.**

The teacher focused, in the third session, on gender stereotypes, gender and address terms and sexism in English illustrated by some sexist expressions employed by the Americans like the use of 'girls' instead of 'ladies'. During discussions of these topics in the classroom, the teacher observed learners' attitudes reflected in their comments and their reactions to assess the progress of their acceptance, openness, respect, tolerance, curiosity, adaptability and empathy.

### *VI.5.3.1. Acceptance.*

During this session, the researcher observed a slight progress in learners' attitudes. They were more able to recognize the cultural differences at the level of values, behaviors and beliefs since they gained more cultural knowledge, but their reactions in some situations reflected their rejection of some cultural norms. The researcher rated learners' ability to accept different cultural perspectives as being intermediate.

### *VI.5.3.2. Openness.*

Classroom discussion triggered learners' reflections on the validity of their judgments. They started questioning the taken for granted ideas they had about the target culture. The teacher observed that the majority of learners dealt with the foreign culture in a less judgmental way. Consequently, she rated their openness as being intermediate.

### *VI.5.3.3. Respect.*

The learners' ability to respect the target cultural behaviors and values remained intermediate during the third session since they thought that what is rejected in the target culture cannot be appreciated.

### *VI.5.3.4. Tolerating ambiguity.*

During the third session, the teacher observed a significant change in learners ability to tolerate ambiguity. They started enjoying ambiguities. They appeared to be more motivated in their discussion of some vague situations. However, the negative emotions of stress, tension and discomfort were observable but with a less degree. The teacher rated their ability to tolerate ambiguity as being intermediate.

### *VI.5.3.5. Curiosity.*

Learners showed the desire and the willingness to learn new cultural information. They asked some questions about the target culture as they tried to answer them. However, their ethnocentric attitudes reflected in classroom discussion dampened their curiosity to learn cultural aspects that were negatively perceived by them. The teacher rated their desire and their curiosity to learn the target culture as being intermediate.

### *VI.5.3.6. Adaptability.*

Learners showed a significant progress in their readiness to integrate practices and behaviors from the target culture as their cultural knowledge was expanding. On the other hand, they resisted the need to adapt some of their behaviors in some situations to defend and protect their cultural identity. Thus, their adaptability during this stage is intermediate.

### *VI.5.3.7. Empathy.*

The teacher observed that learners' empathic attitudes progressed during this stage to reach the intermediate level. They started reflecting on the feelings and the thoughts of others

to understand them. Yet, they responded to some intercultural situations according to their own worldviews.

### VI.5.4. Session four.

The fourth classroom observation took place during the course of euphemism. The teacher explained what should be euphemized and how and when euphemism should be used in the native and the target speech communities. After highlighting the cultural use of euphemism in the American society, learners were requested to compare euphemistic expressions in both communities and practice polite forms of language in groups. Their acceptance, openness, respect, tolerance for ambiguity, curiosity, adaptability and empathy were also observed by the teacher.

#### VI.5.4.1. Acceptance.

Learners ability to accept cultural differences attained a significant progress during this stage. They deeply understood that cultural diversity is a fact. They recognized that people from different cultures are expected to behave and perceive the world differently. Consequently, the researcher rated their ability to accept the possible cultural differences as being high.

#### VI.5.4.2. Openness.

Learners displayed high readiness to deal with the target culture in a less judgmental way. They realized that prejudice and stereotypes are misleading generalizations that cannot help them understand the culturally different others. The researcher observed that the majority of learners succeeded in avoiding them. Thus, she rated their openness as being high.

#### VI.5.4.3. Respect.

The fourth classroom observation revealed that the majority of learners developed positive attitudes towards the target culture. They regared that  practices, values and beliefs of

people from the target culture are worthwhile. They did not only accept, but they also appreciated and respected cultural diversity to a great extent. The teacher rated their ability to respect the target culture as being high.

### VI.5.4.4. Tolerating ambiguity.

At this stage, learners reacted to ambiguous intercultural situations with less visible discomfort and stress because they viewed that such situations are enjoyable and challenging experiences. They were more able to cope with intercultural misunderstandings and conflicts in a positive and a relaxed manner. Their ability to tolerate ambiguity has been increased to be high.

### VI.5.4.5. Curiosity.

During the fourth classroom observation, learners were more curious to discover new cultural knowledge. They agreed that classroom discussions were important opportunities to learn about culture. They asked deep and complex questions about the target culture as they were searching for reasonable answers to them,  based on strong evidence. They were very enthusiastic and very satisfied when their questions were answered. They also asked the teacher about beneficial references that can help them understand further issues related to the target culture.

### VI.5.4.6. Adaptability.

Learners discussion in the fourth session revealed a positive progress in their ability to adapt their behaviors in a way that makes intercultural communication more efficient and more meaningful. They showed more concern and more willingness to be understood by people from the target culture. They felt that they were responsible for the clarity of their speech. Consequently, the researcher rated their ability to adapt their behavior as being relatively high. Yet, they needed more intercultural experiences to increase their adaptability.

### *VI.5.4.7. Empathy.*

During this stage, the majority of learners were more concerned about the feelings and the thoughts of other people. They tried to recognize and understand how people who are culturally different perceive and interpret the world. Their ability to see the world through the eyes of other people has been improved, but it did not attain a high level since developing high empathic attitudes require direct contact and real interaction with people from another culture.

### VI.5.5. Discussion and summary of classroom observation.

Throughout the classroom observation that took place during four sessions, the researcher observed a gradual and positive change and progress in each of the seven components that constitute learners' intercultural attitudes. They accepted and recognized the fact that people perceive the world and behave differently because of the cultural differences that can be contradicted, but must be worth respect and appreciation. They also learned how to deal with culturally different others without biased judgments like prejudice and stereotypes. They became more aware of the necessity to avoid these over-generalizations that mislead them in intercultural situations. Furthermore, the teacher observed that learners started gradually enjoying the challenges that resulted from ambiguous intercultural situations. They succeeded in managing their negative emotions by tolerating ambiguity. Moreover, they became more curious to know and learn about the target cultural practices, behaviors, beliefs and values. They asked complex and deep questions about the target culture, and they were keen to search for and share answers that could satisfy their curiosity. In addition, they were more concerned about the difficulties that could encounter people from the target culture in understanding their behaviors. Consequently, their readiness to adjust their behaviors to make them clear and meaningful for others has gradually been ameliorated during these sessions along with their ability to perceive situations through the eyes of others.

However, the researcher believes that higher empathic attitudes can be better developed outside the classroom through real intercultural experiences where learners directly interact with people from the other culture.

**VI.6. The Post Test Data Analysis**

At the end of the experiment, the students in the experimental and the control groups have taken a posttest to check any progress in their intercultural competence. The objective of this instrument is to assess and evaluate the effect of the independent variable (sociolinguistic knowledge) on the dependent variable (students' understanding of the intercultural differences) after the application of the treatment with the experimental group. The posttest shares the same characteristics and the same forms of instructions of the pretest. Yet, the first part of the pretest has been deleted in the posttest since what matters now is the score of the intercultural competence, as the homogeneity of groups at the level of their social, linguistic and communicative backgrounds is needed to be proved only before the experiment. On the other hand, the posttest also consists of three types of activities. Each activity is designed to assess learners' performance in one of the three components of the dependent variable: Knowledge, skill or attitude (appendix H). The scores obtained in each component vary from 0 to 10, and the final scores also range between 0 and 10. The mean is an important statistical measure that helps the researcher compare the results of the experimental group with those of the control group in the pretest and the posttest to check the effectiveness of the treatment on learners' performance in the experimental group. The final scores of the posttest obtained in the experimental and the control groups are displayed below.

Table 56

*Learners Final Scores of the Posttest in the Experimental Group*

| Participants | Posttest scores | Participants | Posttest scores |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 10 | 17 | 9 |
| 2 | 4 | 18 | 8 |
| 3 | 7 | 19 | 8 |
| 4 | 5 | 20 | 7 |
| 5 | 10 | 21 | 10 |
| 6 | 8 | 22 | 6 |
| 7 | 5 | 23 | 7 |
| 8 | 4 | 24 | 7 |
| 9 | 5 | 25 | 3 |
| 10 | 8 | 26 | 8 |
| 11 | 6 | 27 | 6 |
| 12 | 9 | 28 | 9 |
| 13 | 7 | 29 | 7 |
| 14 | 6 | 30 | 8 |
| 15 | 3 | 31 | 8 |
| 16 | 8 | 32 | 10 |
| $\Sigma X_e$ | | | **226** |
| $X_e$ | | | **7.06** |

Table 57 *Learners Final Scores of the Posttest in the Control Group*

| Participants | Posttest scores | Participants | Posttest scores |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | 3 | 17 | 3 |
| 2 | 4 | 18 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 19 | 3 |
| 4 | 2 | 20 | 3 |
| 5 | 3 | 21 | 2 |
| 6 | 5 | 22 | 2 |
| 7 | 1 | 23 | 3 |
| 8 | 6 | 24 | 6 |
| 9 | 4 | 25 | 3 |
| 10 | 3 | 26 | 6 |
| 11 | 4 | 27 | 4 |
| 12 | 4 | 28 | 4 |
| 13 | 4 | 29 | 5 |
| 14 | 7 | 30 | 4 |
| 15 | 5 | 31 | 4 |
| 16 | 4 | 32 | 3 |
| $\varSigma X_c$ | | | **122** |
| $X_c$ | | | **3.81** |

We noted that the scores obtained by students in the experimental group are much more higher than those of learners in the control group. Consequently, the mean calculated in the experimental group is greater than the mean of the control group. Such results reveal that learners in the first group succeeded in performing the activities because they acquired an adequate level of intercultural competence. However, some learners displayed many problems in their performance, which means that their progress is somehow delayed as compared to the other students who received the same treatment for many reasons like their lack of interest in learning intercultural matters, their poor language proficiency or their limited cognitive abilities. Therefore, we assume that these learners need more time and more experience to develop higher intercultural abilities. On the other hand, the majority of the control group's scores did not attain (10) since their intercultural competence remained poor. Thus, we assert that what matters is not the score itself as the improvement in scores throughout the experiment. Therefore, a comparison between pretest and posttest means must be made, but before doing so, we compare the sum of the scores and the posttest means obtained in each component of the dependent variable in both groups. We remind the readers that the scores of learners' performance in each of the three components range between 0 and 10.

Table 58

*The Differences in the Means of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes in Both Groups in the Posttest*

| Components | Knowledge | | Skills | | Attitudes | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Groups | Total scores | Mean | Total scores | Mean | Total scores | Mean |
| Experimental Group | 250 | 7.81 | 228 | 7.12 | 200 | 6.25 |
| Control Group | 147 | 4.59 | 117 | 3.66 | 102 | 3.18 |
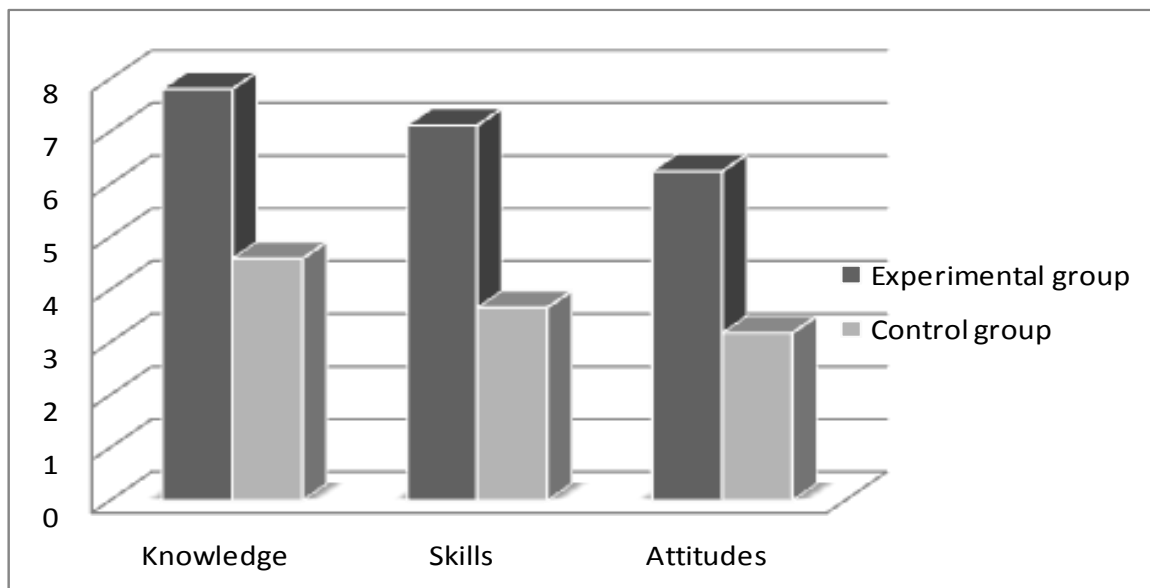
*Figure 52*. The differences in the means of knowledge, skills and attitudes in both groups in the posttest.

The comparison between the means calculated in both groups in each component demonstrates that learners in the experimental group acquired higher intercultural knowledge, positive attitudes and adequate intercultural skills as compared to learners in the control group who faced huge difficulties in performing the posttest activities because of their poor intercultural knowledge, limited intercultural skills and negative attitudes reflected in their reactions towards the critical incidents described in the third activity. Therefore, the majority of them could not attain the average (10) in the three activities. The influence of their native culture was highly observed in their ethnocentric behaviors and attitudes. To examine the effectiveness of the treatment on learners intercultural competence, we need to compare the means of scores obtained in the pretest and postest in both groups to see whether their intercultural competence has been improved or not.

The results obtained in the pretest and the posttest for the experimental as well as the control groups are compared in order to analyze the differences in the mean. The comparison of the two tests means is displayed in the following table and graph.

Table 59

*Comparison of the Experimental and the Control Means in the Pretest and Posttest*

| Groups | Pretest | Posttest |
|---|---|---|
| Experimental Group | 3.34 | 7.06 |
| Control group | 3.47 | 3.81 |
| Difference | 0.13 | 3.25 |
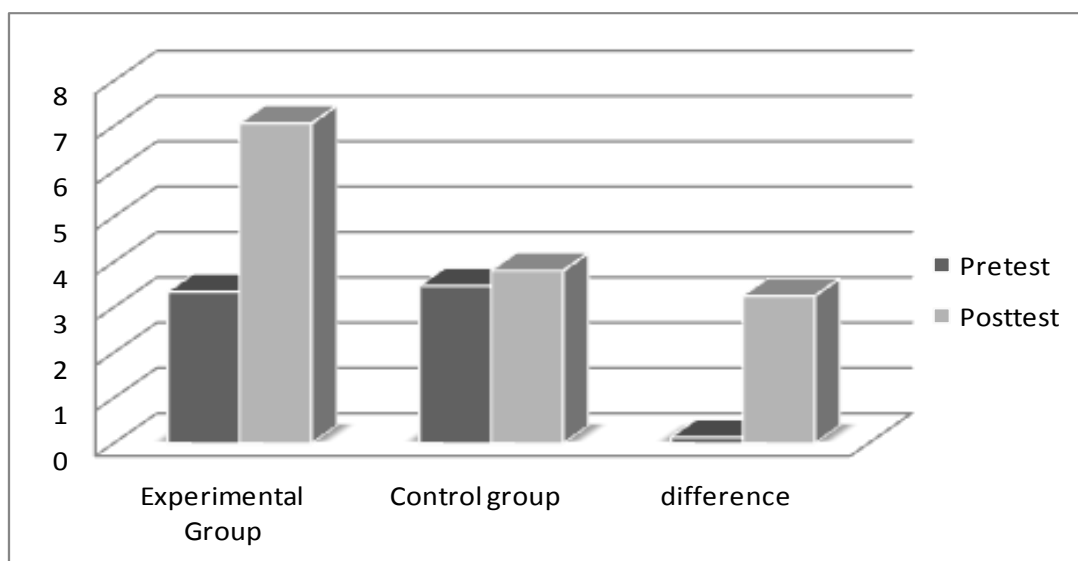


*Figure 53.* Comparison of the experimental and the control means in the pretest and posttest.

The comparison of the means reveals that the mean's difference in the pretest was marginal while it increased in the posttest. The pretest results showed that learners in both

groups had a similar low intercultural level before the manipulation of the variable. After the experiment, the mean of the experimental group has significantly progressed whereas the mean of the control group remained approximately the same. In other words, learners in the experimental group developed higher intercultural competence as compared to their initial state before starting the experiment where their intercultural competence was poor. The majority of learners in the experimental group improved their intercultural competence at the level of knowledge, skills and attitudes. They acquired an intercultural knowledge that allows them to identify euphemistic expressions and translate them into Arabic using euphemistic equivalences. They were also able to guess the appropriate linguistic behavior based on the gender differences in the target culture. In addition, they developed positive attitudes towards the target culture like curiosity, respect, openness and adaptability. On the other hand, learners of the control group did not witness any significant progress in their performance. Their scores, as well as the mean, remained nearly the same which means that their intercultural problems extended from the pretest to the posttest. Their limited intercultural knowledge was clearly observed in their inability to identify, explain and suggest the appropriate euphemistic equivalence in their native language. Moreover, their production of the linguistic forms was influenced by those that are often used in their speech community, which contributed again to the emergence of sociolinguistic interference and misunderstanding. Besides, their reactions to the critical incidents in the third task reflected their negative and ethnocentric attitudes like cultural denial, defense and minimization. In sum, students' intercultural competence in the experimental group has been developed while learners of the control group were still facing huge intercultural problems. We deduce that the positive change that occurred in learners intercultural competence in the experimental group is due to the manipulation of the independent variable (introducing the intercultural dimension into sociolinguistics class). Thus, teaching sociolinguistics within the intercultural dimension

has positively influenced students' intercultural abilities. This conclusion is also supported by data obtained from the progress tests, classroom observation and self-assessment surveys administered at different stages during the implementation of the experiment. These instruments showed that learners were reacting positively in each component of the intercultural competence as the experiment moved forward. However, this claim on the effect of the treatment on the dependent variable must undergo the statistical measurements to be more valid.

### VI.6.1. Statistical analysis and interpretation.

To reach a significant conclusion of the experiment, the analysis and the interpretation of the data must be done on the basis of the statistical measurements of learners' performance using the necessary mathematical formula like mean, variance, standard deviation, frequency and *t* value to check the extent to which the research hypotheses are valid or not.

#### VI.6.1.1. The frequency.

Frequencies are often used in foreign language studies to summarize the basic characteristics of data, allowing researchers to understand the nature of data with minimum space expenditure (Mackey &Gass, 2005, p. 251). In our research, we calculate the frequencies to find how many times the same score is obtained by learners in the posttest.

#### VI.6.1.2. The mean.

The mean is a basic statistical measure that is often calculated in educational research. It is the sum of all scores divided by the number of scores. The formula of this statistic is as follows:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma F x}{N}$$

### VI.6.1.3.The variance.

One takes the differences between each score and the mean and squares that difference. The next step is to add up these squared values, and divide them by the sample size. The resulting number is called the variance (Mackey &Gass, 2005, p. 259).

### VI.6.1.4.The standard deviation.

The standard deviation is a common statistic used to measure variability. It is a number that shows how scores are spread around the mean (Mackey &Gass, 2005, p. 259). It is also the square root of the variance. The formula of this statistic is as follows:

$$SD= \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma FX^2 - \frac{(\Sigma FX)^2}{N}}{N-1}}$$

Table 60

*Frequency Distribution of the Experimental Group Scores in the Posttest*

| Score "*Xe*" | "*F*" |
|:---:|:---:|
| 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 2 |
| 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 4 |
| 7 | 6 |
| 8 | 8 |
| 9 | 9 |
| 10 | 4 |

*Note*. F= Frequency;  *Xe*= *s*cores of experimental group

The frequency table demonstrates that learners' scores in the experimental group range from 3 to 10. The majority of learners recorded scores between 7 and 9. On the other hand, only four subjects recorded scores under 5 which means that the overall performance is acceptable to good.

Table 61

*The Mean and the Standard Deviation of the Experimental Group in Posttest*

| Scores "$Xe$" | $X^2$ | Frequency "$F$" | $FX$ | Score "$FX^2$" |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 18 |
| 4 | 16 | 2 | 8 | 32 |
| 5 | 25 | 3 | 15 | 75 |
| 6 | 36 | 4 | 24 | 144 |
| 7 | 49 | 6 | 42 | 294 |
| 8 | 64 | 8 | 64 | 512 |
| 9 | 81 | 3 | 27 | 243 |
| 10 | 100 | 4 | *40* | *400* |
| | | $N=\Sigma F = 32$ | $\Sigma FX= 226$ | $\Sigma FX^2 = 1718$ |

*Note.* $N$ = number of students.

### The Mean

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma Fx}{N}$$

$$\overline{X}_e = \frac{226}{32} = 7.06$$

$\overline{X}$: the mean    $Fx$: score frequency    $N$: number of scores    $\Sigma$: the sum.

### The Variance

$$S^2 = \frac{\Sigma FX^2 - \frac{(\Sigma FX)^2}{N}}{N-1}$$

$$S^2 e = \frac{1718 - \frac{(226)^2}{32}}{32-1} = \frac{1718 - 1596.12}{31}$$

$$S^2 e = \frac{121.85}{31} = 3.93$$

### The Standard Deviation

$$SD = \sqrt{\dfrac{\Sigma FX^2 - \dfrac{(\Sigma FX)^2}{N}}{N-1}}$$

$$SD_e = \sqrt{3.93} = 1.98$$

Table 62

*Summary of the Statistical Measurements Calculated in the Experimental Group*

| Sum | Mean | Std. Error of mean | Median | Mode | Std. deviation | Variance | Minimum | Maximum |
|-----|------|-----|--------|------|-----|----------|---------|---------|
| 226 | 7.06 | ,235 | 7 | 8 | 1,98 | 3,93 | 3 | 10 |

*Note.* Std. = standard.

Table 63

*Frequency Distribution of the Control Group Scores in the Posttest*

| Score "$Xc$" | "$F$" |
|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 3 |
| 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 10 |
| 5 | 4 |
| 6 | 3 |
| 7 | 1 |

The frequency table in the control group shows that learners' scores vary between one and seven. The majority of these scores fall under the category of poor intercultural performance. It is worth noting that only few subjects reached the average score 10 in the posttest.

