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**Teaching Culture in the Foreign  
Language Classroom  
The Case of English Language classes in  
Mostaganem University**

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in Didactics and Applied Linguistics**

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## **Dedication**

“In the name of Allah, the most merciful, the most compassionate”

This work is dedicated to all the members of my family, particularly my parents, my sister and brothers.

Special dedication is addressed to my husband. I would like to thank him so much for his support.

This work is also dedicated to my little angel, my daughter Alae.

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## **Abstract**

Regarding the inseparability of language and culture, foreign language teaching and learning requires the teaching of target language culture. The current master project focus on the importance of teaching culture in Algerian EFL classrooms. In other words, this research provides an insight on how the foreign language culture is treated in the Algerian universities, and whether it is taught appropriately through effective techniques. Furthermore, it investigates the teachers' attitudes towards the importance of culture teaching. Additionally, this research examines the learners' concern and attitudes towards the target culture learning.. This empirical study examines the situation in which learning and teaching take place. It focuses on considerable observations and analysis of the results that the study reveals. Additionally the results will be discussed. Finally, and on the light of the results provided in the research, some considerable suggestions and recommendations was proposed for the implementation of culture in EFL classrooms. Further suggestions are addressed to the authorities to help improve the teaching of English language and culture.

**Key words :culture , language and culture, teaching culture, foreign classroom.**

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## **List of abbreviations**

**CC:** Communicative competence

**CLT:** Communicative Language Teaching

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**FL:** Foreign Language

**IC:** Intercultural Competence.

**IC:** Intercultural Communicative competence.

**TEFL:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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# General Introduction

## General Introduction

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Broadly speaking, teaching culture in a foreign language classroom (English) was the deal of many researchers throughout the history of language teaching, since language and culture are quite interrelated. Language teaching often means culture teaching as Mitchell and Myles (2004) argue that « language and culture are not separate, but are acquired together, with each providing support for the development of the other » (p.235), therefore dissociating language from its culture would leave this language meaningless and learning would have bad consequences.

In fact, the aim of learning any foreign language is to be able to communicate successfully using this language. Moreover and more importantly, learning English as an international language would help learners of English language to interact interculturally. Therefore, it is primordial for any EFL learner to be well equipped with tools and means that construct language to be able to maintain an intercultural communication successfully. Thus, English Language learners should be taught about the target culture that would help them to develop cultural understanding to accompany their linguistic/systemic knowledge. In fact, this research work aims at finding out the importance of teaching culture in the EFL classrooms in Algeria and more precisely in Mostaganem University.

Additionally, the current master project explores the importance of teaching the target language culture and checks to what extent English language teachers take it into account. For this purpose a questionnaire was designed for L2 students of English at Mostaganem University, and an interview was held with English language teachers at the same department. Moreover the current research provides an insight on both the teacher's and the learner's attitudes towards teaching and learning the target culture in Algeria. In short, this project is an evaluation of culture teaching in the Algerian context. Through this study , we also aim at discovering the teacher's and student's opinions about teaching and learning the culture of different English speaking countries. This project aims at answering the following research questions:

- Do teachers of English give importance to the teaching of culture?
- What are the best ways for implementing culture in EFL classes?
- What are the effective materials to teach culture?

Furthermore the following hypotheses were put forward:

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- English foreign language teachers may focus on the teaching of the language skills over the teaching of culture.
- English foreign language teachers may not find enough time to deal with cultural aspects.
- Teachers may not be enough aware about the appropriate techniques, methods that best fit the teaching of culture.

The current research work is divided into three chapters. The first one is the review of literature. It is the theoretical part of the study which summarizes the common definitions of culture. Moreover, it shows the interrelatedness of language and culture and the approaches and methods for culture teaching in EFL classrooms.

The second chapter is the practical part of the study. It focuses on exploring both the teacher's and the learner's attitudes towards culture teaching and learning, in addition to examining the learning and teaching situation. Moreover, in this chapter, a questionnaire handed to L2 English language students in Mostaganem University. And an interview was held with teachers of English at the department of English. The result of the questionnaires and the interview are presented in tables and diagrams and discussed.

In the third and the last chapter some recommendations were put forward on the basis of the results found. This chapter proposes some tips on how to implement culture in the teaching of the language skills. It has to do with designing activities and the materials that the teacher should select to manage the balance between the linguistic knowledge and the cultural one.

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**English Foreign Language Teaching and Culture**

1.1 Definition of Culture

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### **1.1 Definition of Culture**

Clearly, culture is a very complex and broad concept. The largest meaning of culture is provided by Tepperman et al (1994, p.1): “culture is a humanly created environment for all our thoughts and actions”. It is, thus, a man-made representation of human beliefs and interactions with the world. Furthermore, all human beings belong to a particular culture, there is no such man without culture. It is shared by all the human beings; moreover it distinguishes them from animals. Within the same culture it is possible to find subdivided cultures, for instance, the street culture, the working class culture, or youth culture. Hinkel views that there are “as many definition of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviours, and activities” (1999, p.1). As part of culture we have: literature, arts, and the everyday life typical habits of people belonging to a given culture. These elements can be referred to as observable symptoms of culture. Yet, culture does not only consist of these observable aspects it also involves invisible features such as beliefs, values, norms and attitudes. The New Encyclopedia Britannica provides a definition that combines the two aspects of culture, the observable aspects and the hidden or the invisible features. It asserts:

*“culture is a behavior peculiar to Homo sapiens together with materials objects used as integral part of this behavior; specifically, culture consists of language, beliefs, ideas, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of arts, rituals, ceremonies and so on”*                      (1991, p.874).

Tylor, an English anthropologist provides the classical definition of culture, in his book Primitive Culture (1871); “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (1991,p.874).

Further studies in the anthropological field explore the concept of culture. More than 300 definitions of culture have been examined Kroeber and Kluckhohn work of Culture: “a Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions” (1952, mentioned in Seeleye, 1993 p.15), consequently, they agree upon the complexity and the wideness of that concept which manages to involve every single aspect of the human life, after considering it as a regular way of transmitting habits by means of symbols to form a different achievement that constitutes a particular human group (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, p.181). Many fields adopted the anthropological view of culture among we have the field of language. Such as Chastain who defines it as “*the way people live*” (1988, p.302), and Brown who sees it as

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“a way of life including ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterized a given group of people in a given period of time” (2000, p.176).

As mentioned earlier, language and culture are interrelated, Brown argues: “*a language is part of culture, and a culture is part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one can not separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture*” (2000, p.177). Moreover, culture should be taught through its language, in this context, Byram says: “the language holds the culture through the connotations and the denotations of its semantics” (1989, p.94).

The interrelation between language and culture can be summarized as follows (Kramersch, 1998 p.3):

- Through language the cultural reality can be expressed, in other words, language gives people the access to the systematic knowledge (words, nouns, expressions, verbs ...) whereby we can express our feeling, reality and state easily.
- The cultural reality is embodied within language. That is to say, language represent our culture, culture without language would be nothing. Culture is realized by means of language.
- Culture is symbolized through language that means, people can represent their culture only by means of language, language is the only mean whereby culture can be expressed.

Hence, this is what proves the fact that language and culture are interrelated. Separating a culture from its language will necessarily hinder the effectiveness of the foreign language learning.

### **1.2 The History of Culture Teaching**

At the early ages, the main goal of language teaching and learning was to develop the learners' capacity in reading and translation the literature's oeuvre of that language.

The Grammar Translation Method was among these methods to foreign language teaching that adopted this view, which was based on the assumption that, language learning only takes place through getting in touch with those “great works” (Kramersch, 1996 p.4). This view aimed at teaching people about the history, literature and the different arts so that they can infer culture from them. At that time, culture was considered as a symbol of the elite. In addition to this, culture was not typical for a given society, it was rather universal.

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There were two main views of culture, the humanistic concept of culture which encompasses the “cultural heritage” including the great works in literature, fine arts, music, history, science, economy, sport and geography, it is called the big/capital/large “C” culture (Chastain, 1988; Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993; Pulverness, 1995), and also called *formal* culture (Brooks, 1964), and *achievement* culture (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993; Pulverness, 1995).

The second view of culture has to do with the anthropological concept of culture. It designates the overall way of life in a particular society. This view was adopted by several methods, such as: the Natural/Direct method. It is referred to as small ‘c’ culture (Chastain, 1988; Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993;Pulverness, 1995), or behavior culture (Tomalin and Stempleski ,1993; Pulverness, 1995). This view of culture aims at bringing learners to “*function linguistically and socially in the contemporary culture*” (Chastain, 1988 p.303). During this era, culture was introduced to learners as a kind of separate courses named: *civilization, background studies, area studies, or British life and institutions*. However, the problem with this kind of courses lies in the fact that there was too much focus on the factual aspect, the cultural aspect was presented in a general and stereotypical way. According to Kramsch culture was considered “*as mere information conveyed by the language, not as a feature of language itself*” (1993, p.8) that is to say, culture was taught as an additional element to language and not as part of it.

In our days, modern foreign language teaching and learning sees language and culture as being interrelated. In this context, Mitchell and Myles argue that “language and culture are not separate, but are acquired together, with each providing support for the development of the other” (2004, p.235). Culture should be dealt with as an integral and organized element of language teaching (Chastain, 1988 p.298) since foreign language learners have to be capable to “communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries” (the Common European framework, 2001 p.3). Teaching language without addressing its culture can be described as Byram’s: “survival and routine transaction” (1989,pp.40-41). Therefore, in order for learners to be establish successful communication, it is of a great importance that communicative competence should be supported with cultural awareness (Mountford and Wadham Smith, 2000).

All the important works realized in the field of foreign language teaching and learning, such as the works of Byram, Kramsch, Chastain et al agreed upon the fact that language learning can not be realized far from its culture, in other words, the successful

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learning of foreign language is culture-bound. Politzer claims at the Fifth Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Teaching:

*“As language teachers we must be interested in the study of culture (in the social scientists’ sense of the world) not because we necessarily want to teach culture of the other country, but because we have to teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which students attach wrong meanings”*

(Brooks, 1986 p.123).

### **1.3 The importance of Teaching Culture in the EFL Classroom**

Language is practiced within a society; therefore, it must obey to the norms and to the cultural values appropriate to that society. Otherwise this will end with either a conflict or a humorist situation. The language of daily life is full of meaning that cannot be inferred only if one possesses the cultural knowledge, “culture defines not only what its members should think or learn, but also what they should ignore or treat as irrelevant” (Eleanor Armour Thomas and Sharon Gopaul McNicol, 1998 p.56). Sapire asserts that “*language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives*” (Sapir, 1970 p.207), language mirrors the social and cultural reality.

In fact language learning varies from a culture to another. In order for learners to become competent speakers in a foreign language, the learning should be realized with in a particular situation, which is determined by the cultural components appropriate to that society where this language is spoken. Thus, language learning is culture learning. Buttjes (1990, pp.55-56) argues: “language teachers need to go beyond monitoring linguistic production in the classroom and become aware of the complex and numerous processes of intercultural mediation that any foreign language learner undergoes”. Furthermore, culture determines who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication progresses (Samovar, Porter and Jain, 1981 p.24). It also helps in discovering the circumstances in which language occurs. Culture is beyond any utterance. And this is the reason why Duranti’s (1997, p.24) views culture in that way: “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”. He goes on saying that language is “*an important window on the universe of thoughts*” (1997, p.47). The linguistic

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knowledge of a given language appears to demonstrate the way users of that language conceive the world.