Table 64

*The Mean and the Standard Deviation of the Control Group in Posttest*

| Scores "$Xc$" | $X^2$ | Frequency "$F$" | $FX$ | Score "$FX^2$" |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 12 |
| 3 | 9 | 10 | 30 | 90 |
| 4 | 16 | 10 | 40 | 160 |
| 5 | 25 | 4 | 20 | 100 |
| 6 | 36 | 3 | 18 | 108 |
| 7 | 49 | 1 | 7 | 49 |
| | | $N=\Sigma F = 32$ | $\Sigma FX= 122$ | $\Sigma FX2= 520$ |

**The Mean**

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma Fx}{N}$$

$$\overline{X}_c = \frac{122}{32} = 3.18$$

$\overline{X}$: the mean    $Fx$: score frequency    **N:** number of scores    $\Sigma$: the sum

**The Variance**

$$S^2 = \frac{\Sigma FX^2 - \frac{(\Sigma FX)^2}{N}}{N - 1}$$

$$S^2 c = \frac{520 - \frac{(122)^2}{32}}{32 - 1} = \frac{520 - 465.12}{31}$$

$$S^2 c = \frac{54.88}{31} = 1.77$$

**The Standard Deviation**

$$SD= \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma FX^2 - \frac{(\Sigma FX)^2}{N}}{N-1}}$$

$$SD_c= \sqrt{1.77} = 1.33$$

Table 65

*Summary of the Statistical Measurements Calculated in the Control Group*

| Sum | Mean | Std. Error of mean | Median | Mode | Std. deviation | Variance | Minimum | Maximum |
|-----|------|--------------------|--------|------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|
| 122 | 3.81 | ,235 | 4.00 | 3.00 | 1,33 | 1,77 | 1 | 7 |

Table 66

*The Means and the Standard Deviations of Both Groups in the Posttest*

|  | Mean $\overline{X}$ | Standard Deviation *SD* |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Experimental Group | 7.06 | 1.98 |
| Control Group | 3.81 | 1.33 |
| The Difference | 3.25 | 0.65 |

### VI.6.1.5. Degree of freedom.

The calculation of the degree of freedom is important for testing the null hypothesis.

$df = (N_e-1) + (N_c-1)$

$= (32-1) + (32-1)$

$df = 62$

### VI.6.1.6. The t-test and alpha level.

To test the effect of sociolinguistic knowledge (the independent variable) on learners' understanding of the intercultural differences (the dependent variable), we used an independent sample $t$-test to find out the difference in the posttest means of the experimental and control groups. We opted for an independent t-test since we are dealing with two independent groups exposed to two different treatments: an experimental group and a control group.

$$t_{N1+N2} = \frac{(\bar{x}_1-\bar{x}_2)\sqrt{(N_1+N_2-2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1 S_1^2+N_2 S_2^2)(N_1+N_2)}}$$

$$= \frac{(7.06-3.81)\sqrt{(32+32-2)(32 x 32)}}{\sqrt{((32 x 3.93)+(32 x 1.77))(32+32)}}$$

$$= \frac{3.25\sqrt{63488}}{\sqrt{(182.4)(64)}}$$

$$= \frac{818.87}{108.04}$$

$t = 7.58$

### *VI.6.1.7. The significance level.*

# α=0.05

We have chosen 0.05 as a significance level because it is commonly accepted as the standard in second and foreign language studies. (0.05) indicates that there is only 5% possibility that the results of the research are obtained by chance alone while 95% is due to the relationship between variables

### *VI.6.1.8. Critical value*

Since $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 62$. The critical value for" $t$", as proposed in Fisher and Yates's table of critical values, is 2.00. We notice that the observed "$t$ " value calculated in the research is higher than the critical value of" $t$".

$t_{obs} > t_{crit}$ **(7.58>2.00)**

---

**<u>Necessary data for hypotheses testing</u>**

In order to test the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, we need some statistical data

**Mean of each group: $\overline{X}_e$ = 7.06, $\overline{X}_c$ = 3.81**

**Alpha Level: α=0.05**

**Observed value of "$t$" : $t_{obs}$ =7.58**

**Critical value of "$t$": $t_{crit}$ =2.00**

**Degree of freedom: $df = 62$**

**Null hypotheses: $H_0$: $\overline{X}_e = \overline{X}_c$**

---

**The null hypothesis**: The null hypothesis predicts that there is no relationship between sociolinguistic knowledge and learners' intercultural competence.

**The alternative hypothesis**: The alternative hypothesis states that the difference between the two means is due to the effect of the treatment/manipulation of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

**Significance of these data**

The comparison between the observed *"t"* value and the critical value shows that the *"t"* value is higher than the critical value. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypotheses. These statistical measures demonstrate that there is only 5% possibility that change that occurred at the level of the dependent variable in the experimental group was due to chance while 95% probability was due to the effect of the independent variable (teaching sociolinguistic knowledge within an intercultural dimension) on the dependent variable which is, in the study, learners' intercultural competence in general and their understanding (knowledge) and apprieciation (attitudes) of intercultural differences as well as their appropriate use of language (skills) in particular.

**Conclusion**

Before initiating the experiment, the researcher administered a pretest to examine learners' current intercultural level and to ensure the homogeneity of learners' intercultural abilities in the experimental and the control groups. The results of the pretest revealed students' poor intercultural competence in both groups. Throughout the experiment, the researcher integrated the intercultural dimension in some of the sociolinguistics courses with reference to the target as well as the native culture as a treatment to come to a remedy of the intercultural problems in the experimental group while the control group received the traditional treatment. Many instruments have been employed to check learners progress at different stages of the experiment. The progress tests, continuous classroom observation as

well as self-assessment surveys displayed a gradual positive change in students' intercultural competence as the experiment went forward. At the end of the semester, a posttest has been submitted to both groups. We noticed that the experimental group obtained a higher mean in the posttest when compared to the pretest while the control group's mean did not witness any positive change. The students in the experimental group acquired more intercultural knowledge, they exhibited higher skills of adapting their behaviors in intercultural situations to avoid misunderstandings, as they developed positive attitudes towards cultural diversity like appreciation and respect. The significant progress in the experimental group's scores of intercultural competence in general, and knowledge, skills and attitudes in particular, confirms the effectiveness of exploiting sociolinguistics by teaching it within the intercultural dimension in developing learners' intercultural competence. Furthermore, the statistical analysis of the findings rejected the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypotheses. We concluded that that positive change that occurred in the dependent variable is attributed to the manipulation of the independent variable (which is in our case the teaching of sociolinguistics within an intercultural dimension) on the dependent variable (learners intercultural knowledge skills and attitudes). We conclude that, on one hand, sociolinguistic knowledge helps learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences. On the other hand, teaching the foreign culture in foreign language classes improves learners' use of the foreign language in different situations as we hypothesized in an early stage of the research. However, the researcher believes that developing intercultural competence is a continuous process that requires more time. Therefore, better results must be sought to be achieved in the future.

The next chapter presents the analysis and the interpretation of data obtained from the questionnaire administered to teachers of sociolinguistics to recognize their opinions and their attitudes towards the issue under investigation.

# Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

**Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the analysis and the interpretation of data obtained from teachers' questionnaire. The present tool was administered to teachers of sociolinguistics in order to collect factual information related to their evaluation of the position of culture in their current teaching practices and decisions in sociolinguistics class and their perceptions and attitudes towards the integration of the intercultural dimension when teaching sociolinguistics. Besides, the questionnaire aims to identify some teaching methods, materials, resources and techniques that teachers think are helpful for promoting learners' intercultural understanding. More importantly, the instrument addresses the following research questions:

- ✓ How can sociolinguistics be taught in a way that develops learners' understanding of the intercultural differences?
- ✓ Why do learners need to understand the intercultural differences?

For each item, we explain the objective of the question. Then, we describe, analyze and interpret data obtained from teachers answer and, when possible, we relate it to other items to check the consistency and the harmony of the answers. To simplify and to facilitate the analysis of data obtained from closed-ended questions, we rely on the statistical measurements of frequencies and percentages.

**VII.1. General Information**

In this section, the researcher wants to collect information about the professional background of teachers like their qualifications, their teaching experience and the subjects they are/were teaching.

### VII.1.1. Teachers' qualifications.

Table 67

*Teachers Qualifications*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Licence | 00 | 00% |
| Magiter/ Master | 04 | 66.67% |
| Doctorate | 02 | 33.33% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
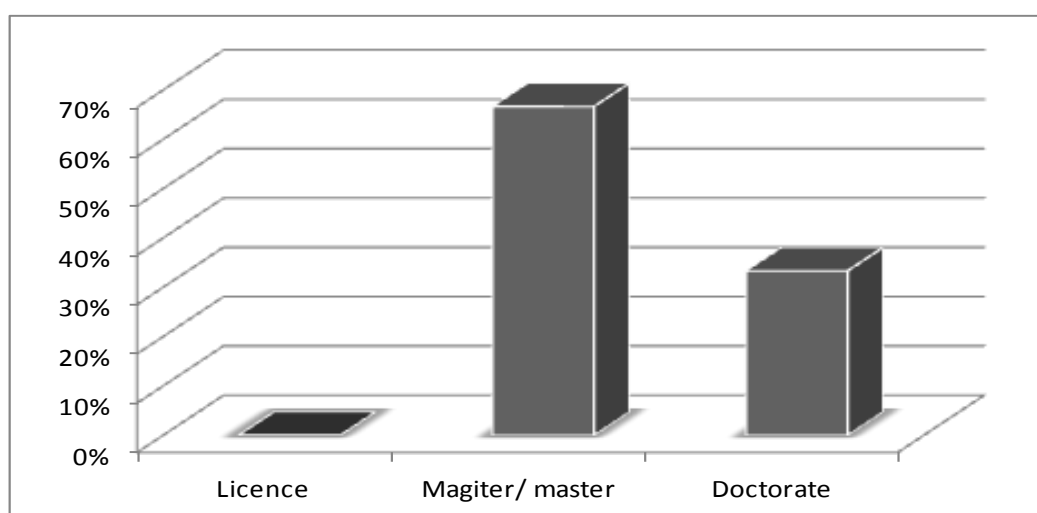


*Figure 54.* Teachers' qualifications.

The sample of teachers who answered the questionnaire consisted of two doctors and four holders of Magister/ Master degree, the majority of whom are preparing their doctorate thesis in applied linguistics or TEFL. One of them is also working on intercultural education in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, we believe that his/her answers will be very helpful. The teachers' answers also revealed that no one holds only the licence degree in this sample.

### VII.1.2.        Teachers' teaching experience.

The majority of teachers have been teaching English for more than 13 years. Their teaching experience ranges from 13 to 24 years. On the other hand, a teacher stated that he/she has been teaching English for four years as another teacher claimed that he/she a novice teacher, which means that these two subjects have a relatively limited teaching experience as compared to the other teachers.

### VII.1.3.        Subjects taught.

All the respondents are teachers of English. They all teach sociolinguistics beside other subjects like grammar, oral expression, written expression, linguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnography of communication and pragmatics. We noticed that some teachers have experienced teaching subjects that are related to the four language skills, and others have taught subjects linked to the communicative skills like ethnography of communication and pragmatics in which a high level of cultural content can be contextualized.

## VII.2.  Teaching Culture

This section deals with teachers' perception of the concept of culture, the link between language and culture and the importance of teaching the English culture within the teaching of English language.

### VII.2.1.        Teachers' perception of the concept of culture.

In an open-ended question,  the teachers were requested to define 'culture' in order to recognize how they perceive this concept. This question was asked in order to understand which culture they relate to the foreign language teaching environment as we believe that their perception of culture can determine some cultural teaching practices. Some definitions provided by teachers focused only on the social and the anthropological dimensions of

culture, known as the small (c) such as " *traditions, customs, beliefs and way of living of a specific group of people."* Another teacher proposed a similar definition that highlighted, beside the social aspects,  the polysemous, the multidimensional and the complex nature of this concept by stating that "*culture may mean different things to different people. Definitions of culture are varied and complex. As far as  I am concerned, I believe that culture forms one's beliefs, norms, values, attitudes <u>and</u> behaviors."* Other  definitions were more  inclusive since they embraced both, the aesthetic and the social points of view like referring to *" a set of beliefs, traditions, arts, customs and distinguishing characteristics that define a certain social group."* In this definition, culture was viewed as a conjunction of the social traditions and the fine arts, in other words, a combination of the small c and the big C.  A teacher referred to the link between language and culture and society by stating that " *Culture represents all the customs, beliefs, norms, knowledge, language, traditions, religions and arts that a group of people share together."*  Interestingly, all these definitions handled culture as one of the main defining features of a particular social group. Another teacher, who perceived culture from a humanistic as well as an anthropological approach claimed that *"culture is a universal fact of human life. It is deeply ingrained in people's ways of acting and being in the world. It is a set of social practices, a system of beliefs, a shared history, art and a set of experience."* This definition was also inclusive since it viewed culture from different perspectives, not only as a set of historical facts, but also as social practices and beliefs that influence people's behaviors. It emphasized both, the big (C) and the small (c). We conclude that teachers do not perceive culture in the same way, but the most convenient definition is the one that stressed aesthetic and the social sides.  Thus, teaching culture also requires a balanced and multi-dimensional perception of the concept. In other words,  learning the social practice and appreciating literature, history and art should be targeted in the foreign language context.

**VII.2.2.**          **Teachers' opinions on the influence of the culture of English**

**speaking countries on the use of English.**

Teachers were asked about the influence of the different cultures that are prevailing in

English speaking countries on the use of English to see whether or not the use of language or

a variety of language  is linked to a specific culture. Their answers are presented in the

following table.

Table 68

*Teachers Opinions on the Influence of the Cultures of English Speaking*
*Countries on the Use of English*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 6 | 100% |
| No | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 6 | 100% |
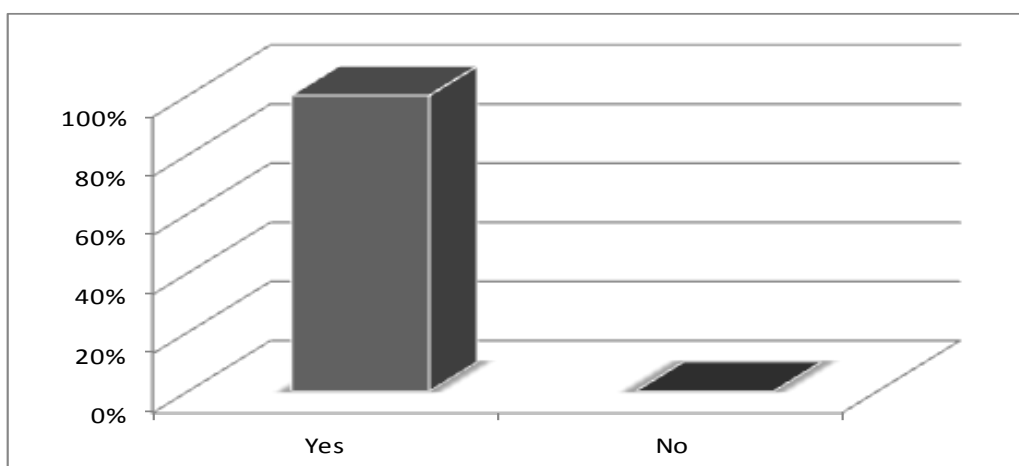


*Figure 55.* Teachers' opinions on the influence of the culture of English speaking

countries on the use of English.

We noticed that all teachers agree that cultures of English speaking countries influence the use of English. This means that different varieties of English are used because of the cultural differences. Teachers' answers to this question revealed that they are aware that the use of language is culturally bound and the selection of particular linguistic patterns is governed by the cultural norms of the speech community where language is used.

**VII.2.3.      Teachers attitudes towards the teaching of English culture within the teaching of English.**

In this question, the relationship between language and culture has been contextualized into the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Teachers were asked to rate the importance of teaching the English culture within the teaching of the English language from not important to very important. To understand better their evaluation, they were also requested to justify and explain the reason(s) behind their choices.

Table 69

*Teachers Attitudes Towards the Teaching of English Culture Within the Teaching of English Language*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Not important | 00 | 00% |
| Important | 00 | 00% |
| Very important | 06 | |
| Total | 06 | 100% |

.
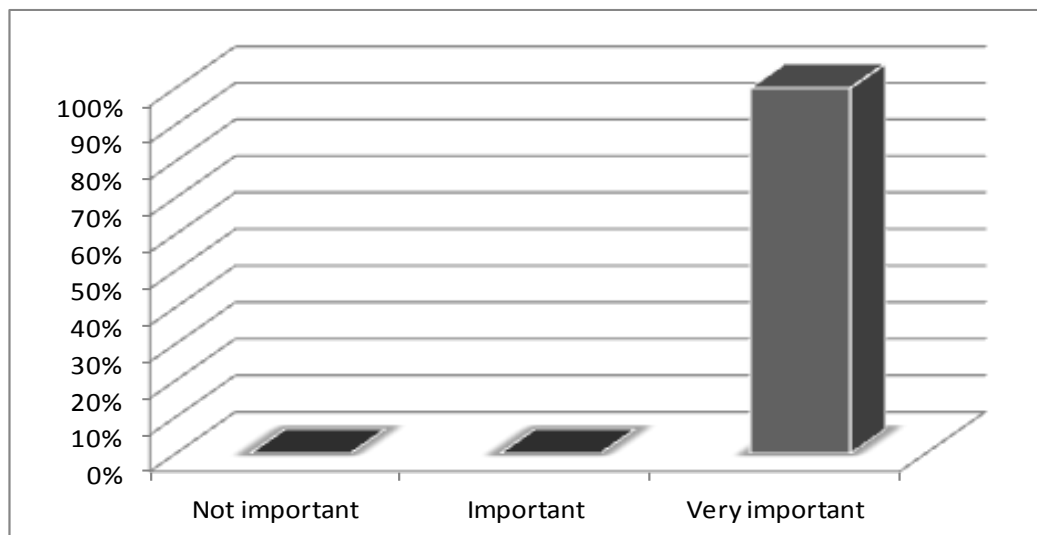
*Figure 56.* Teachers attitudes towards the teaching of English culture within the teaching of English.

As shown in the table, none of the respondents denied the importance of teaching the English culture when teachings the English language. They all believe that teaching the English culture in general and the American as well as the British cultures in particular within the English language classroom is very important. They justified their answers as follows:

"*Language is much more than a means of communication. It is a reflection of culture and a major vehicle for the transmission and, in fact, the creation of culture.*" This justification means that culture is always embedded in language. The cultural meaning and the cultural experience are shared, expressed and transmitted from one generation to another through language. This view is influenced by Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which postulated that *"language, as code, reflects cultural preoccupations and constrains the way people think"* (as cited in Kramsch, 2001, p. 14). Accordingly, the respondent believes that teaching a foreign language necessitates the teaching of its culture. However, she/he did not mention the effect of cultural knowledge on the use of linguistic patterns in intercultural communications.

Another teacher explicitly advocated the firm relationship between language and culture to the extent that they cannot be separated from one another by reporting that *"culture and language are the same coin with two different sides. We simply cannot teach language without culture as it is embedded in each and every detail. This is why culture, in all languages, is the soul and heart and the content that makes the skeleton of language stand and have meaning."* Both, language and culture must be addressed in EFL classroom because, as a respondent explained *" teaching language without its culture is not possible without losing the significance of either."* This link between language and culture was also described by Brown (2000, p. 177) who claims that *" a language is a part of culture, and culture is a part of a language, the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture."*

Further explanations were more insightful as they related the learning of the foreign culture to the appropriate use of language which cannot be attained through the development of the linguistic competence alone. Interestingly, A teacher said that *"language proficiency does not only include the knowledge of grammatical rules and sentence structure, but it also requires knowledge of the cultural and the social context of the use of the foreign language."* Subsequently, learning a foreign language is more than storing a set of grammatical, lexical and phonological items. The appropriate use of language requires a deep understanding of the different socio-cultural contexts where communications take place.

A similar explanation has been written by other participants who also attributed the importance of teaching/learning culture to *" the mastery of the social and the cultural norms of language beside the mastery of the grammatical rules to communicate and use language appropriately."* In this regard, Byram et al. (1999, p. 168) urge that *" the aims of language teaching are to develop in learners both linguistic and cultural competence."* Thus, the important conclusion that can be drawn from teachers' answers is that the majority of them are

aware of the necessity to transcend the linguistic competence as the sole objective in EFL classroom. They all showed a deep awareness of the strong relationship between language and culture to the extent that they view that the foreign culture must be taught with the foreign language in order to use language appropriately and communicate effectively.

**VII.2.4.** **Teachers' attitudes towards the negative effect of the foreign culture on students native one.**

Table 70

*Teachers Attitudes Towards the Negative Effect of Foreign Culture on Students Native One*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 3 | 50% |
| No | 2 | 33.3% |
| No answer | 1 | 16.7% |
| Total | 6 | 100% |
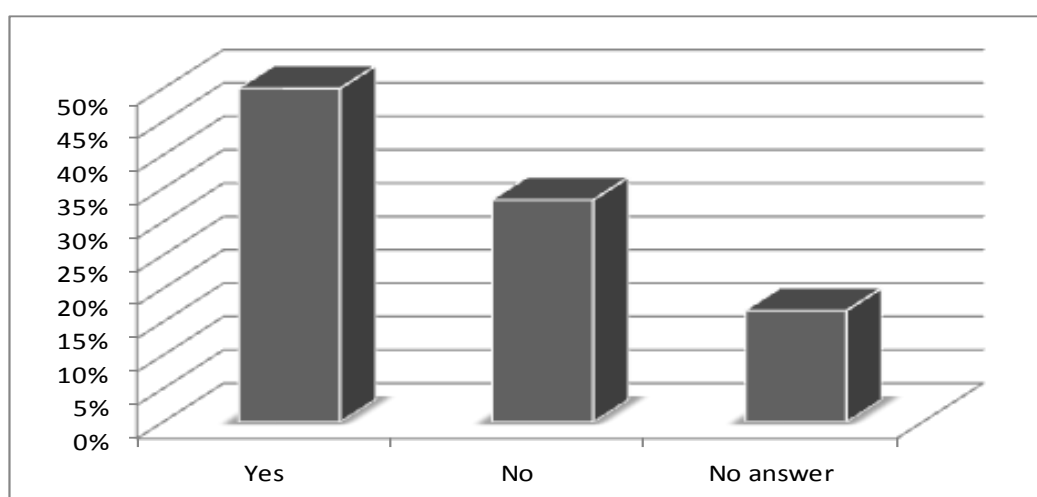


*Figure 57.* Teachers' attitudes towards the negative effect of the foreign culture on students native one.

The table demonstrates that the majority of teachers (50%) agreed that teaching the foreign culture may threaten students' cultural identity, especially when learners develop negative attitudes towards their native culture like the feeling that their culture is more inferior than the target one. Therefore, the respondents who answered positively proposed that ,as teachers they should:

- ✓ *Integrate the native culture in EFL classes along with the foreign one;.*
- ✓ *Raise students' awareness of the similarities and the differences between culture;*
- ✓ *Encourage students as well as teachers to develop positive attitudes towards cultural diversity and overcome their negative judgments.*

In sum, they claimed that students need to develop an intercultural competence that allows them to shift from a culture to another with a high level of awareness and sensitivity of the differences.

On the other hand, two teachers claimed that teaching the foreign culture cannot constitute a threat to students' cultural identity because:

- ✓ *Knowing the foreign culture makes learners more able to distinguish between their native culture and the foreign one;*
- ✓ *Knowing something does not necessarily mean to use it; we must know the target culture in order to behave appropriately.*

It seems that these teachers are not aware of the potential socio-cultural and psychological problems that can be caused by the inappropriate ways of teaching the target culture. In this context, researchers like Kramsch (2013) believe that the overemphasis on the

foreign culture can threaten learners' cultural identity. Therefore, teachers must be careful when teaching the target culture and promote the cultural self-awareness by addressing the native culture, which has not been indicated in the answers of the two teachers as well as another one who skipped this question.

## VII.3. Teaching Culture in Sociolinguistics Classes

### VII.3.1. The effect of learners' poor sociolinguistic knowledge on their communicative ability.

As our sample consisted of teachers who are/were teaching sociolinguistics, they were asked about the effect of the sociolinguistic deficiency on students' ability to communicate in English. Their answers are displayed in the table below:

Table 71

*The Effect of Learners Poor Sociolinguistic Knowledge on Their Ability to Communicate in English*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 06 | 100% |
| No | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
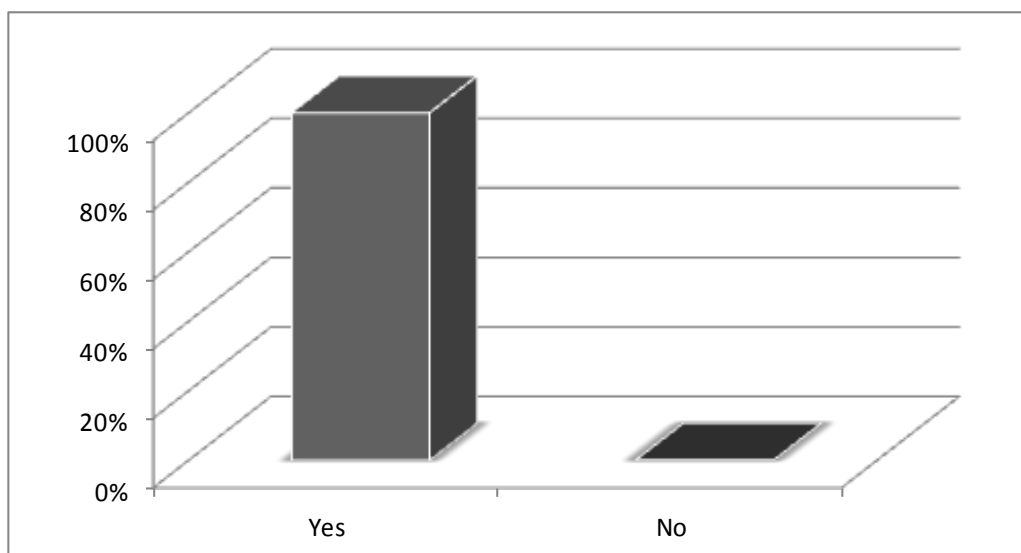
*Figure 58.* The effect of learners' poor sociolinguistic knowledge on their communicative ability.

As shown in the table, all the respondents confirmed that the lack of sociolinguistic knowledge inhibits learners' ability to communicate in English. Therefore, what Canale and Swain (1983) termed sociolinguistic competence is an important component along with other types of competences that help individuals communicate effectively and use language appropriately. Students need to learn about the socio-cultural norms and the conventions that govern the appropriate use of English in real-life situations, as indicated in teachers answers to question (5) because the linguistic competence alone cannot guarantee the appropriate use of language in the social context (Hymes, 1972).

**VII.3.2.      Teachers perception of an effective sociolinguistics course.**

Since EFL students have access to sociolinguistic knowledge, which is essential for successful communications as shown in the previous item, in sociolinguistics classes, we asked the teachers to choose one of the four proposed objectives to be addressed in effective sociolinguistic courses in order to understand how sociolinguistics should be taught. The results are reported in the table below.

Table 72

*Teachers Perception of an Effective Sociolinguistics Course*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| a- Presenting universal sociolinguistic knowledge which deals with the social factors that influence the use of language in general. | 00 | 00% |
| b- Explaining the socio-cultural factors that affect the use of language with reference to the Algerian society. | 00 | 00% |
| c- Explaining the socio-cultural factors that affect the use of language with reference to the English speaking societies. | 00 | 00% |
| d- Demonstrating the effects of socio-cultural factors on language use across social groups, mainly the Algerian and English societies with detailed explanation. | 03 | 50% |
| e- All of them. | 03 | 50% |
| f- Other. | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
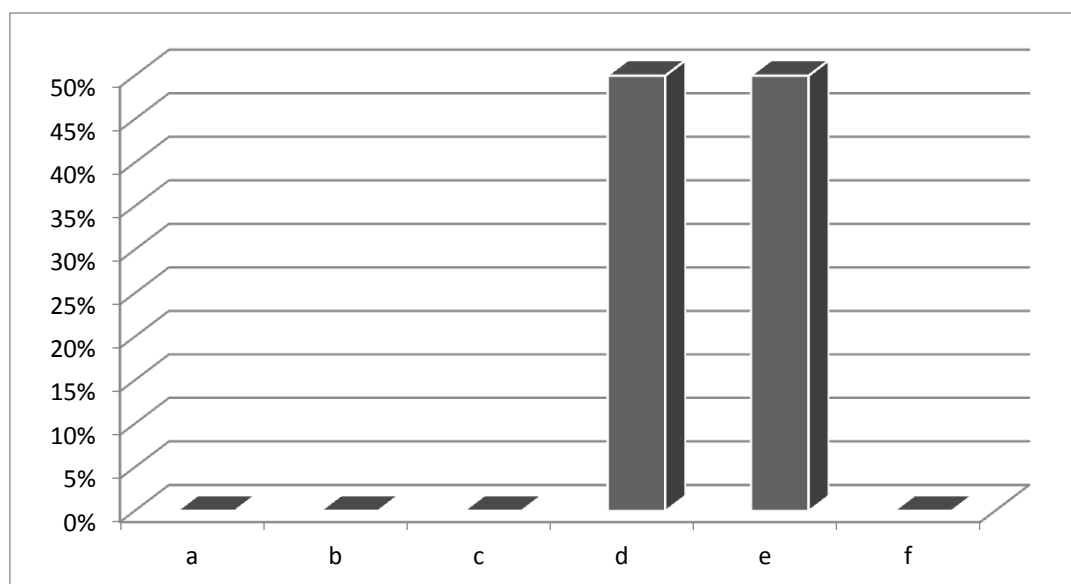
*Figure 59.* Teachers perception of an effective sociolinguistics course.

Among the proposed scopes of sociolinguistics classes, (50%) of teachers believe that an effective sociolinguistics class should focus on demonstrating and explaining in detail how socio-cultural factors affect the use of language in the Algerian as well as in the English societies. Moreover, (50%) of teachers believe that an effective sociolinguistics course should target all the proposed scopes:

✓ Teaching a set of universal sociolinguistic concepts that explains how social and contextual factors affect the use of language in general;

✓ Demonstrating how these social factors function and affect the use of language in the Algerian and the English speech communities.

We noticed that, in their answers, teachers are split into two groups, those who believe that sociolinguistics courses should focus on the use of language in the Algerian as well as the English societies and another group who believes that they should combine both, what is general and what is specific i.e. teachers should explain universal sociolinguistic knowledge to apply it in the Algerian and the English societies. Thus, we conclude that teaching abstract universal sociolinguistic theories cannot be efficient without the application

of these notions and concepts in the native and the target communities in order to understand and assimilate the socio-cultural rules linked to the use of language in these communities.

### VII.3.3. Teachers' evaluation of the cultural content in sociolinguistics syllabus of third-year level.

On the basis of their familiarity with sociolinguistics syllabus and their experience in teaching this subject, teachers were requested the evaluate the cultural content in sociolinguistics syllabus of the third-year level.

Table 73

*Teachers Evaluation of the Cultural Content in Sociolinguistics Syllabus of Third Year Level*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 00 | 00% |
| No | 06 | 100% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
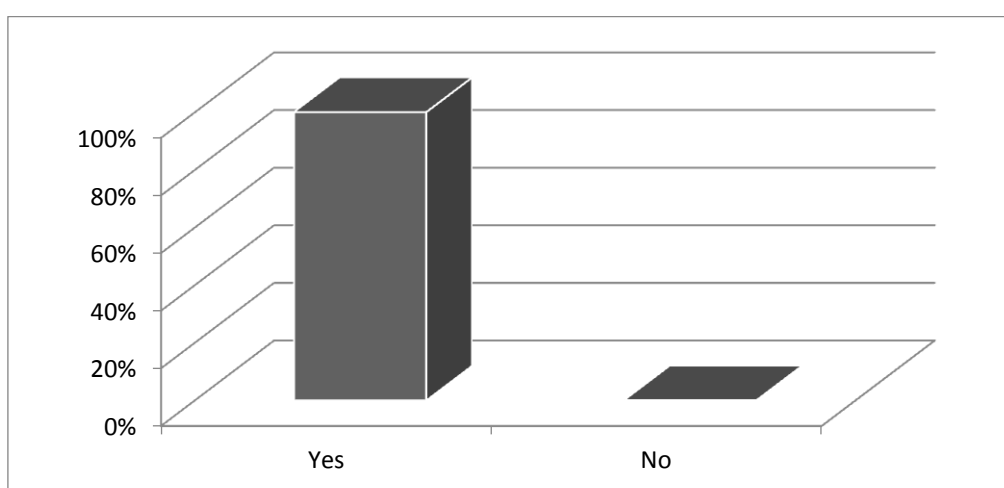


Figure 60. Teachers' evaluation of the cultural content in sociolinguistics syllabus of third-year level.

The figures on the table show that all the teachers were not satisfied with the amount of culture-based issues presented within the sociolinguistics syllabus. They reported that the sociolinguistics syllabus of the third-year level does not offer enough cultural knowledge probably because syllabus designers and teachers think that culture should be taught separately in subjects like civilization and culture of language (CCL). This is what we also noticed in informal discussions on culture teaching with some teachers who claimed that they did not teach culture referring to the (CCL) class.

**VII.4. Students' Understanding of the Intercultural differences**

**VII.4.1. Teachers' attitudes towards the importance of the awareness of the differences between the native culture and the foreign one.**

This question is related to the item (7) in which some teachers referred to the importance of teaching the native culture along with the foreign one and the understanding of the similarities and differences between them in their answers as well as the item (6) which revealed that all teachers believe that teaching the English culture in EFL class is very important. In this question, we aim to understand how teachers perceive the issue of the awareness of the intercultural differences when teaching the foreign culture. The answers of the teachers are displayed in the following table:

Table 74

*Teachers Attitudes Towards the Importance of the Awareness of the Differences Between the Native Culture and the Foreign One*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| *Yes* | 06 | 100% |
| *No* | 00 | 00% |
| *Total* | 06 | 100% |
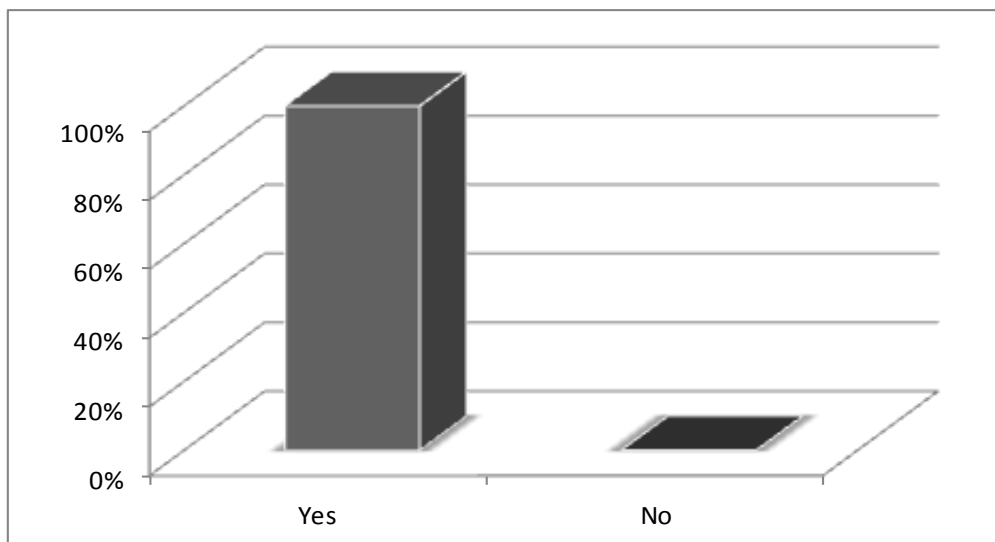
*Figure 61.* Teachers' attitudes towards the importance of the awareness of the differences between the  native culture and the foreign one.

It is noticed that none of the respondents denied EFL learners' need to be aware of the differences between the native culture and the foreign one. They all responded positively to this question by affirming the importance of the understanding of the intercultural differences. In the second part, teachers were requested in an open-ended question to explain their answers. Their answers are exposed in an organized way from general to specific as follows:

- ✓ *Learners have to understand that they are not only dealing with two different languages, but also two different cultures since culture influences language. Therefore, the cultural differences must be emphasized;*

- ✓ *Being aware of the intercultural differences helps learners avoid intercultural problems.* However, the respondent did not explain what these problems are and how they can be solved.

- ✓ *Cultural awareness is central to the notion of intercultural competence. It involves an understanding of not only the culture of the language being studied, but also the learners' native culture. The understanding of the intercultural*

*differences helps learners tolerate culture ambiguities, empathize with others from different cultures, avoid bias and respect other's cultures because no culture is superior than another (positive attitudes).*

✓ *Being aware of intercultural differences is important to overcome stereotypes and prejudices;*

✓ *To preserve their cultural identity, students need to be aware of the intercultural differences;*

✓ *Understanding the intercultural differences helps students appreciate these differences.*

Again, teachers' answers demonstrated how teaching the native culture is also as important as teaching the foreign one. The majority of teachers stressed the role the awareness of the intercultural differences in developing positive attitudes like tolerance, respect, openness and empathy. They all focused on the affective aspect while the behavioral one, which is a key element in Byram's intercultural model (1997), remained unexplored in this item. In other words, they did not explain how the understanding of the intercultural differences develops learners' abilities to behave appropriately in intercultural encounters and reduces misunderstandings.

### VII.4.2. Teachers' evaluation of students understanding of the similarities and the differences between their culture and the foreign one.

On a scale that ranges from very low to excellent, teachers were asked to assess their students' understanding of the similarities and the differences between their native culture and the foreign one to see whether or not students exhibited a high awareness of the intercultural differences. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 75

*Teachers Evaluation of Students Understanding of the Similarities and the Differences Between Their Culture and the Foreign One*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Very low | 00 | 00% |
| Low | 5 | 83.3% |
| Intermediate | 00 | 00% |
| Good | 1 | 16.7% |
| Excellent | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
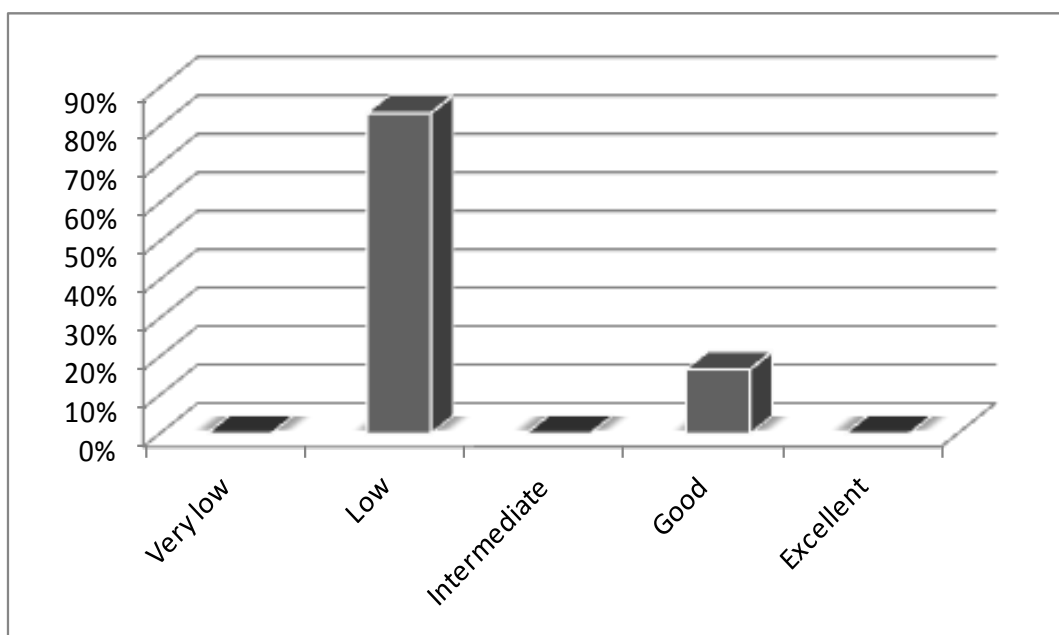


*Figure 62.* Teachers' evaluation of students understanding of the similarities and the differences between their culture and the  foreign  one.

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The overwhelming majority of teachers (83.3%) asserted that their students' understanding of the similarities and the differences between the native culture and the target one is low. On the other hand, only one teacher described his/her students' understanding of the intercultural similarities and differences as being good. This prevailing poor cultural awareness noticed by most of the teachers can cause many problems that affect communication when students interact in intercultural situations. Therefore, they need to acquire more cultural knowledge about both communities, develop skills of comparing, relating and interpreting in order to understand the intercultural differences in terms of practices and behaviors as they have to appreciate these differences.

**VII.4.3.     The effectiveness of teachers' ways of teaching sociolinguistics in helping students understand the intercultural differences.**

To see whether or not their pedagogical goals are/were focusing on the understanding of the intercultural differences when teaching sociolinguistics, in the first part, teachers were asked whether their ways of teaching this subject can help their students understand the intercultural differences or not.  Their answers are presented in the following table:

Table 76

*The Effectiveness of Teachers' Ways of Teaching Sociolinguistics in Helping Students Understand the Intercultural Differences*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 01 | 16.7% |
| No | 03 | 50% |
| Not sure | 02 | 33.3% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
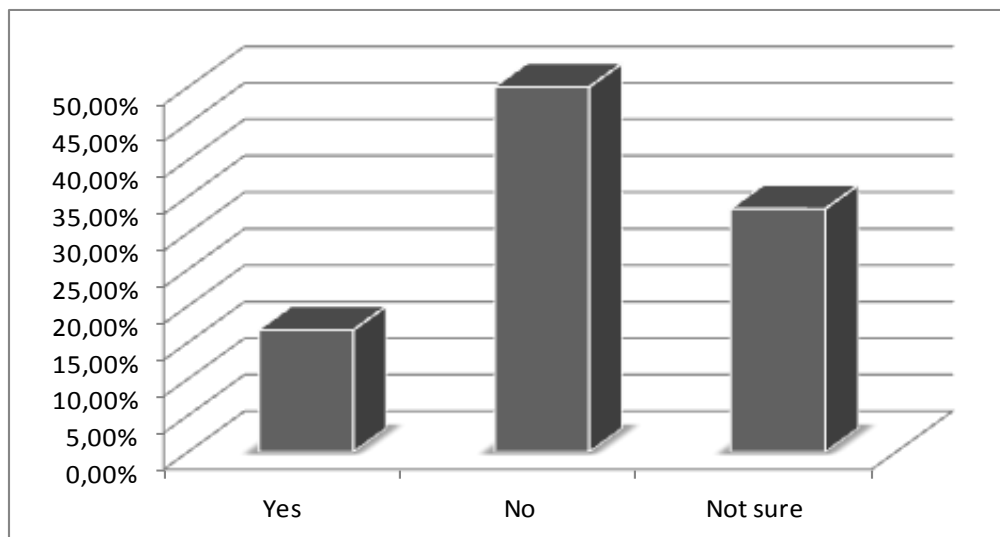
*Figure 63.* The effectiveness of teachers' ways of teaching sociolinguistics in helping
students understand the intercultural differences.

Unsurprisingly, the results show that only one teacher reported that his/her teaching

decisions in sociolinguistics class, including methods, techniques and strategies help learners

understand the intercultural differences because he/she focuses on demonstrating the

similarities and the differences between cultures as one of the teaching/ learning objectives.

Conversely, three teachers acknowledged that their teaching ways are not helpful because

they are restricted to teaching only basic concepts of sociolinguistics. In additions,  two other

teachers were not sure whether or not their teaching methods are helpful because achieving

such objective is not well planned in advance which means that they do not take this objective

into account when designing their courses.

The second part of the question was addressed to the respondents who answered

positively to the first part. We asked them about the design and the implementation of some

cultural activities and techniques that target the progress of students' understanding of the

intercultural differences. The same teacher replied that he/she used activities in which

students were given examples from the target culture, and they were asked to reflect on the

equivalence in their native one as he/she used mini-projects to make them aware of how social factors influence the use of language in the native and the target communities. The answer of this teacher affirmed that his/ her way of teaching sociolinguistics was indeed helpful because both cultures are stressed. On the other hand, the answers of the other teachers showed that they were relying on the traditional way of teaching sociolinguistics.