Kramersch stresses the need for addressing culture to foreign language learners, since the cultural context where language is uttered plays an important role in facilitating language understanding and learning. Moreover, culture teaching develops the students' abilities in handling successful intercultural communications, as well as the development of their cultural awareness in terms the target and the home culture. In this context Kramersch argues: "from the clash between the native culture and the target culture, meanings that were taken for granted are suddenly questioned, challenged, problematized" (ibid ,p. 238). In addition to this: Tavares and Cavalcanti see that culture should be taught in order "*to increase students' awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the target culture and their own, helping them to make comparisons among cultures*" (1996, p.19).

Seeleye claims: "*all students will develop the cultural understanding, attitudes and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialized in that culture*" (Seelye, 1993 p.29).

In a foreign language setting, objectives should be clearly set; Seelye (1997) has suggested six instructional goals for teaching culture based communicative competence, he sees that culture teaching should have the following goals:

- **Goal 1-Interest:** the student shows curiosity about another culture and empathy towards its members.
- **Goal 2-Who:** the student recognizes that role expectations and other social variables such as age, sex, social class, religion, ethnicity, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.
- **Goal 3-What:** the student realizes that effective communication requires discovering the culturally conditioned images that are evoked in the minds of people when they think, act and react to the world around them.
- **Goal 4- Where and when:** the student realizes that situational variables and conventions shape behaviour in important ways.
- **Goal 5- Why:** the student understands that people generally act the way they do because they are using options their society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs.
- **Goal 6- Exploration:** the student can evaluate a generalization about a given culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating it, and have the skills needed to locate

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and organize information about a culture from the library, the mass media, people, and personal information. (Seely, p.25)

Stern (1992) comments that the cited goals appear to focus more on the cognitive aspect. In other words, the goals for him emphasize the on knowing about the characteristics of the target culture and comparing them to the learners' own culture. According to him, "*a research-minded outlook*" (1992; pp. 212-215), "*willingness to find out to analyze, and generalize*" (1992, pp. 212-215) is of a great importance. Moreover, learners should infer the implied meaning the target language use.

The achievement of such goals in foreign language classrooms requires considerable organizations. Byram quotes that the realization of such achievements is not "*incidental to the real business of language teaching*" (1989 p.3). He adds that cultural courses in foreign language classrooms have to occupy "*a rightful place*" (1989:3). In this context, Kramersch says:

*"Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is always on the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitation of their hard-won communicative competence, changing their ability to make sense of the world around them"* (Kramersch, 1993 p.1).

In the Common European Frame Work (2000, p.3), culture teaching is given a great importance, since, according to them, its learning consequences are the development of a shared and common understanding that contributes in reducing conflicts, and promote acceptance to cultural differences within language learners, which lead systematically to successful intercultural communication.

The national curriculum for England Wales argues:

*"Without the cultural dimension, successful communication is often difficult: comprehension of even basic words and phrases (such as those referring to meals) may be partial or approximate, and speakers and writers may fail to convey their meaning adequately or may even cause offence"* (Byram 1998, p.4).

Additionally, the importance of teaching culture in foreign language classrooms lies in the fact that culture influences the different levels of language use and structures; therefore, no matter how the speaker is linguistically competent, without being aware of the cultural aspect, he will inevitably fail to establish an intercultural/international interaction (Liddicoat et al, 2003).

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### **1.4 Attitudes and Perceptions on teaching culture**

Broadly speaking different methods and approaches are proposed for the teaching of culture. At the same time, there are important factors that should be taken into account and that determine the appropriate approach, method, techniques and the activities that best fit the teaching of culture. The situation and the circumstances where the teaching of language takes place can be considered among these important factors. The learners age as well, and their abilities in the foreign language. The teacher who is responsible of the teaching activity has a great role in determining how culture should be taught.

Stern (1992) suggests three different situations in which culture can be taught.

- The teaching of culture should be addressed to foreign language learners who are physically as well as psychologically far away from the target language culture. By doing so, learners are offered the opportunity to see the socio-cultural context and the background of that foreign language, and which enables them to view this language in a wider vision.
- The second situation in which culture should be introduced is when learners are learning this language in order to work or live in a different environment. In this situation the learner is psychologically preprogramed to learn about the culture, since the situation in which the learner is requires possessing the necessary skills such as the pragmatic competence, the social competence, and the socio-cultural competence that can be assimilated only through the teaching of culture. Consequently, the learner here is in a position of motivation and eagerness to learn about the culture.
- Culture has to be taught to learners who are studying abroad or immigrants, since they are already living within the target community, the culture teaching here becomes a must. In such situations, learners are in real time of need to the culture teaching. This is in order to overcome and avoid misunderstandings due to the difference in culture that may occur while interacting with foreigners, and also, to establish successful communications.

Each of the above cited situations has its particular purpose from teaching culture in addition to a number of topics and activities that appear to fit the course. In the first situation, the teaching of culture aims at providing the learners with cultural context that will serve as a background for supporting their already existing knowledge about the foreign language. Therefore, the activities that are said to be helpful for this category of learners are often reading and discussing literary text and even newspapers or watching

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films and video. However, learners in the two remaining situation require various practices in the cultural aspect to develop different important skills within them.

As mentioned earlier, the second factor that determines the way in which culture should be taught focuses on the learners' age and maturity, the learners' command of the foreign language and the educational level. In this context Byram asserts:

*“teaching and learning aims which include ‘understanding’, ‘tolerance’, ‘empathy’ and related notions presuppose a psychological readiness in learners which may be age-dependent, may be influenced by social factors, may be furthered or even inhibited by exposure to a foreign culture and language”.*      (1997, pp.55-56)

The difficulties that the learners may find and that are due to the misunderstanding of certain cultural behaviour can block the learners' willingness and ability and hinders the effectiveness of the foreign language learning. Consequently, learners will develop a malaise when expressing themselves using the foreign language. Therefore, the teaching of culture here would be very helpful for them.