It is worth mentioning that these results were expected because we observed similar situations in the pilot study conducted before initiating the research which proved that the intercultural dimension was marginalized in sociolinguistics classes.

**VII.4.4.** **The role of sociolinguistics in developing the understanding of the intercultural differences.**

After affirming the importance of understanding the intercultural differences in EFL classes, teachers were requested to evaluate the role of teaching sociolinguistics in enhancing students' understanding of the intercultural difference to see whether they believe that sociolinguistics can be exploited to be taught in a way that helps learners understand the intercultural differences as the researcher has hypothesized in an early stage of the research or not.  Their answers are presented in the following table:

Table 77

*The Role of Sociolinguistics in Developing Learners Understanding of the Intercultural Differences*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Very helpful | 5 | 83.3% |
| Helpful | 00 | 00% |
| Barely helpful | 01 | 16.7% |
| Not helpful | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
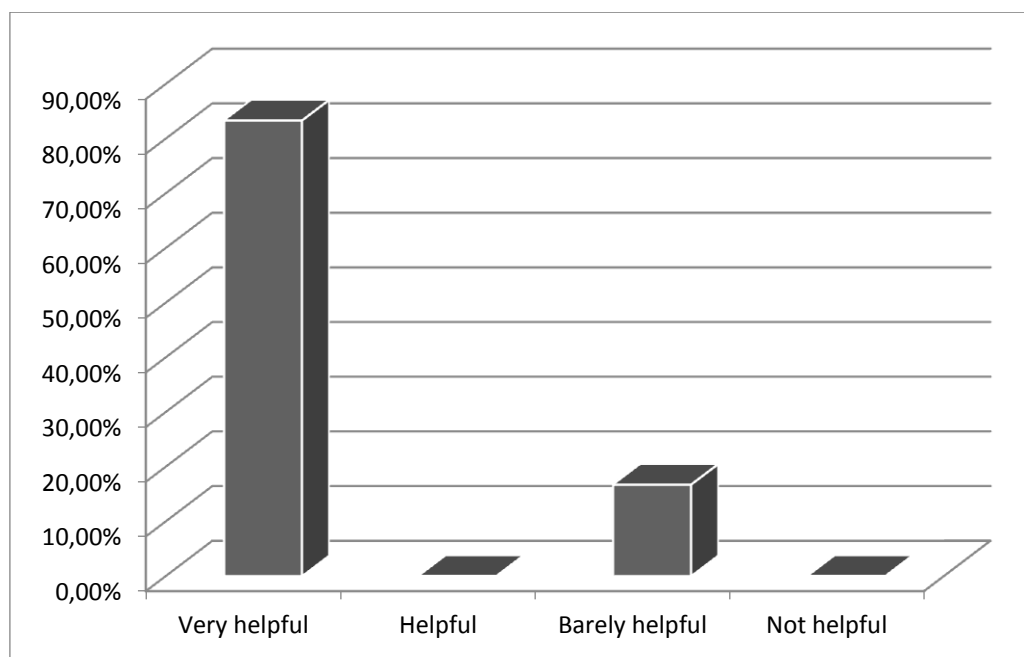


*Figure 64*. The role of sociolinguistics in developing the understanding of the intercultural differences.

The overwhelming majority of teachers asserted that sociolinguistics is very helpful for learners to understand the intercultural differences. Thus, teachers of sociolinguistics can

set this objective within their teaching plans and decisions by integrating the intercultural dimension in their classes. On the other hand, only one teacher viewed that teaching sociolinguistics cannot lead to significant outcomes at the level of the intercultural understanding. Although the same subject stated the effective sociolinguistics course should focus on explaining the effect of the social factors on the use of language in the Algerian and the English communities in item (09), he/she insisted that the subject is barely helpful to achieve this goal.

### VII.4.5. Teachers' perception of the role sociolinguistics class in improving learners' understanding of the intercultural differences.

The majority of teachers acknowledged that the way they taught sociolinguistics were not helpful in item (13), but they also claimed in the previous item that this subject can promote the intercultural understanding. To understand better how teachers perceive the way sociolinguistics can be exploited to improve students' understanding of the intercultural differences, they were requested to explain how they can help them in an open-ended question. Their answers are as follows:

✓ *The implementation of the comparative teaching approach in sociolinguistics classes by comparing between the two cultures to understand the similarities and the differences between culture*;

The teachers relate sociolinguistics courses not only to the foreign culture, but also to the native one in order to understand that the world is perceived in different ways. The comparison between the two different perspectives " *makes the strange, the other, familiar, and makes the familiar, the self, strange – and therefore easier to re-consider*." (Byram and Planet, 2000, p. 189). Teachers should encourage their learners to reflect on the native and the foreign cultures by questioning themeselves and discovering the others in order to understand the similarities and the differences.

✓ *Illustrating the intercultural differences by using authentic materials and other tools that provide concrete examples from real-life situations;*

Sociolinguistics teachers can introduce authentic texts or conversations that illustrate how culture influences the use of particular patterns of language in real contexts to be compared and contrasted to the patterns of interaction in the native speech community. They should also be careful in the design of activities and materials like role plays, simulations and dialogues that teach learners how to take into account these differences in intercultural communication to avoid misunderstandings.

✓ *The use of interactive tools like video-conference;*

A real intercultural communication is an excellent opportunity to increase learners' awareness of the intercultural differences. Teachers can organize a video conference in which students from the two cultures discuss their cultural practices and behaviors. Teachers can guide students to behave appropriately, resolve intercultural problems and cope with the differences. This material can elicit their curiosity to know more about people from the target culture, train them to tolerate ambiguities and suspend their cultural prejudice and stereotypes.

**VII.4.6.      Teachers' evaluation of students' cultural interference in their attempt to communicate in English.**

The evaluation of students' intercultural abilities and problems from the teachers' perspective is important. After the evaluation of students' understanding of the intercultural differences in item (12), in this item, we asked teachers about the cultural interference that their students exhibit in their attempt to communicate in English in sociolinguistics classes. Their answers are presented in the following table:

Table 78

*Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Cultural Interference in Their Attempt to Communicate in English*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 06 | 100% |
| No | 00 | 00% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
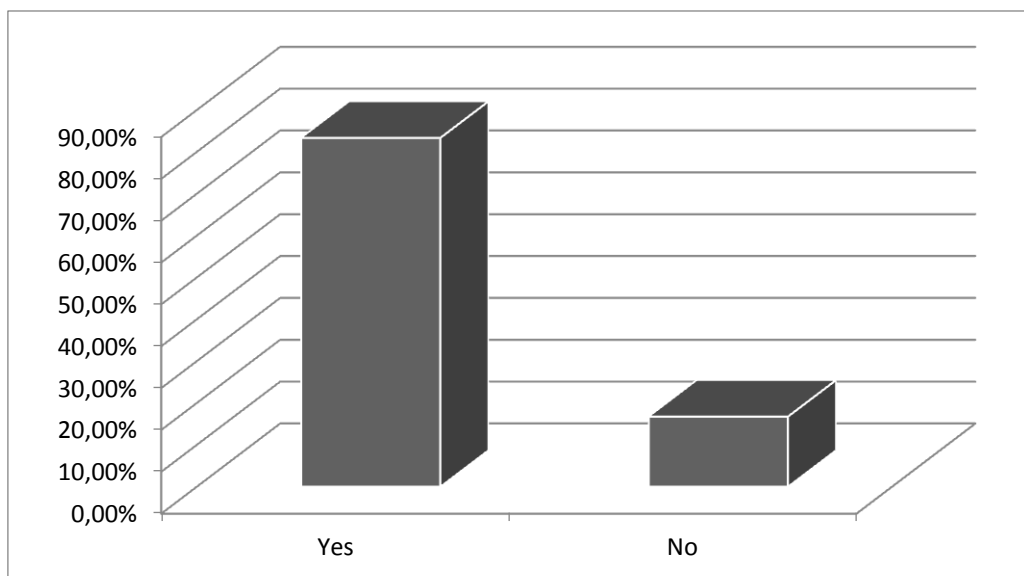


*Figure 65.* Teachers' evaluation of students' cultural interference in their attempt to communicate in English.

The table shows that all teachers reported that cultural interferences were manifested in the performance of their students in sociolinguistics classes. To analyze the teachers' answers, we have to recall the results of item (5) which revealed that the use of English is influenced by its culture and the results of item (12) in which most of teachers described their students' understanding of the cultural differences as being low. Consequently, students'

insufficient awareness of the intercultural difference can cause many intercultural problems that lead to the failure of the communication like the cultural interferences in which students apply their own socio-cultural norms instead of the target ones.

### VII.4.7. Teachers perception of the role of sociolinguistics class in reducing intercultural interferences.

After the assessment of students' intercultural abilities, this question is also directly related to the previous one. Based on their teaching experience as well as their acquaintance with the subject of sociolinguistics, teachers' opinions about the role of sociolinguistics classes in decreasing the amount of cultural interference exhibited in learners' performance are sought in this item. The answers of teachers are presented in the following table:

Table 79

*Teachers Perception of the Role of Sociolinguistics Class in Reducing Intercultural Interferences*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 5 | 83.3% |
| No | 01 | 16.7% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
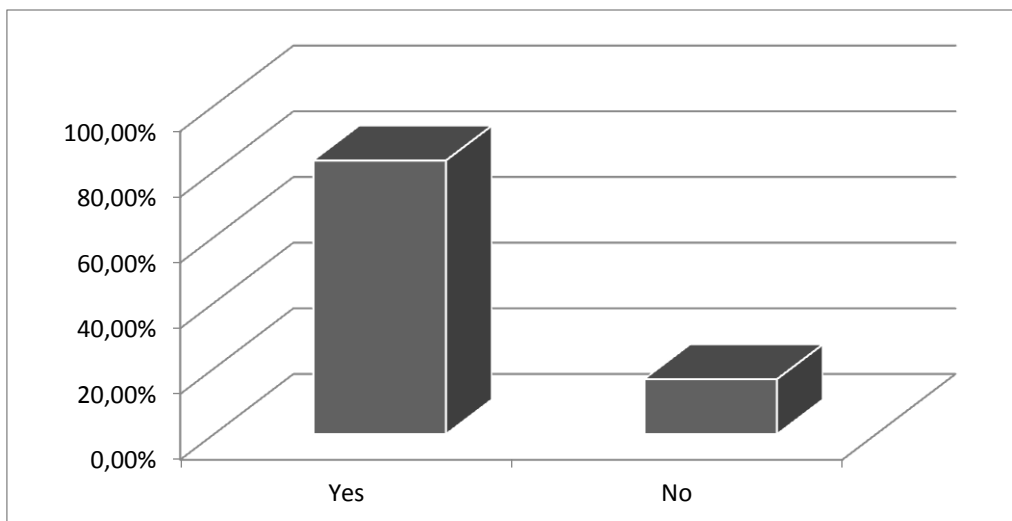
*Figure 66.* Teachers perception of the role of sociolinguistics class in reducing intercultural interferences.

The table reveals that majority of teachers (83.3%) believe that sociolinguistics classes play an important role in reducing the frequency of the occurrence of cultural interferences in learners' speech.

In the second part of the question, teachers were requested to explain the procedures that can be undertaken by sociolinguistics teachers to reduce the occurrence of cultural interference in students' performance. Only four teachers answered this question by suggesting that:

- ✓ *Focusing on the target culture in sociolinguistics is helpful;*
- ✓ *Teaching sociolinguistic concepts with reflection on the English community and the Algerian one can decrease the cultural interference because students will understand the different socio-cultural mechanisms that govern the use of languages in these societies;*
- ✓ *Teaching how each social factor (studied independently) affects language use and asking students to relate it to their own context through presenting lectures in a form of*

*workshops and project works can reduce the amount of the intercultural interferences.*
*Each lecture deals with a social factor and substitutes it to their own context. Then, they*
*compare and contrast it with the TC or vice versa;*

✓ *Encouraging students to compare between the linguistic forms produced in the target*
*and the native speech communities reduces the cultural interferences.*

From the answers of teachers, we deduce that the integration of the intercultural dimension in sociolinguistics class promotes students' understanding of the intercultural differences and reduces the frequency of the occurrence of cultural interferences in their performance. Learners need to reflect on the similarities and the differences between cultures in order to learn how to behave linguistically appropriately and consequently, they can overcome intercultural problems that can cause misunderstandings like cultural interference.

## VII.5.  Learners' Intercultural Attitudes

### VII.5.1.      Teachers' perception of students' attitudes towards the intercultural difference.

An important aspect that needs to be explored in students' understanding of the intercultural differences is the affective one. In this closed-ended question, teachers assessed students' attitudes towards the intercultural differences that are reflected in their reactions and their behaviors when they discuss cultural topics in sociolinguistics classes to see whether they appreciate or reject the differences. Their answers are presented in the table below.

Table 80

*Teachers' Perception of Students' Attitudes Towards the  Intercultural Differences*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| a. They are curious to know more. | 2 | 33.3% |
| b. They appreciate them (they accept and respect). | 1 | 16.7% |
| c. They are flexible. | 1 | 16.7% |
| d. They do not show any particular interest in them. | 4 | 66.7% |
| e. They are ethnocentric (They reject). | 5 | 83.3% |
| f. Other. | 00 | 00% |
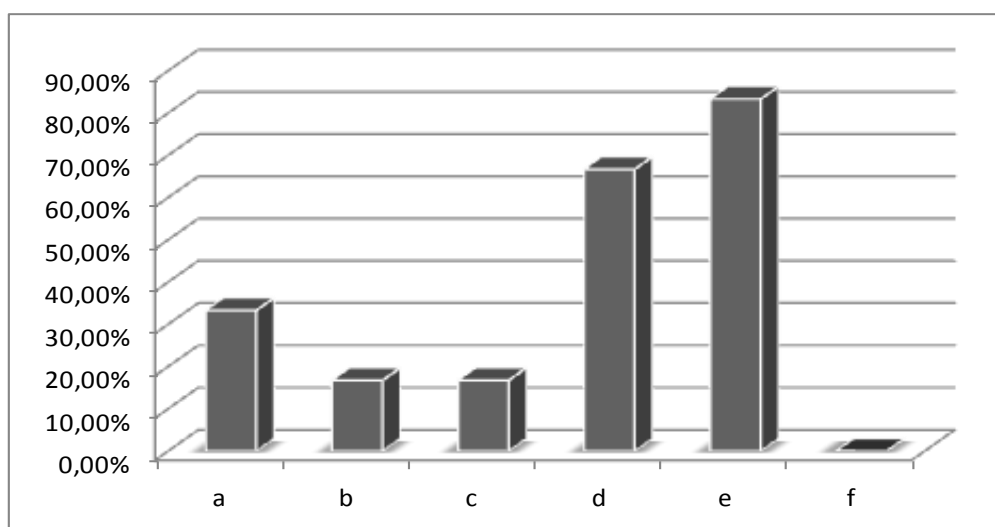


*Figure 67.*  Teachers' perception of students' attitudes towards the intercultural difference.

According to the teachers' answers, students display ethnocentric attitudes towards the intercultural differences like rejection and denial as they are less curious to know more about the cultural differences probably because they are less familiar with the intercultural issues given that the sociolinguistics syllabus does not attach much importance to the cultural

content, as teachers proclaimed. This negative perception of the cultural other functions a barrier towards the understanding of the intercultural differences because "*when students' strong negative attitudes towards certain cultures challenge being open-minded toward other cultures, this affective factor may prevent the learners from desiring to gain knowledge about certain cultural groups and interact with them"(Ryan,2003, p. 133).* Therefore, acceptance, respect, openness, curiosity, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility and empathy are essential to reach a deep understanding of the intercultural differences.

### VII.5.2. Teachers' suggestions to increase students' curiosity to know more about the intercultural differences.

Teachers decisions in the classroom can be responsible for increasing students' curiosity and desire to know more about the foreign culture. For this reason, we asked them to propose how they can elicit their curiosity to discover the differences. Before reporting the responses of teachers, we have to mention that one teacher skipped this open-ended question. Concerning the other teachers, they all agreed that highlighting the intercultural differences by comparing and contrasting the foreign cultural practices and the native ones is helpful. This means that comparing what is familiar with what is unfamiliar can trigger students' reflection on the cultural differences. Some teachers specified that the comparison must be illustrated with examples from real-life situations. In other words, instead of the focus on theoretical concepts, authentic and concrete examples as well as simulations of some problematic situations that require cultural knowledge can raise students' interest in the cultural differences. In this case, students will understand that their linguistic skills alone cannot operate effectively without being acquainted with cultural competences. Another teacher added that the explicit teaching of culture and the reflection on culture-bound linguistic patterns in both communities can motivate students to learn more about the differences, and consequently, appreciate them. As an example, this respondent proposed the teaching of the

cultural differences that are reflected in the use of speech acts like compliments in the native and the target communities.

In sum, teachers recommendations to elicit students' curiosity to know more about the cultural differences can be summarized in the following points

&#10003;     *The comparison and the contrast between the foreign culture and the native one;*

&#10003;     *The shift from teaching theoretical ideas about culture to the focus on concrete and authentic situations where cultural differences are highlighted;*

&#10003;     *Teaching culture explicitly and encouraging students to reflect on the cultural similarities and differences.*

### VII.5.3.      Students' cultural stereotypes and prejudices.

One of the important indicators of the development of a high intercultural understanding that teachers should consider is students' ability to withhold prejudice and stereotypes. Students tend to classify the others into 'taken for granted' categories in order to make the strange familiar because of their cultural unawareness. In this item, teachers were requested to provide us with information about their learners' manifestation of prejudices and stereotypes about the target culture in the classroom. The table below presents their answers.

Table 81

*Students Cultural Stereotypes and Prejudices*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 05 | 83.3% |
| No | 01 | 16.7% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
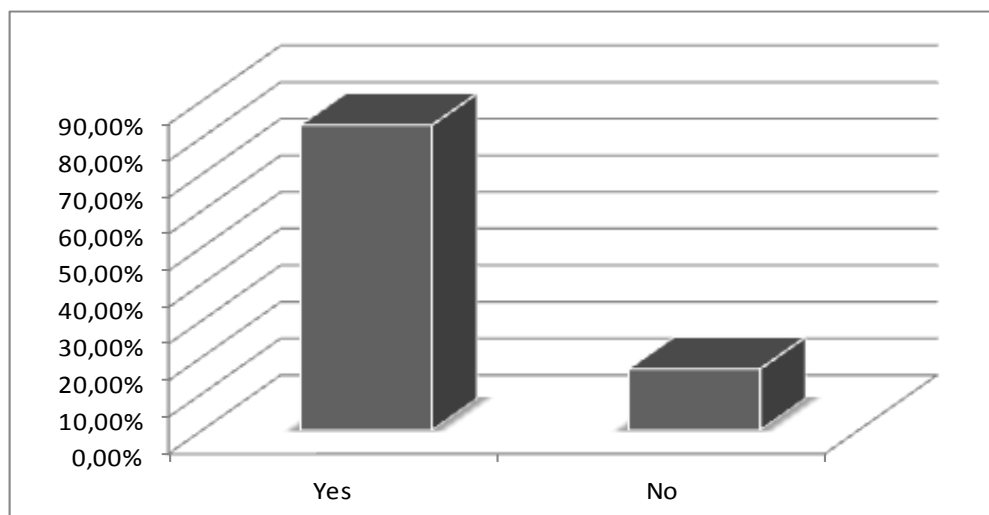
*Figure 68.* Students' cultural stereotypes and prejudices.

As shown in the table, most teachers affirmed that their students exhibit cultural prejudices and stereotypes when they discuss issues related to the target speech community. These overgeneralizations and misconceptions that are persisting in learners' behaviors, thoughts and feelings have a direct effect on their intercultural understanding since they constitute barriers towards intercultural communication. The manifestation of these phenomena in students' performance in sociolinguistics classes reflected their lack of the cultural knowledge and the absence of the exposure to people from the target culture. Therefore, we believe that addressing these issues in intercultural learning is essential.

### VII.5.4. Teachers' correction of students' prejudices and stereotypes in sociolinguistics class.

In this item, teachers were asked about the correction of students prejudices and stereotypes in sociolinguistics classes to see whether or not the adequate sociolinguistic knowledge can help learners overcome these misconceptions or not. The answers of teachers are displayed below.

Table 82

*Teachers Correction of Students' Prejudices and Stereotypes in Sociolinguistics Class*

| Options | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 5 | 83.3% |
| No | 1 | 16.7% |
| Total | 06 | 100% |
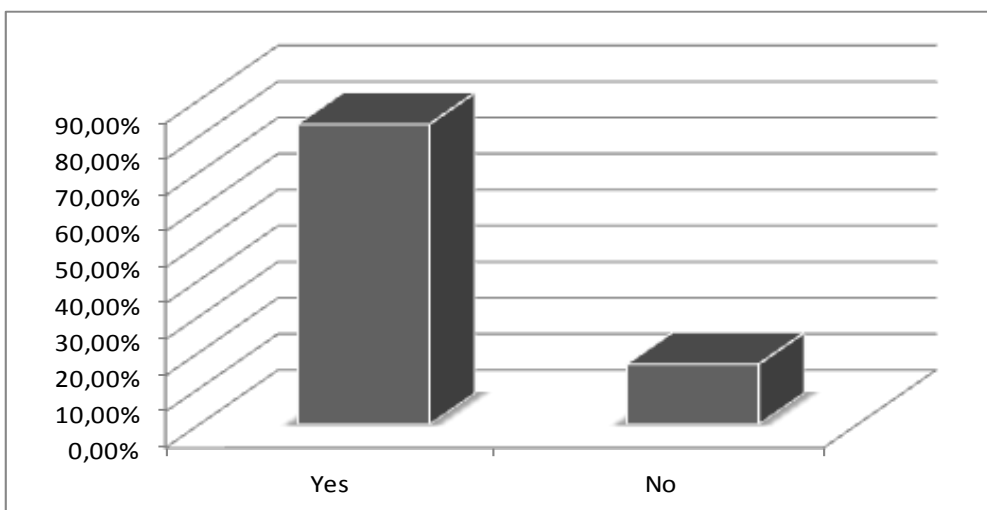


*Figure 69.* Teachers' correction of students' prejudices and stereotypes in sociolinguistics class.

The table and the figure show that the majority of teachers (83.3%) believe that sociolinguistics can correct students stereotypes and prejudice. In other words, the objectives of sociolinguistics courses can be oriented towards exploring and correcting these misconceptions about the members of the target speech community. Conversely, only one teacher refuted the role of teaching sociolinguistics in overcoming these phenomena.

In the second part, those who answered positively were requested to explain how they can correct stereotypes and prejudice when teaching sociolinguistics. Yet, their answers did not offer the expected remedy to this problem because they only commented that:

- ✓ *Students have to distinguish between their preconceptions and the new concepts of the English language;*
- ✓ *Teachers have to explain stereotypes to make them aware;*
- ✓ *Students should be familiarized with values, beliefs and norms of the target culture that may be seen strange to others.*

These suggestions focused on presenting students with limited cultural knowledge which cannot be effective because cultural awareness requires more efforts and skills to be developed. These teachers did not specify any teaching methods, techniques or activities that help learners understand that these misguiding generalizations are responsible for the failure of intercultural communication. However, only one teacher explained that teachers should encourage students to discuss, question and reflect on their prejudice and stereotypes to raise their critical cultural awareness. In this way, they become more open-minded as they develop critical and analytical skills that are important for a deep intercultural understanding.

On the basis of the explanations proposed by them, we conclude that the majority of teachers are not familiar with the topic of prejudice and stereotypes as they lack the experience in tackling this issue in the classroom.

## VII.6. Intercultural Education

### VII.6.1. Teachers' understanding of interculrually competent speakers.

In order to understand how teachers perceive the concepts of intercultural competence and interculturally competent speaker, we asked teachers, in an open-ended question, to cite

the main characteristics of an interculturally competent speaker to be compared with the descriptions found in the literature.

✓ *Intercultural speaker uses communicative strategies and takes into account discourse rules as well as social, cultural, and pragmatic aspects.*

According to this description, the intercultural speaker is the one who acquires strategic, discourse, socio-cultural and pragmatic knowledge. Thus, we can say that this perception of the intercultural speaker is based on the models of communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1980, 1983) and Bachman (1990). Yet, the intercultural approach covers more that these types of knowledge. Researchers such as Corbett (2003)  and Byram (1997) see that intercultural competence is an extension and an elaboration of the traditional communicative competence. In the intercultural approach, both of the native and the target cultures are stressed to be able to see the similarities and the differences between them. In this regard, Jedynak (2011) distinguished between the communicative and the intercultural  approach by claiming that:

✓ *While the aim of the CA is communication,  in the IA,  the aim is maintaining contact, expressing identity and building bound with the native culture and the foreign one;*

✓ *In the CA, the native speaker is taken as a model for effective communication, while in IC the intercultural speaker is perceived as a mediator between the native and the foreign cultures who knows how to deal with different worldviews;*

✓ *CA is interested in the target culture while IC is interested in the reflection on native culture as well as the reflection on the foreign one.*

We cannot deny the importance of the aspects mentioned by the teachers. However, they are not enough to define what an intercultural speaker is. In fact, the common description

of an intercultural speaker is based on his/her intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes (Byram, 1997).

- ✓ *The intercultural competent speaker is more aware, knowledgeable, skillful and effective in using the target language.*

This teacher referred in his/her definition to knowledge and skills which are two important aspects in intercultural competence, but they did not specify what kind of knowledge and skills that describe the intercultural speaker. We have highlighted in the literature review how Byram (1997, 2001) explained in detail knowledge and skills that are needed to be developed in the intercultural competence, and which can be summarized in the following elements:

- ✓ Skills of comparison, relating and interpreting;
- ✓ Skills of discovery and interaction;
- ✓ Knowledge of the social groups' practices and the process of interaction in both cultures.

- ✓ *He knows how to use language correctly and appropriately.*

The appropriate and the correct use of language is important for EFL learners, but it cannot be achieved in IC without a deep understanding of the socio-cultural context where language is produced. In her description of the intercultural speaker, Kramch (1998, p. 27), refers to " *the adaptability to select forms of accuracy and those forms of appropriateness that are called for in a given context of use."* This adaptability cannot characterize every foreign language speaker because it requires cultural knowledge, skills and flexibility.

✓ *Tolerance, understanding and awareness are the main characteristics of interculturally competent speakers.*

Handling ambiguities that often characterize intercultural encounters with tolerance and little discomfort is one of the important features that an intercultural speaker must exhibit. On the other hand, the other attributes which are *'understanding'* and *'awareness'* are vague and confusing words that convey a poor description of intercultural speakers if they are not associated with expressions like *'intercultural differences'*, *'otherness'*, *'the self'...etc.* that are often found in the literature.

✓ *Tolerance, acceptance of others values and beliefs without pre-stated stereotypes or prejudice.*

Positive attitudes like tolerance, acceptance and openness are important to develop the ability to decentre. However, the attitudinal factor highlighted in this description cannot function alone in intercultural communications; it depends on the speakers' cultural knowledge and skills that they must develop in order to act as mediators between cultures and to avoid cultural clashes.

We noticed that the majority of teachers described an intercultural speaker from an affective perspective while the cognitive and behavioral  abilities that focus on what speakers should know and how they should behave in intercultural encounters were not taken into account. Furthermore, they did not refer to speakers' native cultural identity stressed by Kramsch (1998) and Byram (2001. p. 5) who defines an intercultural speaker as "*someone who has the ability to interact with 'others', to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, to be conscious of their evaluation of differences."* The descriptions proposed by teachers reflect their limited experience in intercultural education. Therefore, they need to understand that the intercultural speaker is not

expected to know everything about the target culture, but he/she is required to learn how to mediate between cultures in order to avoid or resolve misunderstandings and to act as a "*diplomat*" (Corbett, 2003).

### VII.6.2.  Teachers' suggested methods and materials to teach culture.

This item aims to present some materials and methods that can be used to ameliorate the quality of teaching culture in foreign language classes. The five teachers answered the question while one teacher skipped it.

✓ *The connection between the philosophical and the educational theoretical frameworks and the practice. More specifically, a systematic plan as to how to go about teaching culture, intercultural competence and clear criteria that could facilitate such decision.*

Teachers should bridge the gap between theory and practice by applying intercultural theories that fit into their teaching objectives and prospects in the classroom.

✓ *The use of social networks can facilitate the access and the exposure to native speakers to experience intercultural communications.*

✓ *Learners work in labs using authentic and audiovisual materials to have a direct access to the target culture.*

Authentic materials that are produced by native speakers for non-teaching purposes can be a rich source for learning intercultural knowledge,  appropriate patterns of interaction and developing positive attitudes.

✓ *Comparing between the native and the target cultures.*

A simple comparison cannot be very helpful. Teachers should train learners to deeply reflect on the similarities and the differences between cultures and appreciate them.

✓ *Teaching culture through discourse analysis.*

The field of discourse analysis can be exploited to contextualize and teach aspects from the target culture like turn taking and compare them with the native one.

### VII.6.3.    Teachers' comments and suggestions.

At the end of the questionnaire, the teachers were invited to write down any comment or suggestion which can help students understand the intercultural differences in sociolinguistics classes. Their comments are summarized in the following points.

✓ *The enrichment of teachers' basic education with courses that reflect the new reality (intercultural dimension) and promote intercultural competence/awareness.*

We believe that intercultural courses alone cannot be enough. Teachers must benefit from intercultural trainings that clarify the implementation of the intercultural approach and the assessment of learners' intercultural competence. The more familiar are teachers with this approach, the more effective teaching/learning outcomes will be gained. Foreign language teachers are not conditioned with the acquisition of a  holistic knowledge of the target culture, but they must be urged to achieve a deep understanding of the intercultural approach to integrate it appropriately.

✓ *"Practices with proverbs, slangs, idiomatic expressions and  collocations*."

The link between language and culture can better be illustrated through the examination of these linguistic devices in the classroom. The focus on idioms, proverbs and slang can help learners understand the differences between cultures because they will understand how these expressions reflect different  cultural worldviews.

✓ *Transcending the traditional teaching materials like the use of handouts and delivering traditional lectures.*

This point is very important in the intercultural dimension where roles have changed. Learners are no more passive receivers of knowledge. They become responsible for their

learning while teachers become facilitators who guide learners to achieve their learning objectives.

> ✓ *As in our context few if no student can actually have the possibility to experience similarities and differences between his/her own culture and TC through direct contact (travel) , teachers should replace it with varied ways to stimulate students' curiosity to know more about the target culture and start see his/her own culture as valued as the target one.*

They should design materials, methods and activities like simulations and role plays that bring into the classroom real-life situations to understand the similarities and the differences between cultures.

**Conclusion**

After the analysis and the interpretation of teachers' responses in the questionnaire, we assert that the objectives underlined in this step are achieved. The data obtained from this instrument offer a clear description of sociolinguistics classroom  in terms of teachers, learners and teaching practices.  We noticed that all teachers are aware of the fact that the use of language is tied to the socio-cultural norms of the speech community. Therefore, they are in favor of teaching the English culture within English language classes to enable learners communicate appropriately. However, we observed that their perception of the notion of "intercultural speaker" is not very rigorous since they focused only on the attitudinal factors like tolerance and acceptance while the cognitive and behavioral abilities as well as the learners' cultural identity were marginalized in many situations. Moreover, Some oral comments that have been received from some teachers like 'I hate culture', 'I did not teach culture' or ' I am not specialized in culture' proved that some of them have negative attitudes towards the teaching of culture. Thus, we are bound to say that some responses of teachers

reflected their limited intercultural experiences and their unfamiliarity with intercultural theories especially when some questions were left unanswered. We conclude that teachers are in need of a persisting intercultural training that provides them with up-to-date intercultural approaches.

The questionnaire also revealed that the syllabus of sociolinguistics does not address culture-based issues because it focuses on teaching basic sociolinguistic concepts apart from any cultural objectives. Therefore, teachers admitted that their current teaching practices cannot help learners understand the intercultural differences. Nevertheless, they stressed EFL students' need to understand the differences between the native culture and the foreign one in order to avoid intercultural communicative problems, develop positive attitudes towards the cultural differences like respect, empathy, and to preserve their cultural identity. Also, teachers' assessment of learners' intercultural abilities revealed many intercultural problems that resulted from their poor intercultural understanding like the occurrence of cultural interferences in their performance, the manifestation of negative attitudes such as rejection, lack of interest in the foreign culture and reliance on prejudice and stereotypes in their perception of people from the other culture.

The most significant conclusion we can draw is related to the answers of the research questions which confirms that sociolinguistics can be exploited by integrating the intercultural dimension to reach the goals of increasing students' understanding of the intercultural differences, reducing the frequency of the occurrence of cultural interference, raising their awareness of the invalidity of stereotypes and prejudice to understand the other, developing positive intercultural attitudes like respect, openness and empathy and eliciting their curiosity to know more about the target culture by adopting some approaches and materials such the implementation of the comparative teaching approach that encourages learners to reflect on the similarities and the differences between cultures, the use of authentic materials that

demonstrate how the selection of certain linguistic behaviors is influenced by culture and other tools that illustrate how real communications take place in real-life situations like the design of mini projects and workshops to explicitly contextualize and relate the social factors that affect the use of language such as age and gender to the native and the foreign communities as well as encouraging learners to use social networks to experience real intercultural encounters. This conclusion correlates with the results of the experimental test which support that teaching sociolinguistics within the intercultural approach leads to a deep intercultural understanding. Hence, we assert that the syllabus requires some reforms related to the contextualization of culture.

# Recommendations and Pedagogical Implication

## Introduction

Throughout our research, we reached the conclusion that, although the participants (teachers of sociolinguistics) were aware of the importance of teaching culture when teaching the foreign language, little attention was given to the integration of the intercultural dimension in English language classroom in general and sociolinguistics in particular. Since both foreign language teachers and learners are cultural entities, language users and communicators, we contend that some reforms and redresses in the context of foreign language teaching and learning must be put into action. For the sake of the improvement of the foreign language teaching/learning process and its outcomes, we present some recommendations that are drawn in the light of the research results and which are related to the integration of culture not only in sociolinguistics courses but also in other courses like literature, civilization and oral expression. Through the following recommendations, we invite the ministry of higher education, policy makers, syllabus designers and foreign language teachers to reflect on foreign language pedagogy in the classroom and to reconsider the integration of the intercultural dimension.

To get deeper insights into the applicability, the validity and the effectiveness of these recommendations, we designed a questionnaire for experts who are university teachers of English, holding diverse academic degrees (professorate, doctorate and magister) to evaluate and comment on them in order to add more credibility and more objectivity to them. This tool was presented to 41 teachers hand by hand or sent through their professional E-mails. Only 12 teachers from Algerian universities (Batna, Jijel, Skikda and M'slila) commented on our recommendations.

## VIII.1.      The Integration of the Intercultural Dimension within Language Teaching

Teachers of English should shift their teaching focus from achieving the linguistic competence to developing students' intercultural communicative competence because the effective and the appropriate use of language can only be achieved when students learn the foreign cultural norms and conventions. The integration of culture in EFL context has become a central component, and foreign language teachers are urged to teach culture explicitly within the four language skills in a gradual and a continuous manner. Consequently, learners' language proficiency cannot be evaluated in terms of the four skills without evaluating their intercultural competence.

### Comments of evaluators.

(a): I absolutely agree with you. Well observed! But how would expect teachers to do it?

(b): Yet, we have to consider that in the Algerian context EFL teachers are employed because they are supposed to be proficient in English language, but not in English culture. On the other hand, which culture should we consider to the native one, while in a language of multi-Englishes, the British culture lost its ample, imperial and status?

(c): Yes, in fact, culture and language are inseparable facets of the same coin. I prefer to introduce them in parallel or together in a similar context. For instance, teaching language or a point in language necessitates examples that can be taken from the culture of the target language where the students are familiar with or the first time they encounter. Of course, no language can be taught in isolation from its culture.

(d): FL teachers are urged to teach culture, both explicitly and implicitly within the four skills, and this teaching should not target only the observable elements of culture (the iceberg model) but also the hidden elements which cause cultural misunderstanding.

(e): No, I think they should teach it implicitly through the same teaching materials and in a sequential and a continuous manner

(f): Indeed, but not necessarily in sequential order.

(g): We cannot deny the fact that developing students' linguistic competence is a condition to get access to the target language. Yet, intercultural communicative competence should not be marginalized since it helps a lot in putting the linguistic competence into context and gives life to it. Then, a shift towards one aspect and putting aside another is not a good idea for teaching, but let us say that a balance between the two is the best.

(h): I totally agree with this, and all efforts must be pursued towards this objective.

(I): Teaching culture is very important in EFL classes because it helps learners to know how to speak correctly and communicate effectively.

(j): I strongly agree, teaching language requires teaching culture.

(k): Yes of course, integrating culture in our teaching is very important. Learners need to be aware of both their culture and the culture of the foreign language they are learning in order to avoid any misconception. Indeed, when students get more familiar with the foreign cultural norms and conventions, they develop a more effective intercultural communicative competence.

(l): Teachers should not exclude the linguistic competence in their language learning, however, they need to develop intercultural communication competence which has a deep impact on language learning.

The majority of our evaluators support the idea that the integration of culture in EFL context is becoming compulsory because the use of English is culturally conditioned. Therefore, we are convinced that the teaching of culture is also as important as the teaching of the other subjects like grammar and phonology whose primary objective is the development of the linguistic competence. However, the evaluator (b) separated teachers' language

proficiency from their cultural abilities that play a central role in the success of any intercultural communication. Furthermore, while s/he was wondering about the English culture that should be taught, her/his comment revealed that s/he has negative attitudes towards the British culture which may affect her/ his perception of culture teaching. We believe that viewing language proficiency in terms of the linguistic competence and the four skills is not enough. In fact, language teaching/learning should go beyond the acquisition of the four language skills by integrating culture when teaching the four skills 'speaking, listening, writing and reading'. For instance, teachers of oral expressions can use some tools like texts or spoken discourses to raise students' awareness of the intercultural differences along with the development of their speaking skill.

Concerning comments (d) and (e), from the experiment that we conducted, we observed that learners reacted more positively to explicit instructions about the intercultural issues, especially during the initial and the intermediate stages of developing the intercultural competence that covers cognitive, behavioral and affective aspects. Any significant progress is hard if not impossible to be observed at the level of these domains through the implicit teaching of culture alone because tangible, concrete and practical elucidations are more effective.

For the evaluator (f), we believe that, like the four skills of language, the development of the intercultural competence is also an ongoing process that requires years of learning. Thus, achieving such goal should be set within a long term plan that extends from the first year to the graduation year starting from the simplest to the most complicated aspects. In sum, the integration of the intercultural dimension should be systematic.

## VIII.2. The Focus on the Intercultural Approach Rather than the Landeskunde Approach

Teachers must transcend the traditional way of teaching culture as a set of historical and geographical facts and literature known the *Landeskunde* approach to focus on the intercultural approach in which they contextualize the teaching of the foreign language to help students recognize and understand the cultural differences.

### Comments of evaluators.

(a): Again, you are right and according to the syllabus proposed by the MESRS, teaching the subjects of civilization and literature was purposely done for cultural ends of the target language, but in an isolated way: avoid cultural comparisons which meant also avoid cultural differences (Irrational policy). Thence propose solutions.

(b): Cultural differences are intended to those who wish to learn a foreign language to integrate them with the natural environment of the language being learnt. I, personally, doubt that we have the minimum number of EFL learners who wish to integrate, but mostly they learn EFL for economic reasons (to be employed in the future).

(c): It is true that to avoid cultural shock, students should be introduced into others' culture and should be made aware of the openness towards the other. If learners are imbued with cultural awareness they listen to one another, then you can convey any cultural insight you want. First, there must be certain criteria on which culture should be taught - the core of the thing lies in ACCEPTING THE OTHER; the rest will ensue.

(d): Further explanation is needed for " the intercultural differences". If not only "Landeskunde", further details about the other elements are needed here.

(e): Yes, of course, I do agree to teach culture using the intercultural approach, and especially contextualizing the teaching of this language to understand many cultural differences.

(f): Yes, "Landeskunde" approach can lead to cultural transfer which is dangerous.

(g): Yes, I do agree with this idea since we see how teaching culture was and still is classical and confined to what has been mentioned above. Culture goes beyond history, geography and even literature to refer to a lifestyle with all its aspects.

(h): It is a good step towards an effective foreign language teaching.

(i): Today, teaching is based on learners-centered approach which focuses on students needs and interests.  Nowadays, students  are very interested in knowing the culture of a foreign language because the majority of them want to travel to the foreign countries to have a job.

(j): I think that both the traditional way of teaching culture and the intercultural approach are effective in nurturing the students' intercultural competence. As a teacher of literature and civilization, my students learn about foreign cultures through texts. The latter can be historical, political, social and religious.

(k):  Definitely, today, culture is a part of all teaching subjects. Teachers are required to create new methods of teaching culture that would help students to realize cultural differences and how culture impacts language use.


In the "Landeskunde" approach, culture is taught as facts related to history, politics, educational systems, geography, literature, fine arts, artifacts, economic and social structures, known as Culture with big C. Yet,  increasing students' familiarity with the culture of the foreign language through supplying them with cultural knowledge and facts  is not helpful since this approach *"... may overemphasize one aspect at the expense of others, thus leading to a rather stereotypical understanding of foreign culture." (Delanoy, 1995, p. 40).* On the other hand, the intercultural approach is meant to increase their sensitivity towards these misconceptions and these overgeneralizations by training them to question and reflect on the intercultural similarities and differences in order to react and behave appropriately in

intercultural encounters and to avoid misunderstandings and cultural conflicts by improving not only their cultural knowledge but also their skills and attitudes because knowledge alone cannot help learners solve such problems caused by cultural differences. Therefore, teachers, educators and syllabus designers should focus more on knowing how to handle intercultural conflicts rather than knowing about the foreign culture. Furthermore, in the traditional approach, learners' attitudes towards the cultural information is insignificant while in the intercultural one, learners respect, empathy, curiosity, tolerance and openness are sought to be developed and promoted.

For the evaluator (c) who claimed that learners do not need to understand the intercultural differences because the majority of them will not be put in such situations that require the use of their cultural knowledge, we assert that, through raising students' understanding of the intercultural differences, learners who are future teachers (employees) become able to recognize what is doable/ sayable and what is not. Hence, they use the foreign language appropriately, and they overcome cultural transfer and shocks. Moreover, unlike the traditional approach, raising students' awareness of the intercultural differences will help EFL learners preserve their cultural identity because the intercultural approach addresses both cultures.

## VIII.3. The Integration of Culture-Based Approaches and Subjects in EFL Classroom

The development of the intercultural competence can be attained in EFL classroom when the ministry of higher education and syllabus designers integrate culture-based approaches and subjects such as interactional sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, ethnography of communication and contrastive pragmatics which deal with the cultural rules and the contextual cues of social interaction.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): Correct. But I wonder if the MESRS would one day think of doing it. You might probably organize a team made of the different Algerian foreign language departments and through several seminars work out a platform to propose.

(b): In one way, it is just to learn about the culture of the foreign language, whether in discourse analysis, contrastive pragmatics…… The first thing to think of is not to design some culturally-based curricula, but reviewing the employment policies and the policy of education.

(c): Is it the problem of the Ministry? I believe it is the common concern between all the ministries namely education, tourism and journalism. We are always introducing the intercultural approach in our teaching through diverse tools without teaching the mentioned subjects. For example, discourse analysis is always taught with sociolinguistics; yet people do not really have intercultural competence because this should be taught and practiced. I believe the best tool to teach intercultural competence is through mobility, exchange of visits, openness towards the other and communication.

(d): The training of teachers to be able to implement these syllabuses is also important to be integrated.

(e): Yes, absolutely.

(f): Yes, these subjects are so important to understand the cultural dimension of English.

(g): Yes, they have a great role is doing so since they represent the authority and the policy makers to apply the approach in textbooks and teaching methods.

(h): This can be achieved at higher levels, but objectives should target other categories of learners (primary, middle and secondary school pupils)

(i): Yes, to attract the attention of decision makers and program designers, you can write articles or organize study days.

(j): Culture based approaches are useful to develop knowledge about cultural rules and social interaction. However, it still remains important that teachers are aware of these approaches and the way of transmitting culture. Otherwise, teaching culture remains constant and statistic.