The teacher's role is of a great importance in the selection of the right method in teaching culture. Teachers should be perfectly organized in a way that they can deal and confront their learners successfully and to be able to overcome the learning and the teaching challenges. For this case Byram says: “the teacher should be aware of the nature of the challenge to learners' understanding to culture and identity” (1997, p.62).

### **1.5 Some Common Approaches of Teaching Culture**

One can notice a number of distinct approaches all over the history of the teaching of culture. Yet, some of them are no longer used, whereas others managed to keep their important position. These approaches can be divided into two main classifications: the first category refers to those approaches that emphasize mostly if not only on the teaching of the target language culture. That is to say, the culture of the country where the foreign language is spoken. It is referred to as mono-cultural approach. The second category is called the comparative approach and it refers to those approaches, that stresses the need for comparing the target language culture and the learners' home or native culture. The mono-cultural approach is no more implemented since it does not take into consideration the learners' native culture.

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Risager (1998 pp. 243-252) talks about four different approaches that are said to be suitable for the teaching of culture. And which are based on the comparison between the two cultures. According to him, these approaches would help in the selection of adequate material, techniques, and activities to achieve the set of objectives:

### **1.5.1 The foreign cultural approach**

Is based on the concept of the single culture associated with a specific people and a specific language. It focuses on target countries where the language is spoken and does not deal with the learners' own country, nor with relation between the two. This approach was dominant until the 1980's and is criticized nowadays because of the lack of comparison between cultures.

### **1.5.2 The intercultural approach**

Is based on the concept of comparison. The intercultural approach deals with both the target culture and the learners' one. The aim is to develop an intercultural and communicative competence, a competence that enables the learner to function as a mediator between the two cultures. Since 1980's, language teaching has become increasingly influenced by the intercultural perspective.

### **1.5.3 The multicultural approach**

Is based on the idea that several cultures may coexist with the same society. It focuses on the cultural and linguistic diversity of the target country or countries as well as learners' own, and the relation between the two. The aim here also is to develop intercultural communicative competence, but at a partly different level; it is a competence enabling learners to use the target language as a *lingua franca*, speaking with people who belong to the society where the target language is spoken e.g. France, but belong to another culture, e.g. Moroccan culture, and who may speak another language as their first language, e.g. Moroccan Arabic. (Risager, 1998, p.247). This approach is increasingly gaining population.

### **1.5.4 The trans cultural approach**

It views that cultures in the modern world are interwoven by virtue of globalization. It is also reflected by the fact that many people speak foreign languages as *lingua franca* (i.e. used in situations where none of the speakers has the language in question as his or her first language). Its main aim is to teach learners to use it for international communication.

In addition to the above mentioned approaches, many other different approaches exist, which focus on different aspects of a particular culture and aim at developing the learners' various skills. The next coming approaches place emphasis on the necessity of

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providing the learners with the necessary knowledge that enables them to develop an understanding of other different cultures, as well as comparing between them.

### **1.5.5 The Theme Based or the Thematic Approach**

It has to do with the teaching of topics related to culture such as: value, ceremony, love, symbolism, honor, humor, beauty, intellectuality, the art of living, realism, common sense, family, liberty, religion and education. In fact these themes are said to be particularly relevant to a given culture. Even though mono-cultural in its nature, this approach gives importance to the relationship that exists between language and culture. According to Nostrand (1974), learners can best assimilate cultural aspects of a given language when addressed to them in form of themes. This view believes that a theme is wider than a topic; moreover it includes typical actions belonging to a given way of life. Norstrand defines the theme as follows: “*an emotional charged concerned, which motivate or strongly influence the cultural bearer’s conduct in a wide variety of situations*” (Seelye, 1993 p.133). According to him themes enrich the learners’ intellectually. He adds that each culture has its specific themes which are generally twelve. After being taught about the target culture themes, learners become aware and react accordingly. However, the theme based approach has been criticized for the fact of dealing with the target language culture as segmented features. Consequently learners may find difficulties in understanding the social processes and values and this will inevitably lead to stereotyping.

### **1.5.6 The Topic-Based Approach**

This approach deals with more general and across-sectional topics caring out various cultural components. Alan Mc Lean (1994) claims: “*topic-based approach can provide an oblique yet original encounter with British life and culture, it deals with key elements of current British life such as class, privatization, education, health not in isolation but in a series of a unifying context*”. This approach is seen as being suitable for the teaching of culture, since it develops the learners’ holistic and integrated view of the target culture. Wisniewska-Brogowska asserts (1994): “*knowing about the people who use the language, understanding their behavior, beliefs and custom increases cultural awareness and promotes greater personal interest both in language and culture*”. Durant agrees upon this approach and adds that the teaching of culture should take place *on the bases of analytic and comparative methods*” (1997 p.31).

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### **1.5.7 The Problem-Oriented Approach**

It is based on the assumption that learners should be brought to a greater interest and should be motivated by themselves to learn about other cultures. Seelye (1993) considers the role of the teaching as a great importance in to attract the learners' interest towards the target language culture. He claims that the problems defined by the teacher should be very précised so that students will reach the learning out comes as quick as possible.

*“rather than be told to read a book on general topic chosen, students can be taught to read and to skim carefully only limited sections germane to their specific era of interest, otherwise, the student will be fast bogged down in the fantastic explosion of knowledge that threaten to engulf all scholars especially those in science and social science”*

(Seelye, 1993, p.47).