The intercultural competence can better be developed in foreign language class that seeks to help learners understand how communication usually takes place in any cultural group and illustrates how people's behaviors in interactions including their use and their interpretation of language are shaped by their culture. Therefore, fields that describe and analyze language in its natural socio-cultural environment where it is used are very helpful for learners because they increase their awareness of the role the socio-pragmatic aspects and the socio-cultural factors when communicating in real interaction. Subjects like ethnography of communication and interactional sociolinguistics can yield to a better intercultural understanding since, as Cynthia Gordon ( 2011, p. 77) explains:

> *Such studies, building on Gumperz's work, provide insight into various kinds of* ***intercultural miscommunication;*** *they identify a range of causative factors, including uses of address terms, the structuring of information in discourse, and uses of pacing and pausing: some also give practical suggestions for improving communication. Many are important not only because they contribute to a more nuanced understanding of cultural differences and how these manifest internationally, but also because they aim to educate the public about cultural aspects of communication.*

Introducing interactional sociolinguistics helps students understand how speech is differently contextualized due to the cultural differences. Thus, they will see how different understandings of the contextualization cues will lead to communications problems because

each cultural context interprets the same massage or cue differently. For instance, learners can understand how address terms are differently employed in interaction in different cultures.

Yet, we agree with evaluators (a) and (i)  who claimed that the implementation of such recommendation requires serious efforts like preparing a platform with collaboration with other researchers and experts in the field, writing articles or organizing conferences, seminars and study days on this issue in order to convince policy makers to take the necessary actions.

The evaluator (b) stated that these subjects are helpful in learning about the foreign culture, but we believe that they can also help in promoting learners' intercultural awareness when teachers relate and contrast features in the foreign culture to those in the native one. For instance, teaching contrastive pragmatics by comparing the pragmatic systems in different speech communities helps learners understand that different socio-pragmatic rules lead to different pragma-linguistic forms. In addition, s/he said that the employment policies should be reviewed, but s/he  did not explain how since teachers are usually employed because of their degrees, experiences, the option in which they are specialized, without taking into consideration their intercultural competence.

Concerning the comment  of  the  evaluator (c), we are convinced that the ministry of higher education and scientific research plays the major role in introducing approaches, methods and strategies to improve the learning outcomes like developing learners intercultural competence. Besides, we cannot deny that exchanging visits offers learners the opportunity to enrich their intercultural experience. However, such suggestion cannot be available to all of them. Hence, the necessary procedures must be taken by decision makers to compensate the absence of such fruitful experience like the integration of approaches, subjects and materials that bridge the gap between theory and practice since presenting a theoretical body of knowledge is not sufficient as s/he said.

Teachers familiarity with these subjects is also important. Therefore, we support the view of the evaluator (d) who emphasized the need to train teachers to integrate these subjects in a way that helps learners understand the intercultural differences by projecting theories on real-life interactions.

As the evaluator (h) highlighted, of course, this recommendation can be applied only at the university level where these subjects can be taught because at such stage we are preparing learners to be competent teachers and effective communicators. Other recommendations can be applied  for early levels.

## VIII.4.The Use of the Comparative Approach to Teach Culture

One of the best methods for teaching culture is the *comparison* between the cultural practices in the native and the target groups to understand the similarities and the differences and to reduce the ethnocentric attitudes. By using the comparative teaching approach, the student not only understands the other, but also deconstructs and reconstructs the self to increase his/her self-cultural awareness.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): Very good! The question remains posed if you do not give practical solutions. You have to consider that most teachers are puzzled about the question and how to work it out. So if you hand them a practical example, or two than that might be their fer de lance.

(b): But who will help in achieving the distinction between the two languages? A teacher as a native speaker, or a teacher as a foreign speaker? When you find the answer  you have to think of what it entails.

(c): The use of the comparative approach is a good method that opens up the window to every culture bearer to accept the other, to know the other's culture and  the reasons it is  different from his. This tendency will make from him a flexible personality influencing and be

influenced. This smoothness of spirit makes any individual allow the others to understand him easily and by way of reciprocity he will understand them, and thus, the notion of deconstruction/ reconstruction grows and generates openness at large.

(d): I cannot agree more.

(e): Yes, Sure.

(f): Comparison is helpful because teachers must raise students' attention to acceptance not assimilation.

(g): This is absolutely true, and it would be great if such an approach is applied in real teaching.

(h): As teachers, we must take into consideration the different personalities and the different ways of thinking of our students. So, to compare between native and target languages will be very difficult to be accepted inside a classroom context. We must be careful in teaching using this way.

(i): The process of the comparison between the two cultures helps students to improve their cultural awareness and strengthen their positive attitudes.

(j): I agree. The more the student learns about and understands the similarities and the differences between his/her own culture and the foreign one, the more accepting and open-minded s/he becomes.

(k): Comparative teaching approach remains the best for grasping the similarities and the differences between cultures.

Developing students' intercultural competence necessitates the use of the effective teaching methods in foreign language classroom. On the basis of the results of the research, we support the view of researchers such as Kramsch (1996, p. 206) who endorses that

"understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one's own." By using the comparative teaching approach, the self and the other are met in EFL classroom to create a third zone between them. Hence, for the evaluator (b) who was wondering about the role of teachers in such classroom pedagogy, we perceive them as monitors and trainers who teach learners how to stand in a third position between cultures by enhancing their knowledge, skills and attitudes. Furthermore, in this approach in which teachers teach the foreign culture with reference to the native one, they compare the familiar to the unfamiliar in order to raise learners' awareness of the differences. For example, learners can be asked to observe a given cultural practice or a behavior in the target society like greeting when watching a particular video, then, they have to reflect on the way the same practice is performed in their own society in order to deduce the similarities and the differences between them. In this way, they not only understand the foreign culture, but they also reshape their perception of theirs. Therefore, Byram and Planet (2000, p. 189) argue that "comparison makes the strange, the other familiar, and makes the familiar, the self strange – and therefore easier to reconsider."

Concerning the comment (h), who postulated that this method cannot be effective because of learners' divergent personalities, we insist that the aim of the comparison is not to decide which culture is better or more superior than the other, but to develop attitudes like acceptance, tolerance, openness, flexibility and respect towards cultural diversity that positively refine their personality and reduce their ethnocentric attitudes and behaviors. Of course, a simple comparison is not enough. Teachers need to encourage learners to analyze, explore and reflect on the differences to overcome the potential risks of acculturation.

## VIII.5. The Role of Authentic Material

The use of authentic materials such as radio broadcast, songs, literary texts, articles from newspapers or magazines and videos in EFL context is essential for developing intercultural competence in non-native environments because they illustrate the natural

occurrence of communication and interaction in real-life situations. These materials help learners understand the intercultural differences and improve their skills of observing, comparing, relating and interpreting through observing people's behaviors and comparing them to the native ones.

### Comments of evaluators.

(a): True, but yet again tell the teachers how to do it, if you have done it during your experiment, give them at least one example.

(b): But if ever the learners have not known about their native cultural patterns and the natives appearing on these materials do not reflect the native cultural norms.

(c): I totally agree with you because to make the intercultural competence grow, students must be exposed to authentic material. Learners will discover by themselves the different cultures as they come naturally to them and bit by bit the cultural shock will disappear and soon be replaced by acceptance.

(d): Yes! Indeed.

(e): I do agree.

(f): Authentic materials always have their essential role in providing learners with a healthy environment and real-life situations.

(g): Yes, authentic materials are very important to illustrate intercultural aspects.

(h): The integration of such resources and materials has in fact become a necessity more than a choice in today's classes of foreign languages.

(i): This will depend on the available time that we have for the course, the number of students inside the classroom, and the type of authentic materials that are available.

(j): Authentic materials are the effective ways in learning the foreign language and all its aspects.

(k): Oh yes! I have taught oral expression for five years and this was exactly the way I used to do things. The materials I used to rely on were radio broadcast, songs, speech, articles from newspapers and videos to discuss the target culture and the intercultural issues.

(l): Undoubtedly, using authentic materials is found very useful to teach culture. Students need to see and listen to native speakers and observe how they act in different situations.

As Corbett (2003, p. 105) indicates, "course materials should not simply provide models for good language use; they should also encourage the exploration of cultural practices", we believe that authentic materials serve in portraying and reflecting the cultural reality and the natural occurrence of communication in real-life contexts and everyday situations. These cultural resources can increase learners cultural knowledge, improve their skills and promote their positive attitudes. They offer learners the opportunity to discover and explore how native speakers think and behave as they allow them to expect and accept the cultural differences. As their familiarity with the foreign cultural practices and behaviors grows up, the cultural shock will be reduced as evaluator (c) said. For instance, through the use of authentic videos, learners can understand the intercultural differences by observing people's cultural behaviors and comparing them to the native one. Thus, they "... become aware of the ways in which their own cultural back-ground influences their own behaviour, and develop a tolerance for behaviour patterns that are different from their own" (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993, p. 82). Because audiovisual aids can better illustrate the nonverbal communication, in the experiment, we used some authentic videos to explain some cultural practices like greeting and personal space. For further suggestions, teachers can use a scene from a movie to illustrate gender differences or politeness strategies in a particular culture; they can use songs to teach idioms or newspapers to teach euphemism in the target culture.

Concerning comments (b) and (i), we agree with Brown (2000, p. 83) who stated that "material should be chosen, not so much on the basis of their own interest, but for what they can be used to do." In other words, the teaching materials used in any lesson are selected in relation to the objective set ahead in the lesson plan (in our case the objective is achieving an adequate intercultural competence), the available time and the accessibility to the material in the classroom.

## VIII.6. Raising Learners' Cultural Self-awareness through Questioning Themselves and Reflecting on their Cultural Experiences

Students must be encouraged to question themselves and reflect on their cultural experiences in classroom debates and discussions to develop their awareness of their culturally shaped selves and to promote their critical analytical thinking which is a prerequisite for raising the intercultural awareness.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): This is an impossible mission in our department. You can though successfully do it in classes of no more than 25 equipped with the latest technologies to display.

(b): For the time being, learners are not to the maximum aptitude to question who they are and to reflect on their cultural experience. We have to distinguish between what is said theoretically and what is daily experienced.

(c): Critical thinking opens up wide the students' minds by giving them a chance to ask questions about themselves and do not take things for granted. So, before engaging students to enter the world of others' culture, let them stand and reflect upon their own identities, their norms and their values. If they come to know all these with limitations they will shift to know the others. They for sure understand the others as they have understood themselves. Then, they automatically enter into communion with other cultures.

(d): Yes of course.

(e): Yes, indeed.

(f): I agree.

(g): I agree.

(h): Good.

(i): This is very important to preserve their own identity.

(j): Exactly, and the number of misconceptions and stereotypes that the students become aware of after the debates is utterly amazing.

(k): Yes, students need to be aware of their culture in order to understand the cultural differences.

Developing learners' self-awareness is an important stage which requires a high level of critical and analytical skills. In an intercultural training, learners should stop taking things for granted, as evaluator (c) said, by eliciting their reflections on their practices, beliefs and behaviors that are shaped by their cultures in activities like debates and discussions. In this way, they will become more open-minded as the validity of their misconceptions and their stereotypes will be discussed, questioned, and subsequently corrected thanks to the critical-analytical skills they develop. In fact, classroom debates and discussions help learners understand better not only the otherness, but also explore and discover the cultural self by deconstructing and reconstructing it. Indeed, self awareness is essential to preserve the cultural identity, as the evaluator (i) stated above. Yet, tolerance, respect, acceptance and flexibility should also be promoted to overcome defensive and ethnocentric attitudes.

Concerning the comments (a) and (b), in fact, we believe that debates and group discussions can be very effective in large classes, especially if they are planned in advance

and structured in a way that fosters the development of self-awareness and enhances their critical and analytical skills. Even passive learners will be motivated to share their ideas and learn from others' experiences if the teacher succeeds in choosing topics that trigger their curiosity and their reflection. Thus, they will be more involved in the teaching/learning process.

**VIII.7. Critical Incidents and Problem-Solving Activities.**

The use of critical incidents and problem-solving activities raises students' intercultural sensitivity through their reflection on issues like misunderstandings, cultural shocks and conflicts caused by the intercultural differences. These types of activities teach learners how to adapt their behaviors in intercultural communications to be understood, how to develop a feeling of empathy toward the others and how to tolerate ambiguity.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): This is Sysoyev proposal for foreign culture learning while there was ample conflict between the West and the East and it does not mean that it works at all situations.

(b): Students need to be exposed to cultural problems and conflicting issues so as to brief them to absorb the shock of cultural differences. Hence, by briefing them in this way, learners with practice find no problem facing the different cultural values of the other.

(c): Yes, I do agree.

(d): Yes, empathy is very important in communication.

(e): Yes, to make learners aware of how, where, and when such problems can be encountered and avoided.

(f): This is a good and a very effective strategy to teach cultural differences.

(g): Yes. Problem solving activities and critical incidents train foreign language learners to behave appropriately in intercultural situations.

(h): I totally agree! Problem solving activities are very important.

(i): I agree. I think that the use of critical incidents and problem solving activities can really help to raise the students' tolerance and empathy.

(j): Problem solving activities are important to help students explore the gap between cultures and understand how this gap may influence language use. They are useful to help students understand how to act in different situations and what kind of speech acts they need to react against different situations.

All the evaluators agreed on the importance of introducing critical incidents and problem solving activities in intercultural pedagogy except one teacher who called into question its effectiveness in our context. However, we are strongly convinced that our students are not sheltered from intercultural problems since they are learning a foreign language as they are exposed to a foreign culture which is different from their own. These differences in values, beliefs and cultural practices will eventually cause some problems that students should learn to manage. For instance, before initiating the experiment, we observed that learners' reactions when discussing these issues revealed that they thought that their culture is more superior than the target one. Through the use of critical incidents and problem solving activities they realized that they have to decentre by accepting and respecting different worldviews in order to avoid cultural clashes. These activities are known as culture sensitizers because they describe and illustrate intercultural situations where misunderstandings and clashes are raised because of the cultural differences. Through discussions, teachers guide learners who become actively involved in the learning process to propose interpretations or solutions to solve the problems. Besides, engaging in such activities promotes learners

analytical and critical skills as it develops comparing, relating, interpreting and interaction skills.

## VIII.8. ICT Tools and Teaching Culture.

ICT tools are important resources of intercultural lessons and training activities. They offer students the opportunities to interact and communicate with people from the target culture using videos and textual chatting to exchange their cultural experiences through websites like Yahoo, YouTube, Skype and Facebook.

### Comments of evaluators.

(a): An absolute must! And regularly update.

(b): How many people have you got in touch have made contacts with natives and if any what evidence do they have on those being natives?

(c): Using interface, chatting and exchange of photos, videos... etc. can open wide the route to knowing one another. Today, many students know about different countries and their habits even before they went there.

(d): The use of these tools should be guided by the teacher i.e. within the confines of a blended learning approach.

(e): Yes, of course, they help a lot to learn how to interact with people from the target culture.

(f): Yes, ICT's can help illustrate intercultural and cultural patterns.

(g): This can be considered a part of authentic materials, but ICT may go beyond that to up to date with newly contexts.

(h): I totally agree.

(i): The same answer of statement 6

(This will depend on the available time that we have for the course, the number of students in the classroom and the type of authentic materials that are available.)

(j): The use of them should be controlled by the teacher.

(k): Absolutely, ICT tools are effective for intercultural exchange. Students can use these tools to learn more about cultural differences. Moreover, ICTs are important for language learners because having contact with native speakers will enable students to sound like a native speaker.

We confess that the most effective intercultural training takes place when trainees travel to the foreign country to be directly exposed to real intercultural communication. Yet, in our situation, the majority of learners do not have the opportunity to travel abroad and to interact with native speakers. In the present research, we found that the absence of this valuable experience can be compensated by the integration of ICT tools that train learners to interact with native speakers without going to their country. Researchers like Kramsch and Thorne (2002, p. 100) claim that "[g]lobal technologies offer a mode of communication that provides at first sight convenient, authentic, direct, and speedy access to native speakers and their cultures." Internet and computer-mediated communication bring the foreign culture into the classroom to allow learners experience and learn from real intercultural encounters.

Today, the technological advances allow teachers along with the assistance of the administrative staff to organize video-conferences within exchange programs where EFL learners discuss different perceptions of the world and different cultural experiences with people from the foreign culture. Some students may feel anxious in intercultural face-to-face communication. Therefore, teachers may substitute this type of face to face communication by text-based CMC using social networks like yahoo mail, messenger... etc. They can also register in some forums, groups or platforms to discuss cultural topics. When these activities are performed outside the classroom, students should be asked to write a report about what they learned as well as the difficulties they faced in such experiences. Furthermore, teachers can upload some instructional videos from YouTube that teach them the importance of

nonverbal communication in intercultural encounters such as paralinguistic cues, kinesis, postures and gestures.

Concerning the comments (d) and (j), we agree that the guidance of teachers is very important since the uncontrolled use of ICT tools can have serious consequences such as the formation of overgeneralizations and misconceptions about the target cultural community. Besides, creating a native-like speaker proposed by evaluator (k) is, in fact, one of the potential risks that must be managed by the teacher through the careful selection of materials and instructions to form intercultural mediators. Therefore, as Chun (2008, p. 15) said, "Studies are repeatedly emphasizing the role of instructor in raising awareness, in designing appropriate tasks, in monitoring the online collaborations, and in following up on intercultural exchanges."

## VIII.9. The Importance of Continuous Classroom Observation to Assess Learners Intercultural Abilities

Foreign language teachers can continuously use classroom observation checklists to assess learners' progress and to identify and solve their intercultural problems like prejudice, stereotypes and cultural transfer through the observation of their behaviors and their reactions in activities like classroom discussions, role plays and simulations.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): This is doable, but with a lot of patience and attention.

(b): Prejudice is a natural human feeling that everyone has. It is like the Theory of Face Politeness. Everyone seeks to preserve something by having a prejudice towards the other. Needless to think of living in a world where natural human behaviour submits to a total metamorphosis.

(c): Observation checklists are good collection data tools. I suggest that teachers can use participant observation where they themselves become members of the group and control the use of culture and the extend learners properly use it or not. Teachers can indirectly record what they want and move from one group to another unnoticed.

(d): Yes, I agree.

(e): It works with some teachers but not all of them, because to do that we need to cut minutes or half an hour to assess this progress and identify their cultural problems.

(f): Yes, but it is hard to evaluate it in class.

(g): For teachers, self evaluation works to see to what extent what is applied as a new approach is workable.

(h): I totally agree.

(i): This depends on the time allocated, the number of students, and the nature of the course.

(j): To get valid and reliable assessments.

(k): I don't know if this would be possible in Batna 2 University due to the huge number of students.

Assessing learners' intercultural competence is an essential aspect of intercultural education to see whether learners' intercultural abilities have progressed throughout the intercultural teaching or not. Since developing this competence is a systematic and an ongoing process, teachers should continuously observe learners' performance in the classroom to assess their progress. In this vein, Byram (2013) claims that "Observation charts are especially helpful when trying to collect data about complex competences, such as intercultural communicative competence or speaking competence." Classroom observation is also important to assess the effectiveness of methods, materials, techniques and activities that

are used to raise learners intercultural competence and to decide about the coming stages of the teaching/learning process.

Apropos of the commentator (b) who views the prejudice as natural human feeling, we agree that it develops during the process of socialization. However, learners who hold prejudice towards the target cultural group are narrow-minded and intolerant, which negatively affect their intercultural abilities. In fact, behaving with people in a judgmental way is one of the factors that leads to intercultural shocks and rejections. Therefore, misconceptions like stereotypes and prejudice must be detected, critically analyzed and corrected by teachers.

Concerning the evaluators (a), (e), (f) and (k) who believe that using such assessment tool is difficult in large classes, we are aware that observing the individual performance of each student is time consuming. Therefore, we propose the use of group assessment in activities like role-play, simulation and group discussion instead. To facilitate the task of teachers, the design and the selection of tasks and activities should be done in accordance with the aspects intended to be observed and assessed.

It is worth noting that, in intercultural education, teachers should become learning facilitators who guide students to reflect on intercultural problems and to raise their awareness of the serious consequences of their misconceptions and misbehaviors whenever a problem is observed in their performance.

## VIII.10.    The Use of Self-Assessment Tools to Promote Learners' Autonomy

Teachers should give students the opportunity to assess their intercultural abilities to raise their awareness of the importance of the intercultural competence and to promote their autonomy and self-reliance.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): Good, but how?

(b): Many teachers themselves have never experienced the development of  intercultural competence and if you permit, they even lack professionalism and linguistic competence.

(c): You should specify which type of learners and at what level. Assessing their own intercultural pace is given but to the few. Students must be mature enough; students who are able to understand the critical thinking norms can do the job, but the others they need not to be prejudiced.

(d): Yes. Self-assessment is important for learners' autonomy.

(e): I do agree.

(f): Yes, but it is hard to assess, too.

(g): Yes. Self-assessment is important not only in the case of intercultural competence, but also in language proficiency.

(h): It is a good idea, but I wonder how learners can be able to assess their intercultural capacities.

(i): If they are aware of the cultural aspects and they know how to use them appropriately.

(j): Giving students the opportunity to assess their intercultural abilities is very crucial to boost their confidence and enhance cultural interaction.

(k): I agree. Teachers should be tolerant too, and give students the opportunity to assess their intercultural abilities.

The intercultural language teaching aims to increase learners' involvement in the learning process by making learners responsible for their learning through taking decisions,

drawing conclusions and reflecting on experience (Bandura, 2000 & Marczak, 2013). Self-assessment tools and self-reports allow learners to review their learning process and outcomes to identify and recognize their strength, weakness and needs, especially in the assessment of abstract elements like attitudes which, consequently, promote their abilities to manage their learning. Among the researchers who encourage the use of self-assessment tools are Lussier et al.(2007) who explain its importance as the following:

> *This may, in turn, increase their awareness of developmental process behind intercultural learning, and activate them so that they take a more active part in the process and systematically monitor the changes to self-perceptions or attitudes and emotions which they experience. After all, they can best assess what happens within them* (as cited in Marczak, 2013 P. 102).