### **1.5.8 The Task-Oriented Approach**

It aims at making learners doing research on their own. However, what differentiates this approach from the previous one is that the task-oriented approach is based on co-operative tasks. In this approach learners are said to work on peers, or small groups on topics related to the target language culture. By doing so, learners discus, communicate and share their knowledge with other learners and consequently learn from each other. After wards the learners are asked to interpret their information into the target context and compare it to their own (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993).

### **1.5.9 The Skill-Centered Approach**

This approach appears to be different from the already mentioned approaches, since it stresses more the practical aspect. This approach is said to be appropriate for the kind of people who are living in the target language community. This approach main goal is to manage developing the needed skills for learners living there to enable them to handle successful communications with others in different contexts. This does not mean that the skill-centered approach gives importance to the knowledge of culture over other aspects of learning, in this context, Bolt asserts that this approach to the teaching of culture gives importance to the awareness and skills without neglecting the content, and considers the present and future without neglecting the past, and finally, it deals with both similarities and differences in cultures. This approach is based on the following principles:

- Increasing and dealing with open questions instead of the closed ones.

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- The learning product is important as much as what is known.
- It gives importance to both the process and the product of an activity.
- It stresses the learners' involvement and the materials used by the teacher.
- Exploring attitudes in order to develop the necessary skills.
- The teacher and learners should share the main goals.
- Language is for grounded.

Brooks argues that all approaches to the teaching of culture should “*never lose sight of the individuals*” ( Seelye, 1993 p.135). Depending on their course objectives, course designers and teachers are going to select the most appropriate approach that can serve as a framework that guides them to achieve better results.

### **1.6 EFL Teaching in the Algerian School**

Being fully aware of the importance of English as a foreign language, both at the national level, especially, as the world has become a global village, the Algerian curriculum developers incorporated English as another foreign language (beside French) to be taught in the national educational programme. As the potential of teaching this foreign language in a more positive environment in Algeria is available, this work attempts to conduct a brief exploration of the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the Algerian context. It also, attempts to shed the light, and in depth on the syllabus and the objectives suggested by the Algerian authorities (June 1999) for both Middle and Secondary school education and universities.

English is compulsorily taught throughout the Algerian Middle and Secondary schools and universities (even in some military/security, economic and cultural institutions). Its status thereof is that it is considered as the second foreign language, besides French, despite the fact that it does not particularly play an important role in the national and social life of the Algerian people. As it (English) is not one of the historical components of the Algerian cultural identity, people do not seem to need to resort to it to live their social, intellectual and economic daily realities. Also, English in Algeria is not the students' natural communicative environment. Besides, this foreign language is not akin to the students' mother tongue; Arabic. Therefore, apart from the limited amount of English they hear, speak, read or write in the classroom, English is, to a certain extent, absent most of the time in their daily lives.

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Moreover, the entire cultural context in Algeria is different from lifestyle in Great Britain or any other English-speaking country for that matter. In spite of the dramatic spread of English in media and social networks as a medium of communication, it is amazingly true to say that only the teachers of English or the textbooks and the reading documents they provide the learners with are considered to be the only source that can inform them (to some extent, however) about the way of thinking and living of the English speaking peoples. More than that, and as states by Hayenne (1989 p.43), English is considered by some Algerians as “*a language of an ex-colonial and imperialist country*”. In spite of all these challenges encountered by the English language, the Algerian political and educational authorities have managed to undertake the rehabilitation of the status of this language. Because of the technical and economic exchanges all over the world, English is now occupying a better position in the Algerian educational system. Hence, most of the Algerian students and even their parents are becoming more conscious of its importance as an international language ‘*par excellence*’.

### **1.6.1 The Higher education Reforms in Algeria**

The Algerian universities first adopted a system based on the French model which meant that the university faculties were autonomous even in designing the teaching curricular . The system resulted in duplication of academic offerings, and complete loss of credits by students changing programs. (Ben Rabah, 1999)

Some reforms designed to modernize the university system were introduced in 1971, and major reforms were introduced in 1988. Nevertheless, the universities still loosely resemble the French model, and French remains widely used for instructional purposes. The number of French instructors has declined, however, as the number of Algerian teachers has increased after 1980 when a decree introduced the total Arabization of the first year of social and political science, law and economics at university, offering openings for Arabized baccalaureate holders. In basic education, arithmetic was taught in Arabic starting in the 1981/1982 school year: so French was now the language of instruction only for French itself. In secondary education, mathematics instruction was gradually Arabized , with total Arabization of the baccalaureate planned for the 1989/1990 school year. (Grandguillaume 2004).

This step had been a disaster for the baccalaureate holders who followed scientific and technical streams at university; where subjects were taught in French such as the

## **Chapter One                      English Foreign Language Teaching and Culture**

medical stream, electrical engineering, computing and architecture on one hand and the foreign languages learners on the other. These students found themselves facing the language handicap that prevented them from even understanding the courses content as explained by Entellis,1981: “Indeed, increased arabization of primary and secondary school curriculum without concurrent language uniformity at the higher levels has created enormous tensions and frustrations for those "arabisants"\* unprepared to cope effectively with French-language instruction, and therefore destined to "dead-end" jobs, since nearly all openings in the public and private sectors require some level of bilingualism and, in certain fields, trilingualism.”

### **1.6.2 Objectives of EFL Teaching and Learning in the Algerian School**

For a country like Algeria, which has witnessed turmoil in the choice of the languages used in education, it has been hard to set the objectives of studying English as a foreign language. In higher education, for example, students are often asked about their motives of studying English as a speciality. Their answers often vary between “because I like it” , “because it’s the language of the world”,”it was not my choice but this was the only thing I could do with my marks”. In such situation, it is necessary to put conditions to learning.

Another phenomenon is that our students rely heavily on grades as a motive for learning. As a matter of fact, the mark becomes the main objective for the learner rather than the learning process or the subject taught. Travis and Wade, say in the same context: *“the fact that our school system relies heavily on grades may help explain why the average college graduate reads few books. Like all extrinsic rewards, grades induce temporary compliance but not necessarily a lifelong disposition to learn”* (1997, p.232)

Giving more importance to marks may hinder the learner from making research for the sake of gaining knowledge. It also kills creativity and intelligence. In order to remedy to such a problem, a number of motivating properties need to be introduced into the Algerian educational arena for a better accomplishment of the teaching goals. These could be summarized as follows:

- Creating conditions for learning: sufficient space. A group that is not too big, adequate lighting and room with adequate acoustics. But also, plenty of opportunity for students to participate in class and an atmosphere where they feel motivated to learn.
- Base learning on communication and creating real English situations.

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- Establish goals and objectives in teaching English.
- Make a clear disconnection between French and English for a better thriving of English as a separate subject.
- Creating projects focusing on English classes.

The misconception inherent to the teaching of English in Algeria are misconceptions in the distinction between the theory and practice, between the “know” and “know how”. It is not enough to do our best; we should know what to do, then do our best to achieve it.

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### **1.7 Conclusion**

To conclude this chapter, it is worth noting that the teaching of culture in a foreign language classroom is of a great deal of importance. Most importantly teaching should define clear and realistic goals to be achieved. It is true that the cognitive, behavior and the affective aspect are important, yet still the development and the raising of intercultural understanding is the key for a successful foreign language teaching/learning and thus culture teaching. The choice of the approach, the method, the techniques and the appropriate activities is of a great importance for the achievement of the major goal which is an effective and efficient learning. This selection is conducted by several factors that the teacher has to bear in mind.

# Chapter Two

## Data Analysis and Discussion

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Data collection tools

2.2.1 Teacher's interview

2.2.2 Student's questionnaire

2.2.3 Participants

2.3 Data Analysis

2.3.1 The Interview

2.3.2 The student's questionnaire

2.4 Discussion

2.5. Conclusion

**2.1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with the empirical study that aims at exploring the importance of culture teaching in Algerian EFL classrooms; the case of second year higher education learners, department of English in Mostaganem University. It focuses on both teachers and students aiming to discover their attitudes towards the importance of culture teaching and learning. The current chapter represents the practical part of our study. The description of data collection tools, which are interviews and questionnaires. The result and analysis will be discussed in this chapter.

**2.2. Data collection tools**

In order to conduct this research work and collect the needed data for this study, two different methods of investigation are chosen. A questionnaire is used with learners and an interview is used with teachers.

**2.2.1. Teacher's interview**

An interview was made with teachers of English language in Mostaganem University about the importance of culture and whether they teach it in their classrooms. The interview was in a form of an informal discussion. The teachers who participated in the discussion were three, they were asked to provide their age, and the years of the teaching experience.

**2.2.2. Student's questionnaire**

The student questionnaire was made of eight questions, multiple choice type (question 2, 3, 4 and 5), and Yes/No questions type (question 6, 7 and 8). This questionnaire aims at discovering the student's point of view and concern towards the learning of culture. The questionnaire focuses mainly on finding out to what extent students think that learning about the target culture is necessary in their EFL learning.

Additionally, this questionnaire aims at finding out what interests or attracts the students in the English language culture (history, literature and arts or the British lifestyle). They were also asked about the source of their knowledge about the target language culture, that is to say, if all what they have learned about the British culture was learnt at school, from the English culture lecture, or they acquired it elsewhere, and if they are interested to learn about other English speaking countries as USA, Canada and Australia.

Moreover, it intends to investigate if the students are aware about the differences that exist between their native culture and the English people culture, by comparing and contrasting themselves to the native English people.

### 2.2.3. Participants

The teachers interview was conducted to teachers teaching English language at the University of Mostaganem. The number of teachers was three, and they were two males and one female. Moreover, their age differs as well as their teaching experiences. We selected them for their teaching experience with second year licence students.

On the other hand, the questionnaire designed for students were delivered to forty five students learning in the same class in Mostaganem University. They were 19 males and 26 females.

**Table N° 2-1: Students characteristics**

<b>The characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<u>Age</u>		
19-20	6	13.33%
21-22	28	62%
23-24	8	17.77%
>24	3	6.66%
<u>Sex</u>		
Females	26	57.77%
males	19	42.22%
Types of educational institution university	45	100%

### 2.3. Data Analysis

**2.3.1. The Interview**

All the teachers agreed upon the necessity of handling cultural issues in EFL classrooms. However, some teachers state that they prefer to focus on the syllabus rather than wasting their time on teaching learners about the target language culture, because in examinations, learners are assessed on their systematic knowledge about the language and not on culture. They added that providing the learners with the linguistic knowledge is sufficient at that level.

Throughout my interviewees, answers it became clear that we can by no means teach English in isolation of its culture. Language is part of culture and, thus, we cannot dissociate it from the EFL classroom as one of my informants put it.

Interestingly, teachers stated that their students are more and more interested about the other culture. This is due to globalization and their easy access to English cultures through the media and their interactions with foreigners on social media.

When asked about the materials they used to teach culture whether implicitly or explicitly, teachers demonstrated a poor use of material. Though university classrooms and amphies are equipped with audio visual devices, mainly projectors. Rather they rely simply on lecturing. This explains the poor grasp of culture by EFL students.

Other teachers mentioned the problem of the lack of time. They admitted that we are very limited by time and this is why we neglect culture.