Many evaluators expressed their concerns about the difficulties of using self-assessment tools probably because of learners' limited experience in this domain. Teachers have to facilitate this task for learners and guide them by adopting a scale upon which they grade their abilities in one of the intercultural aspects. Moreover, teachers can also train learners to assess themselves through the use of some reliable ready-made tools and inventories proposed by some organizations like the intercultural development inventories

The evaluator (b) referred to teachers' linguistic and intercultural competence which will be explained in detail in the next recommendation.

## VIII.11.    Teachers' Intercultural Communicative Competence

Teachers are required to become researchers/ethnographers to develop their intercultural competence, and syllabus designers to select the appropriate cultural aspects to be taught as well as the appropriate teaching materials, strategies and methods to be used to target a

particular intercultural aspect. Furthermore, they must carefully handle cultural issues to avoid any subconscious formation of overgeneralizations and misconceptions in learners' minds.

**Comments of evaluators.**

(a): Very good

(b): Indeed, teachers' intercultural literacy should go beyond learners' capacity to hold. Teachers should stay neutral in transmitting a cultural norm. They should not profit from learners' naivety to inject their poisonous messages. They should not inculcate dangerous things about cultures that in fact do not claim for.

(c): Yes, teachers should be trained to be interculturally competent.

(d): I do agree.

(e): Yes, sure.

(f): The teacher is the first impression students can get towards both the target language and its culture too. He or she is the one who can make learners like∕hate, accept∕reject, convert to∕assimilate the target culture. Therefore, they must be well prepared for this task

(g): That is true. Both, teachers and learners should develop their intercultural competence if they aim to reach the stage of becoming intercultural speakers of the language.

(h): Teachers must first be trained in order to introduce the intercultural aspect in the course without negatively affecting learners' attitudes.

(i): I strongly agree.

(j): Indeed, the teacher is and will always remain a researcher.

(k): Teachers play a very sensitive role in intercultural education. Besides their role as guides, they are advisors. Students are highly impacted by teachers' views and attitudes. Therefore, teachers attitudes towards cultural diversity should be very positive.

Teachers' intercultural competence is also essential in intercultural language teaching since it has a direct effect on students' intercultural understanding. Their limited cultural knowledge and poor intercultural experience will eventually lead to the failure in reaching the desired outcomes. In this regard, Byram (2008, p. 86) emphasizes the importance of teachers' intercultural competence as the following:

*Teachers have to make complex decisions about how and when to develop intercultural competence in their learners. In order to make these decisions they need a rich personal experience of the acquisition of intercultural competence themselves- the five savoirs- and a knowledge of development and social psychology.*

Teachers should continuously train themselves to improve their intercultural abilities by conducting research and ethnographies to deepen their understanding of this field, and to decide about the appropriate teaching materials, techniques and strategies that facilitate the acquisition of the intercultural input.

Both teachers and students are human beings who come to the classroom with their own attitudes about the target culture. Teachers' adequate intercultural competence plays a significant role in raising learners' awareness of the invalidity of overgeneralizations that can subconsciously be generated when teaching some cultural practices. Besides, teachers should carefully and positively portray cultural diversity to promote learners' positive attitudes towards the target culture.

**General Conclusion**

It was believed that culture should be taught as a set of cultural knowledge and facts related to history, geography, economics and education in separate subjects like civilization and culture of language. This way of approaching culture teaching did not prove its effectiveness on learners' ability to communicate and to use language. Being aware of the communicative function of language as well as the influence of culture on language use, calls for the integration of the intercultural dimension in foreign language pedagogy has been arisen. Yet, the situation in the department of English at Batna 2 university was far from targeting this objective as we noticed through the direct observation and the pilot study conducted before initiating the experiment the absence of the formal and the informal intercultural instructions like the use of materials, strategies and activities. Since each culture has its specific norms to use language, the linguistic patterns that are appropriate in one culture may be inappropriate in another one. These intercultural differences can lead to serious clashes and misunderstandings if communicators are not aware of them. In fact, the random teaching of culture that focuses on transmitting factual information without developing affective, cognitive and behavioral aspects can engender ethnocentric attitudes and stereotypes. Exposing foreign language learners to the foreign culture is a complex and a systematic process which requires careful strategies and decisions that are necessary to train learners to manage intercultural problems and prepare them to intercultural encounters instead of supplying them with factual information.

Although sociolinguistics has been taught as definitions and descriptions of basic abstract concepts related to the field with limited culture-based instructions, as the pilot study results confirmed, this class can be an important opportunity to help learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences by analyzing and comparing how cultural systems

affect the use of language in social interaction in each speech community since its primary concern is the use of language in society. Sociolinguistics courses can be exploited to be taught from an intercultural angle as a remedy to help learners understand the intercultural differences and to improve their intercultural abilities.

In this research, we investigated  the role of teaching sociolinguistics courses within the intercultural dimension in developing third-year undergraduate learners' understanding of the intercultural differences to examine the current situation of culture and intercultural dimension in sociolinguistics teaching practices and to bring innovation to the teaching of sociolinguistics and culture  in the department of English at Batna 2 university by highlighting the need to transcend the traditional approach of teaching culture and demonstrating the importance of introducing the intercultural dimension within the study of the foreign language to promote learners' intercultural communicative competence. Besides, the study was intended to shed lights on the exploitation of sociolinguistics courses in order to improve learners' understanding of the intercultural differences and to suggest a practical framework related to the integration of the intercultural approach in sociolinguistics class  through the use of effective teaching  methods, materials and strategies that can provide learners with a solid intercultural understanding and develop positive attitudes towards the others.  Following the methodological path of the thesis, the following research questions have been raised:

1- To what extent can sociolinguistics courses help learners understand and appreciate the intercultural differences?

2- How can sociolinguistics be taught in a way that develops learners' understanding of the intercultural differences?

3- How do sociolinguistics teachers perceive the integration of the intercultural dimension in their teaching practices?

4-why do learners need to understand the intercultural differences?

On the Basis of these questions, we put forward two hypotheses in this work. The first hypothesis proposed that introducing the intercultural dimension that relies on the comparison between the native and the foreign cultural practices and beliefs in sociolinguistics courses may help learners understand better and appreciate the intercultural differences. The second hypothesis suggested that illustrating how to appropriately manage the intercultural differences in sociolinguistics class is likely to improve learners' use of language in different communicative situations. In other words, they learn to behave appropriately in intercultural encounters by mediating between the self and the other as they compare between the cultural conventions of language use in both societies.

To test the extent to which the independent variable affected the dependent variable, an experiment has been designed by exposing the experimental group to the innovative treatment that consisted of some sociolinguistics courses that were related to the native and the target speech communities to  bring the foreign cultural practices and beliefs as well as the native ones to the classroom in order to encourage learners to analyze and to reflect on the similarities and the differences between them for the aim of improving learners' intercultural competence. At the end of the experiment, we compared the scores obtained by learners in the experimental group with those of the control group in the posttest to see whether or not there has been any significant progress in learners' intercultural competence. The analysis and the interpretation of data obtained from the posttest confirmed the hypotheses since the treatment proved its effectiveness on learners' understanding and appreciation of the intercultural differences and on their use of language in intercultural encounters. Consequently, misunderstandings, cultural clashes, stereotypes and cultural transfers have been reduced.

To collect factual information related to teachers' evaluation of the place of culture in sociolinguistics class and their attitudes towards the integration of the intercultural dimension

in sociolinguistics, a questionnaire has been administered to teachers of sociolinguistics. The analysis and the interpretation of their answers revealed that teachers are aware of the importance of teaching culture in EFL class. However, they confessed that their teaching practices poorly focus on the intercultural understanding. Besides, they confirmed learners' need to understand the intercultural differences to avoid communicative problems, develop positive attitudes and to preserve their cultural identity. Therefore, they expressed their willingness to integrate the intercultural approach within sociolinguistics courses. On the other hand, the answers of some teachers reflected their limited intercultural experience and unfamiliarity with this issue. Thus, we concluded that both teachers and learners must receive a persisting intercultural training to develop their intercultural communicative competence.

According to the research results, the improvement of learners' intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes during this short-term study that lasted only one semester was significant. However, the development of this competence requires longer experience and more training activities and practices to achieve a higher level. For this reason, longitudinal studies can better extend the scope of the research to provide a full picture. Due to its importance, this issue is worth further investigations on the larger scale to generalize the results and to explore important topics such as teachers' intercultural training, teaching materials and assessment of intercultural competence in order to improve the teaching practices and the learning outcomes.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Materials Used to Develop Students Intercultural Knowledge and Attitudes



Greetings and Goodbyes, Hug or Handshake? Hugging and American Culture

*Figure A1:* A screenshot of a video that illustrates nonverbal communication in the American culture.

The link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSweEs7E0yQ

*Figure A2:* A picture that illustrates an acceptable posture in USA.
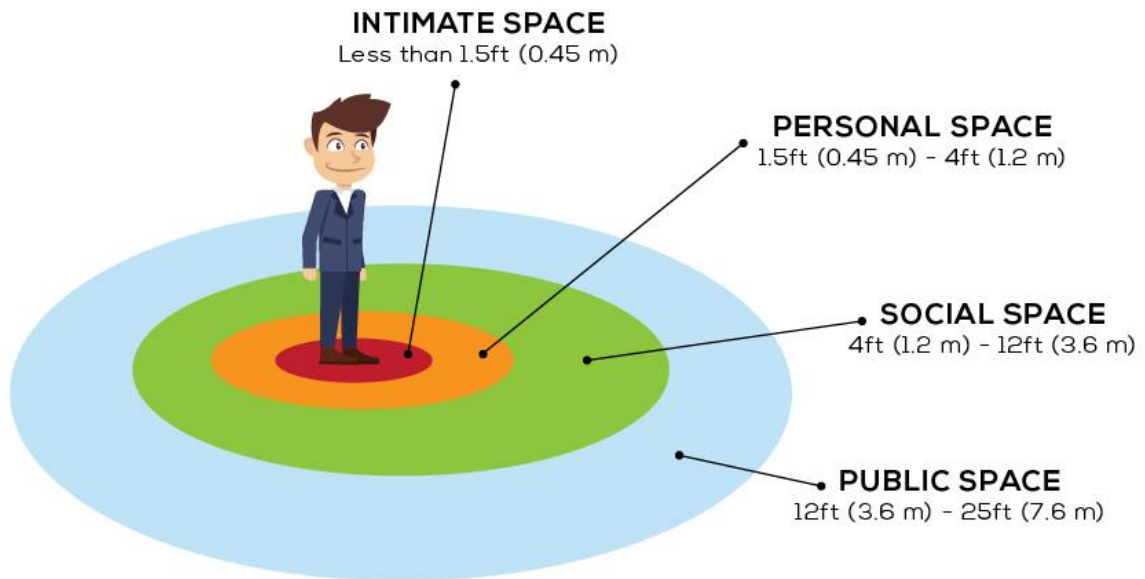


*Figure A3:* A picture that illustrates the importance of personal space in USA.
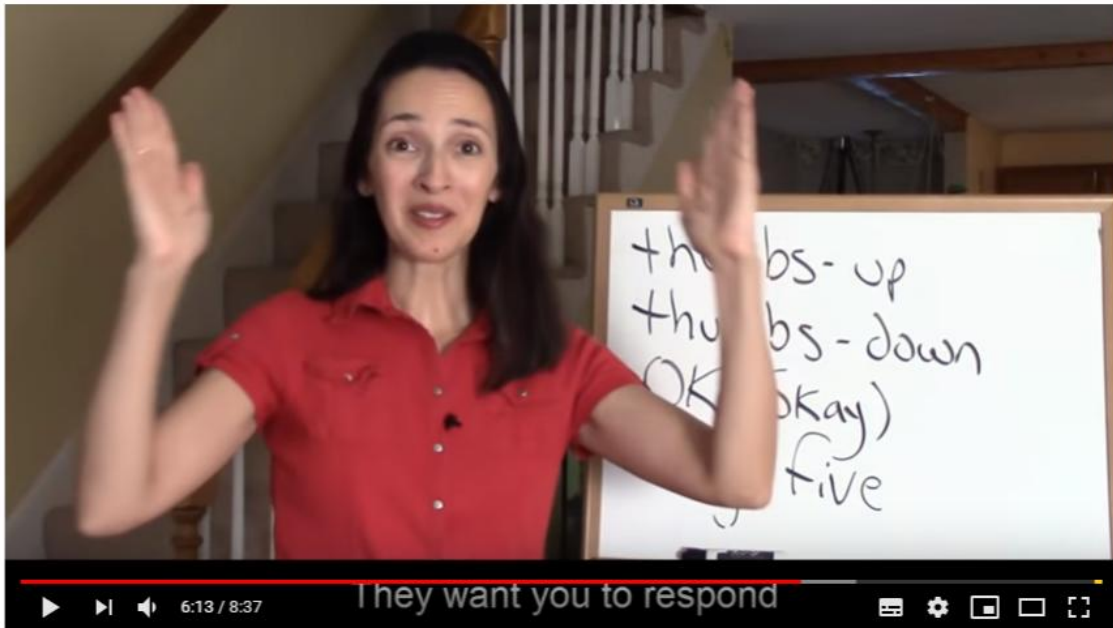
Hand Gestures (1/2) - American Culture & English Vocabulary

Figure A4: A screenshot of a video that explains the interpretation of hand Gestures in USA.

The links: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8hnO9w8YPg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UyP4b5lEJQ

**Appendix B**

**Materials Used to Develop Learners Intercultural Skills and Attitudes**
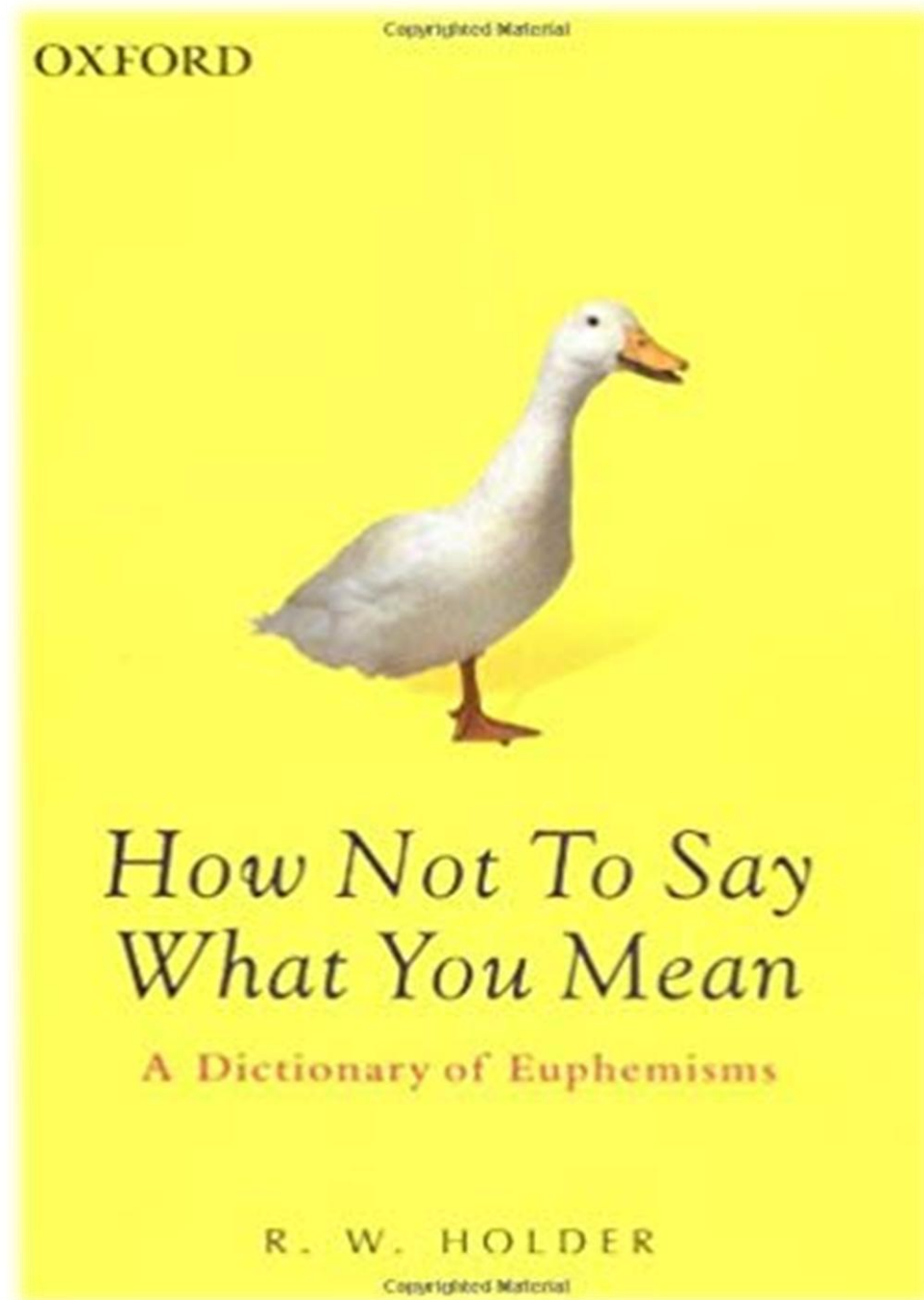


*Figure B 1*: How Not to Say What You Mean (2002) by Holder, R. W., (Oxford University Press) used to explain the meaning of some euphemistic words and expressions.
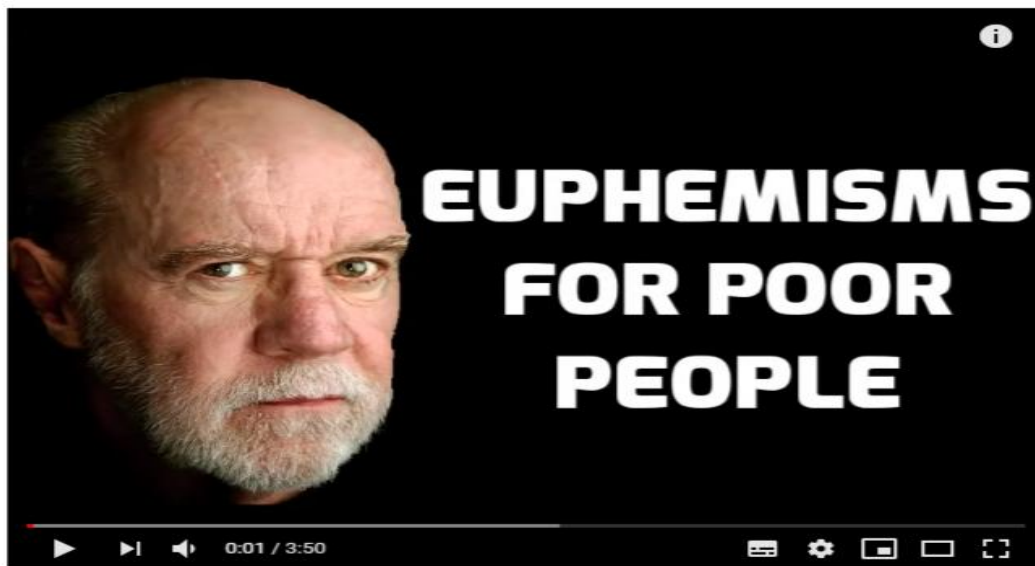
George Carlin: Euphemisms For Poor People

*Figure B 2:* A screenshot of a video by George Carlin that explains the possible euphemisms for a poor person.

The link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8n5k06vSVY
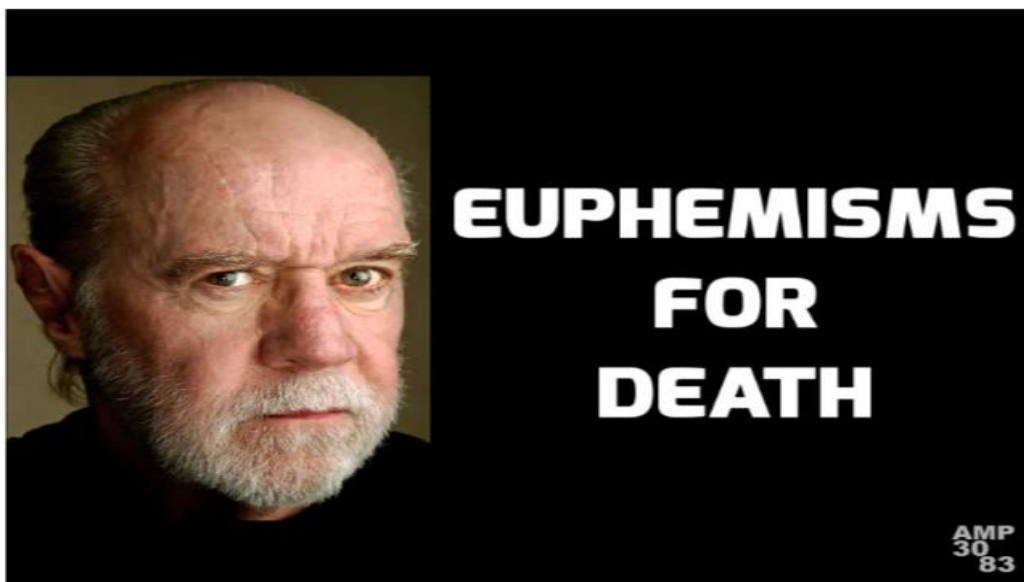


George Carlin: Euphemisms For Death

*Figure B 3:* A screenshot of a video by George Carlin that explains the possible euphemisms for death.

The link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSI9JQS2h7c

## Appendix C

## Materials Used to Develop Learners' Intercultural Competence

## Mixed Metamessages across Cultures

The danger of misinterpretation is greatest, of course, among speakers who actually speak different native tongues, or come from different cultural backgrounds, because cultural difference necessarily implies different assumptions about natural and obvious ways to be polite.

Anthropologist Thomas Kochman gives the example of a white office worker who appeared with a bandaged arm and felt rejected because her black fellow worker didn't mention it. The (doubly) wounded worker assumed that her silent colleague didn't notice or didn't care. But the co-worker was purposely not calling attention to something her colleague might not want to talk about. She let her decide whether or not to mention it: being considerate by not imposing. Kochman says, based on his research, that these differences reflect recognizable black and white styles.