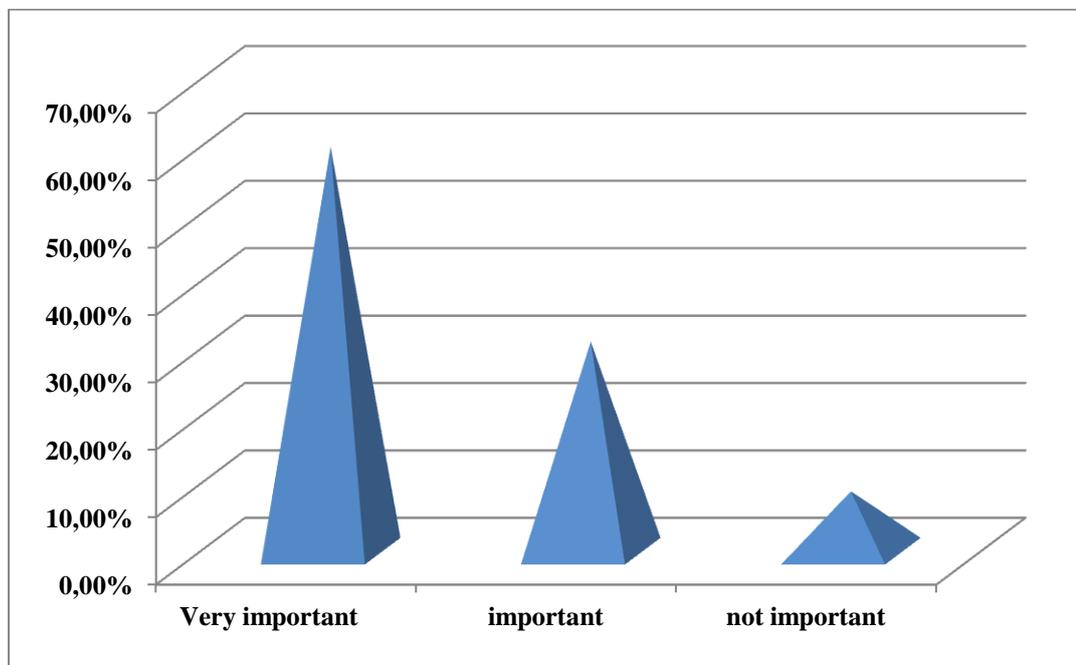
**2.3.2. The student's questionnaire**

The majority of students had understood questions and answered all of them. Below are the findings:

**1- According to you is it important to learn about the culture of English language?**

<b>Very important</b>	27	60,00%
<b>important</b>	14	31,11%
<b>not important</b>	4	8,88%

**Table N° 2-2: Importance of culture according to the student**



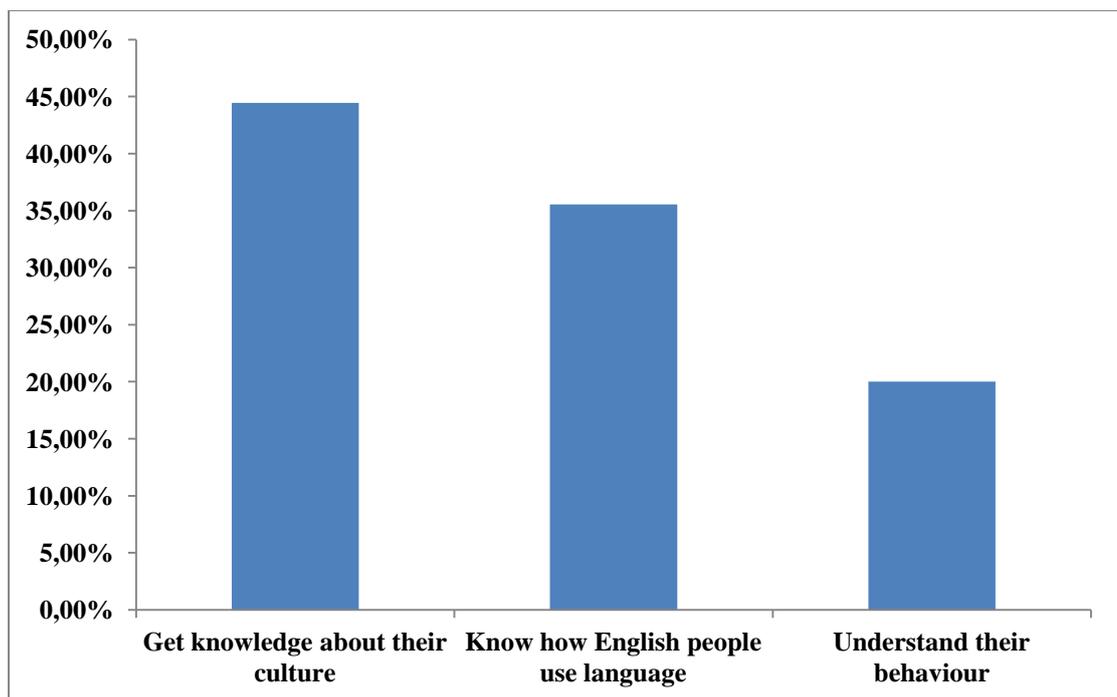
**Figure N° 2-1: The importance of culture according to the student**

The majority of sample (45 students: 19 males & 26 females) considered culture as being very important for learning (60%). Whereas, (31, 11%) of the students who considered it important, conversely, very few of them considered it not important. The genders (Male & Female) of the three part of this sample are equal in their participation.