An American woman visiting England was repeatedly offended—even, on bad days, enraged—when the British ignored her in settings in which she thought they should pay attention. For example, she was sitting at a booth in a railway-station cafeteria. A couple began to settle into the opposite seat in the same booth. They unloaded their luggage; they laid their coats on the seat; he asked what she would like to eat and went off to get it; she slid into the booth facing the American. And throughout all this, they showed no sign of having noticed that someone was already sitting in the booth.

When the British woman lit up a cigarette, the American had a concrete object for her anger. She began ostentatiously looking around for another table to move to. Of course there was none; that's why the British couple had sat in her booth in the first place. The smoker immediately crushed out her cigarette and apologized. This showed that she had noticed that someone else was sitting in the booth, and that she was not inclined to disturb her. But then she went back to pretending the American wasn't there, a ruse in which her husband collaborated when he returned with their food and they ate it.

To the American, politeness requires talk between strangers forced to share a booth in a cafeteria, if only a fleeting, 'Do you mind if I sit down?' or a conventional, 'Is anyone sitting her?' even if it's obvious no one is. The omission of such talk seemed to her like dreadful rudeness. The American couldn't see that another system of politeness was at work. By not acknowledging her presence, the British couple freed her from the obligation to acknowledge theirs. The American expected a show of involvement; they were being polite by not imposing.

An American man who had lived for years in Japan explained a similar politeness ethic. He lived, as many Japanese do, in frightfully close quarters—a tiny room separated from neighbouring rooms by paper-thin walls. In this case the walls were literally made of paper. In order to preserve privacy in this most unprivate situation, his Japanese neighbours simply acted as if no one else lived there. They never showed signs of having overheard conversations, and if, while walking down the hall, they caught a neighbour with the door open, they steadfastly glued their gaze ahead as if they were alone in a desert. The American confessed to feeling what I believe most Americans would feel if a next-door neighbour passed within a few feet without acknowledging their presence—snubbed. But he realized that the intention was not rudeness by omitting to show involvement, but politeness by not imposing.

The fate of the earth depends on cross-cultural communication. Nations must reach agreements, and agreements are made by individual representatives of nations sitting down and talking to each other—public analogues of private conversations. The processes are the same, and so are the pitfalls. Only the possible consequences are more extreme.

## We Need the Eggs

Despite the fact that talking to each other frequently fails to yield the understanding we seek, we keep at it, just as nations keep trying to negotiate and reach agreement. Woody Allen knows why, and tells, in his film *Annie Hall*, which ends with a joke that is heard voice-over:

*Figure C 1*: A Text extracted from the book of 'That's Not What I Meant! How conversational style makes or breaks your relations with others' by Deborah Tannen (1996) to teach intercultural competence.

## Chapter TWO

### Asymmetries:
### Women and Men Talking at Cross-purposes

Eve had a lump removed from her breast. Shortly after the operation, 34 talking to her sister, she said that she found it upsetting to have been cut into, and that looking at the stitches was distressing because they left a seam that had changed the contour of her breast. Her sister said, "I know. When I had my operation I felt the same way." Eve made the same observation to her friend Karen, who said, "I know. It's like your body has been violated." But when she told her husband, Mark, how she felt, he said, "You can have plastic surgery to cover up the scar and restore the shape of your breast."

Eve had been comforted by her sister and her friend, but she was not comforted by Mark's comment. Quite the contrary, it upset her more. Not only didn't she hear what she wanted, that he understood her feelings, but, far worse, she felt he was asking her to undergo more surgery just when she was telling him how much this operation had upset her. "I'm not having any more surgery!" she protested. "I'm sorry you don't like the way it looks."

Mark was hurt and puzzled. "I don't care," he protested. "It doesn't bother me at all." She asked, "Then why are you telling me to have plastic surgery?"

He answered, "Because you were saying you were upset about the way it looked." Eve felt like a heel: Mark had been wonderfully supportive and concerned throughout her surgery. How could she snap at him because of what he said--"just words"--when what he had done was unassailable? And yet she had perceived in his words metamessages that cut to the core of their relationship. It was self-evident to him that his comment was a reaction to her complaint, but she heard it as an independent complaint of his. He thought he was reassuring her that she needn't feel bad about her scar because there was something she could do about it. She heard his suggestion that she do something about the scar as evidence that he was bothered by it. Furthermore, whereas she wanted reassurance that it was normal to feel bad in her situation, his telling her that the problem could easily be fixed implied she had no right to feel bad about it. Eve wanted the gift of understanding, but Mark gave her the gift of advice. He was taking the role of problem solver, whereas she simply wanted confirmation for her feelings. A similar misunderstanding arose between a husband and wife following a car accident in which she had been seriously injured. Because she hated being in the hospital, the wife asked to come home 35 early. But once home, she suffered pain from having to move around more. Her husband said, "Why didn't you stay in the hospital where you would have been more comfortable?" This hurt her because it seemed to imply that he did not want her home. She didn't think of his suggestion that she should have stayed in the hospital as a response to her complaints about the pain she was suffering; she thought of it as an independent expression of his preference not to have her at home.

### "THEY'RE MY TROUBLES--NOT YOURS"

If women are often frustrated because men do not respond to their troubles by offering matching troubles, men are often frustrated because women do. Some men not only take no comfort in such a response, they take offense. For example, a woman told me that when her companion talks about a personal concern--for example, his feelings about growing older--she responds, "I know how you feel; I feel the same way." To her surprise and chagrin, he gets annoyed; he feels she is trying to take something away from him by denying the uniqueness of his experience. A similar miscommunication was responsible for the following interchange, which began as a conversation and ended as an argument:

IE: I'm really tired. I didn't sleep well last night. SHE: I didn't sleep well either. I never do. E: Why are you trying to belittle me?

shE: I'm not! I'm just trying to show that I understand!

This woman was not only hurt by her husband's reaction; she was mystified by it. How could he think she was belittling him? By "belittle me," he meant "belittle my experience." He was filtering her attempts to establish connection through his concern with preserving independence and avoiding being put down.

*Figure C2*: A text extracted from 'You Just Don't Understand' by Deborah Tannen (1990).

than females because masculine pronouns are more common than feminine ones in Standard Arabic. This use of sexism in language sanctions and reinforces male-biased gender perception in teaching materials.

Concerning the second domain where sexist language is attested, namely professional occupations, men in Moroccan culture are usually defined by professional characteristics, whereas women are seldom defined in this way. Men achieve social identity by taking up a job, whereas women are socially defined as wives and mothers. This presupposes that women are expected to hold minor, menial and insignificant occupational roles in Moroccan society.

As for the third domain, namely gender relationships, women are usually defined and represented in relation to men, and not vice-versa. For example, the nomenclature that defines women always refers to them in relation to their fathers, husbands, brothers, bosses, or even sons: *mrat flan* 'somebody's wife', *bent flan* 'somebody's daughter', *xut flan* 'somebody's sister', and *lkatiba d flan* 'somebody's secretary'. Likewise, a woman would easily define herself as *mrat rrajel* 'a man's wife', implying a 'respectable' and 'protected' identity. The latter expression is often used as a defense mechanism in mixed-sex disputes. In texts, women are usually represented as lovers and wives of men, that is, as adjuncts, very seldom as independent and free agents.

Concerning the fourth domain where sexist language is attested, that is character stereotyping, women in Moroccan culture are often represented as highly emotional and irrational human beings. Decontextualized and misunderstood religious sayings such as *al mar?ath naaqisatu çaqlin wa diin* 'a woman's mind and religion are deficient' reinforce this. This way of qualifying women weakens their image when tackling serious public or private issues. These views are also reflected in the media and in children's textbooks (cf. Belarbi 1987). Being timid and over-emotional is considered a positive female trait in Moroccan culture. Women who are not associated with such attributes range from arrogant or shrews to nagging and sharp-tongued. Moreover, names and voices often represent women as silly and stupid in contrast with men who are usually depicted in more favorable terms. Derogatory terms are meant to trivialize women in areas where they challenge male political or intellectual powers. Sexist language invaded the three Moroccan languages through social relations, the media, as well as institutional practices. Sexist attitudes, conceptions, and ideology have become fossilized not only in textbooks, but also in everyday practices, creating, thus, lasting stereotypes.

*Figure C 3:* A sample of a text taken from Fatima Sadiqi' s book of 'Women, Gender and Language in Morocco' to encourage learners to reflect on gender differences in their native culture.

**Pretest**

**Part One: Learners' Profile**

1. Your mother tongue is:

a. ☐ Shawi

b. ☐Kabyle

c. ☐Arabic

d. ☐Other, specify.................................................

2. Gender:

 a.  ☐ Female                              b.☐ Male

3. Age: ......................

4. How do you evaluate your present level in understanding the authentic English language used in movies, videos, tapes and news?

    a.☐ Poor                   b.☐ Average             c.☐ Good

5. Have you ever had a face to face communication with a native speaker?

      a.☐ Yes                   b.☐ No

6. Have you ever had any form of communication with a native speaker?

      a.☐Yes                   b.☐ No

   If Yes, What kind of communication did you have?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

7. Do you find communication with native speakers:

a.☐ Very easy                   b.☐ Easy

c.☐ Difficult                   d.☐ Very difficult

Please,justify..................................................................................................................

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8. Do you see any difference between the language you use and that of the native speaker?

     a. ☐ Yes                           b. ☐ No

   If yes, is the difference in:           a. ☐ Language form

b. ☐ Expressing meaning

c. ☐ Other, specify…………………………

9. Can the difference between cultures affect the use of language?

a. ☐ Yes                                                        b. ☐ No


Please,explain:......................................................................................................................................
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**Part Two**

**Activity One**

Explain the meaning of these idioms in English, then translate them into your mother tongue.

1. He outwitted his accusers and come out smelling like a rose.

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2. Two peas in a pod.

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3. The spirit is willing, but, the flesh is weak.

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4. As we know, two heads are better than one.

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5. Our policy is as clear as day.

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**Activity Two:**

Read the hypothetical scenario and suggest the appropriate linguistic behavior according to each situation.

1. You accidentally bump into an old lady in a department store, causing her to drop some package.

You say:

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2. The teacher starts explaining an important point in the lesson and you come late to attend the course.

The teacher: Late arrivals are disruptive.

You say:

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3. You and your classmates invite your methodology teacher to join you on a trip organized by the university, but he refuses by saying:

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4. You enter into a store and you see an attractive handbag. You want to ask the salesperson to show you the bag.

You say:

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5. You are in the classroom, organizing your papers. A student from another group, whom you do not know very well, come and ask you to answer his questionnaire. Because you do not have time you refuse by stating:

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**Activity Three**

1. Cite three characteristics you know about the American people.

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2. How do Americans perceive time?

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3. How would you respond if an American invites you to Thanksgiving dinner?

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**Progress Test 1**

Tick the right answer;

Table E

*Progress Test to Assess Learners Intercultural Knowledge*

| Statement | True | False |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The close physical proximity is not encouraged in the American culture. | | |
| 2. Americans and Europeans find it uncomfortable to stare someone in the eyes for a long period of time. | | |
| 3. In Algeria, it is not acceptable when men kiss each other on both cheeks to greet. | | |
| 4. Americans never smile at strangers. | | |
| 5. Algerians find the long eye contact a sign of respect. | | |
| 6. Americans do not like being touched during a conversation. | | |
| 7. Making the V sign with the index and the middle finger while the palm is inward is appreciated in Britain. | | |
| 8. Forming a circle with the thumb and the index finger in America means no or bad. | | |
| 9. If an Algerian forms a circle with the thumb and the index of the right hand, this signals his satisfaction. | | |
| 10. Americans may snap their fingers to get someone's attention, but this gesture is socially inappropriate. | | |

# Appendix F

## Progress Test 2

Write ten sentences in which the following words should be euphemized to make them sound more polite when used in real-life interaction.

1. Age:

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2. Death:

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3. Alcohol:

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4.  Handicapped:

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5. Poor person:

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6. Learner's bad performance in the exam:

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7. Cheap:

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8. Someone is fired from his job:

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9. Accidental death:

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10. Living in a slum:

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**Learners Self-Assessment Survey**

Subject:

Group:

Session:

Date:

Please, read the following statements, and for each one indicate your current attitude, according to a scale that ranges from 0 to 3.

Table G 1

*The Scale Used in the Self-Assessment Survey*

| Scale | Explanation |
|---|---|
| 0 | The statement never conforms to my present attitude. |
| 1 | The statement slightly conforms to my present attitudes. |
| 2 | The statement conforms to my present attitudes in many situations. |
| 3 | The statement totally and always conforms to my present attitude. |

Table G 2

*Self-Assessment Survey*

| Statements | Scale | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. I accept the differences in cultural perspectives, behaviors and values. | | | | |
| 2. I do not rely on stereotypes and prejudice to understand others' attitudes and behaviors. | | | | |
| 3. I value cultural diversity in terms of attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. | | | | |
| 4. I manage my emotions and frustration when I find myself in ambiguous intercultural situations. | | | | |
| 5. I am curious to learn more about the target culture's values, beliefs and behaviors. | | | | |
| 6. I communicate and behave in ways that are appropriate to the target culture in intercultural encounters. | | | | |
| 7. I am able to put myself in others' shoes, which means that I am able to see things from the other's perspective. | | | | |

# Appendix H

## Posttest

### Activity One

Identify euphemistic expressions in the following sentences, explain their real meaning and suggest the euphemistic equivalences in your mother tongue.

1- Politicians are economical with the truth.

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2- The horrible old guy has finally kicked the bucket.

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3- She got the results back from the hospital. Bad news! She has the big C.

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4- The child is intellectually challenged, but he is making a great academic progress.

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5- They are planning to tie the knot a few months from now.

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**Activity Two**

Suggest the appropriate linguistic behaviors for the following situations according to the gender of the speaker in the target speech community. Highlight two features at least that you use to make it sound more femine or more masculine.

1- A woman telling her friend that the jacket is big on her.

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2- A woman describing the lasagna made by her mom.

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3- A man saying goodbye to his friend (man).

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4- Barbara: What do you think of the color of my coat?

Nancy: (she does not like it) ...................................................................................

5- A man asking his son to not behave as a girl.

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**Activity Three**

1- In an intercultural situation, an American speaker looks in your eye for a long time during a conversation. How would you feel?

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2- A misunderstanding occurs in an intercultural communication because the Americans have a positive association for the animal donkey while this animal has a negative meaning in your culture. How would you react?

3- Irene and her husband recently met a couple that had just immigrated to USA. Irene and her husband were having a party at their house, so they decided to invite their new friends. When the couple arrived, there were three other couples there already. The man entered and shook hands with the men, but not with any of the women.

  - Explain the situation.

- How do you perceive Irene's position?

- If you were the man, what could you do?

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4- How would you react if an American asked you politely to give him some personal space during an intercultural communication?

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5- How would you react if you receive a nonverbal behavior  (like putting the feet on the desk or showing the sole of the shoes) which is not offensive in America, but it is in your culture?

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**Teachers Questionnaire**

University of Batna 2

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Department of English

This questionnaire is designed to collect data about teaching culture in sociolinguistics classes. It aims at identifying teachers opinions and attitudes towards the teaching of culture in EFL classes. The researcher will be very grateful for your answers based on your teaching experience.

### i. General Information

1. Qualifications:
      a- Licence      □
      b- Master / Magister  □
      c- Doctorate      □

2. How long have you been teaching English?
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3. Subjects Taught: …………………………………………………………......................

### ii. Teaching Culture

4. How do you define culture?

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5. Do you think that the cultures of English speaking countries influence the use of English language?

a-Yes □

 b- No □

6. Do you think that teaching English culture within the teaching of English language is:

a- Not important □
b- Important      □
f. Very important   □

Please, justify your answer.

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7. Do you think that teaching the foreign culture can threaten students' native culture?

a-Yes    □

 b- No    □

Please, explain.

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### iii.    Teaching Sociolinguistics

8. Do you think that poor sociolinguistic knowledge negatively affects learners' ability to communicate in English?

a- Yes   □

b- No   □

9. According to you, effective sociolinguistics courses should focus on:

a- Presenting universal sociolinguistic knowledge which deals with the social factors that influence the use of language in general. □

b- Explaining the socio-cultural factors that affect the use of language with reference to the Algerian society. □

c- Explaining the socio-cultural factors that affect the use of language with reference to the English speaking societies. □

d- Demonstrating the effects of socio-cultural factors on language use across social groups, mainly the Algerian and English societies with detailed explanation. □

e- All of them  □

f- Other □,   Please, specify.

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10. Do you think that sociolinguistics syllabus of third-year level offers enough cultural knowledge?

a- Yes □

 b- No □

### iv. Students' Understanding of Intercultural Differences

11. Do you think that EFL learners must be aware of the differences between the native culture and the foreign one?

a- Yes      □

b- No   □

Please, explain.

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12. How do you rate your students' understanding of the similarities and differences between their culture and the foreign one?

a-  Very low    □

b-  Low □

c- Intermediate □

d- Good  □

e- Excellent  □

13. a. Do you think that your way of teaching sociolinguistics helps your students understand the intercultural differences?
a- Yes  □
b- No   □
c- Not sure   □
Please, explain.

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b. If yes, do you design any cultural activities or materials that raise students' understanding of the intercultural differences?

a- Yes       □

 b- No       □

Please, explain.

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14. How helpful is sociolinguistics in understanding the intercultural differences for students?

 a-  Very helpful  □

b-  Helpful  □

c-  Barely helpful □

d-  Not helpful   □

15. According to your teaching experience, how can sociolinguistics teachers help students understand the intercultural differences?

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16. Do your students exhibit some cultural interferences when they speak English?

a- Yes     □
b- No □

17. a. Do you think that sociolinguistics class can decrease the amount of the cultural interference?

a- Yes     □
b- No □

    b. What can you do as a teacher to decrease the amount of cultural interference?

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**v. Students' Attitudes**

18. When you discuss cultural issues in sociolinguistics class, how do you perceive your students' attitudes towards the intercultural differences?

a- They are curious to know more □

b- They appreciate them (they accept and respect) □

c- They are flexible □

d- They do not show any particular interest in them □

e- They are ethnocentric (they reject). □

f- Other□. Please, specify. ........................................................................................

19. What do you do to increase students' curiosity to know more about the intercultural differences?

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20. Do your students exhibit cultural stereotypes and prejudice?

a- Yes     □
b- No □

21. a. Do you think that sociolinguistics class can correct these misconceptions?

a- Yes     □
b- No □

  b. How do you deal with students' cultural misconceptions and prejudice?

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**vi. Intercultural Education**

22. According to you, what are the important characteristics of an interculturally competent speaker?

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23. Do you suggest any other teaching methods or materials for a better teaching of culture?

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24. Do you have any further comments or suggestions to help students understand the intercultural differences in sociolinguistics class?

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Thank You

## Appendix J

### Questionnaire for the Evaluation of Recommendations

University of Batna 2

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Department of English

### Questionnaire

Although researchers are aware of the importance of teaching the foreign culture when teaching the foreign language, little attention is given to the integration of the intercultural dimension in English language classroom in general and sociolinguistics in particular. In order to improve the teaching/learning outcomes of the foreign language, we presented some recommendations that are drawn in the light of the research results. As a foreign language teaching expert, you are kindly requested to evaluate and comment on these recommendations to get deeper insights into their applicability and their validity. We will be very grateful for your contribution based on your teaching experience.

1/ Teachers of English should shift their teaching focus from achieving the linguistic competence to developing students' intercultural communicative competence because the effective and the appropriate use of language can only be achieved when students learn the foreign cultural norms and conventions. The integration of culture in EFL context has become a central component and foreign language teachers are urged to teach culture explicitly within the four language skills in a gradual and a continuous manner. Consequently, learners' language proficiency cannot be evaluated in terms of the four skills without evaluating their intercultural competence.

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2/ Teachers must transcend the traditional way of teaching culture as a set of historical and geographical facts and literature known the *Landeskunde* approach to focus on the intercultural approach in which they contextualize the teaching of the foreign language to help students recognize and understand the cultural differences.

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3/ The development of the intercultural competence can be attained in EFL classroom when the ministry of higher education and syllabus designers integrate culture-based approaches and subjects such as interactional sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, ethnography of communication and contrastive pragmatics which deal with the cultural rules and the contextual cues of social interaction.

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4/ One of the best methods for teaching culture is the *comparison* between the cultural practices in the native and the target groups to understand the similarities and the differences and to reduce the ethnocentric attitudes. By using the comparative teaching approach, the student not only understands the other but also deconstructs and reconstructs the self to increase his/her self-cultural awareness.

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5/ The use of authentic materials such as radio broadcast, songs, literary texts, articles from newspapers or magazines and videos in EFL context is essential for developing intercultural competence in non-native environments because they illustrate the natural occurrence of communication and interaction in real-life situations. These materials help learners understand the intercultural differences and improve their skills of observing, comparing, relating and interpreting through observing people's behaviors and comparing them to the native ones.

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6/ Students must be encouraged to question themselves and reflect on their cultural experiences in classroom debates and discussions to develop their awareness of their culturally shaped selves and to promote their critical analytical thinking which is a prerequisite for raising the intercultural awareness.

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7/ The use of critical incidents and problem-solving activities raises students intercultural sensitivity through their reflection on issues like misunderstandings, cultural shocks and conflicts caused by the intercultural differences. These types of activities teach learners how to adapt their behaviors in intercultural communications to be understood, how to develop a feeling of empathy towards the others and how to tolerate ambiguity.

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8/ ICT tools are important resources of intercultural learning and training activities. They offer students the opportunities to interact and communicate with people from the target culture using videos and textual chatting to exchange their cultural experiences through websites like Yahoo, YouTube, Skype and Facebook.

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9/ Foreign language teachers can continuously use classroom observation checklists to assess learners progress and to identify and solve their intercultural problems like prejudice, stereotypes and cultural transfer through the observation of their behaviors and their reactions in activities like classroom discussions, role plays and simulations.

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10/ Teachers should give students the opportunity to assess their intercultural abilities to raise their awareness of the importance of the intercultural competence and to promote their autonomy and self-reliance.

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11/ Teachers are required to become researchers/ethnographers to develop their intercultural competence and syllabus designers to select the appropriate cultural aspects to be taught as well as the appropriate teaching materials, strategies and methods to be used to target a particular intercultural aspect. Furthermore, they must carefully handle cultural issues to avoid any subconscious formation of overgeneralizations and misconceptions in learners' minds.

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THANK YOU