**2- Learning about English people helps you to?**

<b>Get knowledge about their culture</b>	20	44,44%
<b>Know how English people use language</b>	16	35,55%
<b>Understand their behaviour</b>	9	20%

**Table N° 2-3: The benefits of learning about English culture**



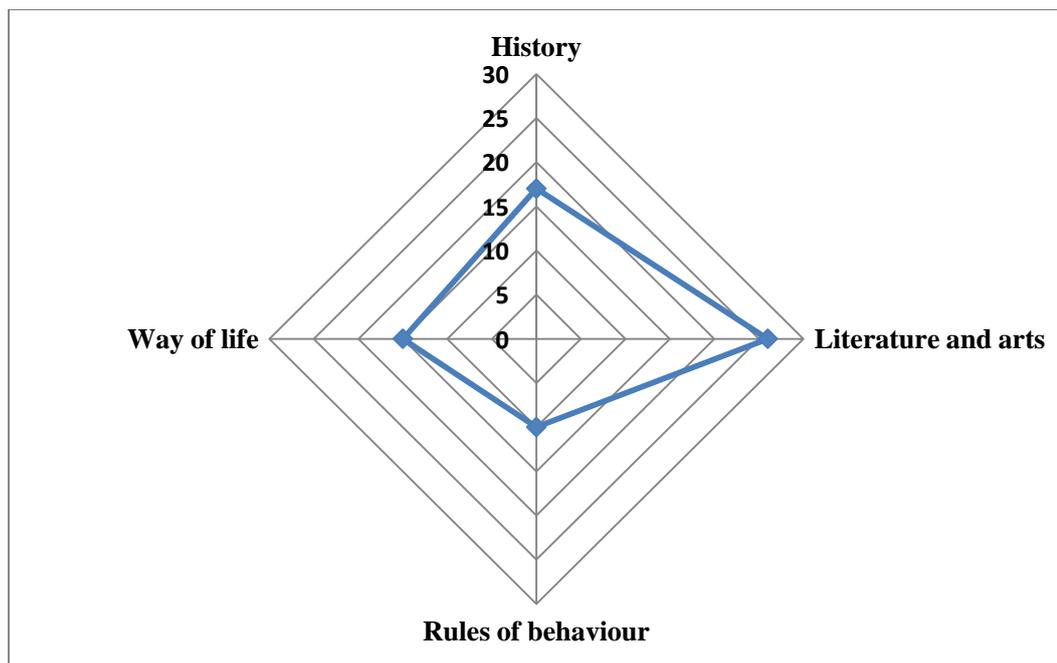
**Figure N° 2-2: The benefits of learning about English culture**

The case of the benefits of learning about English, we found that an important per cent thought that this can get them knowledge about their culture (44, 44%). Only (35, 55%) thought that learning about English give the chance to know how English people use language. By the way, the rest (20%) thought that they can understand their behaviour.

### 3- Which aspects of culture interest you?

<b>History</b>	11	24,43 %
<b>Literature and arts</b>	20	44,45 %
<b>Rules of behaviour</b>	4	08,89 %
<b>Way of life</b>	10	22,23 %

**Table N° 2-4: Culture-related Topics**



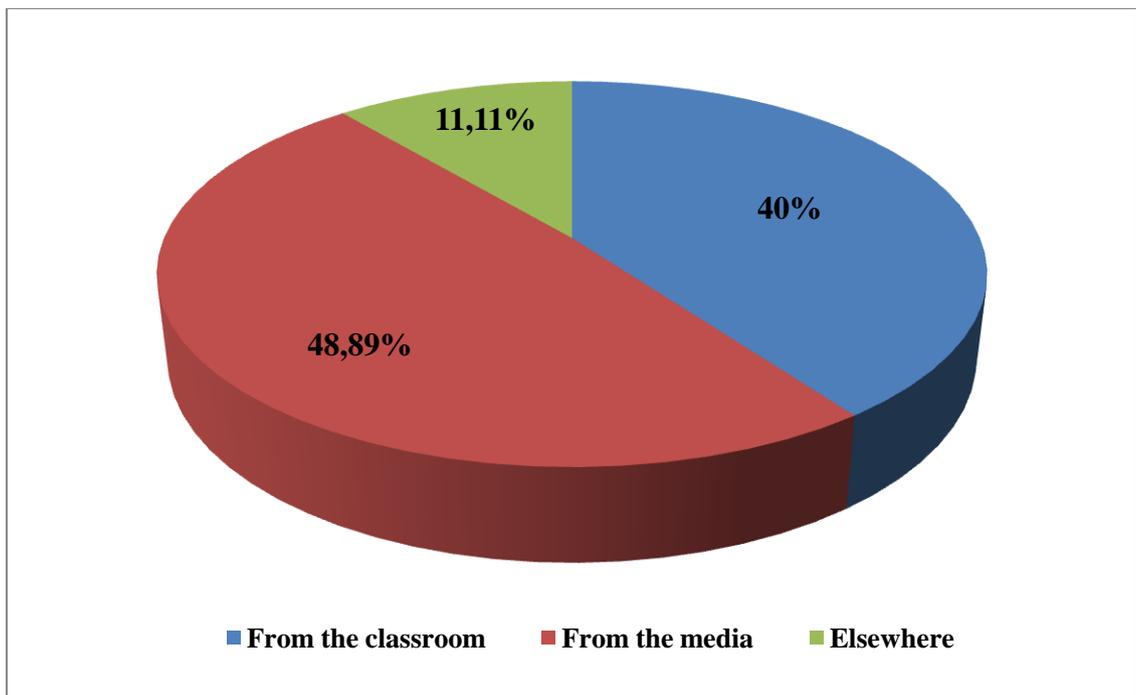
**Figure N° 2-3: Culture-related Topics**

The students were provided with a chosen list, in the aim to see the degree of preference. Literature and arts was highly ranked in comparison with the others aspects of culture. In second place, we found history. In same time, the way of life was closer than the history. Conversely, Rules of behaviour was seen less than the others aspects

**4- Where did you acquire your knowledge about English culture?**

<b>From the classroom</b>	18	40%
<b>From the media</b>	22	48,89%
<b>Elsewhere</b>	5	11,11%

**Table N° 2-5: Sources of students’ knowledge about Culture**



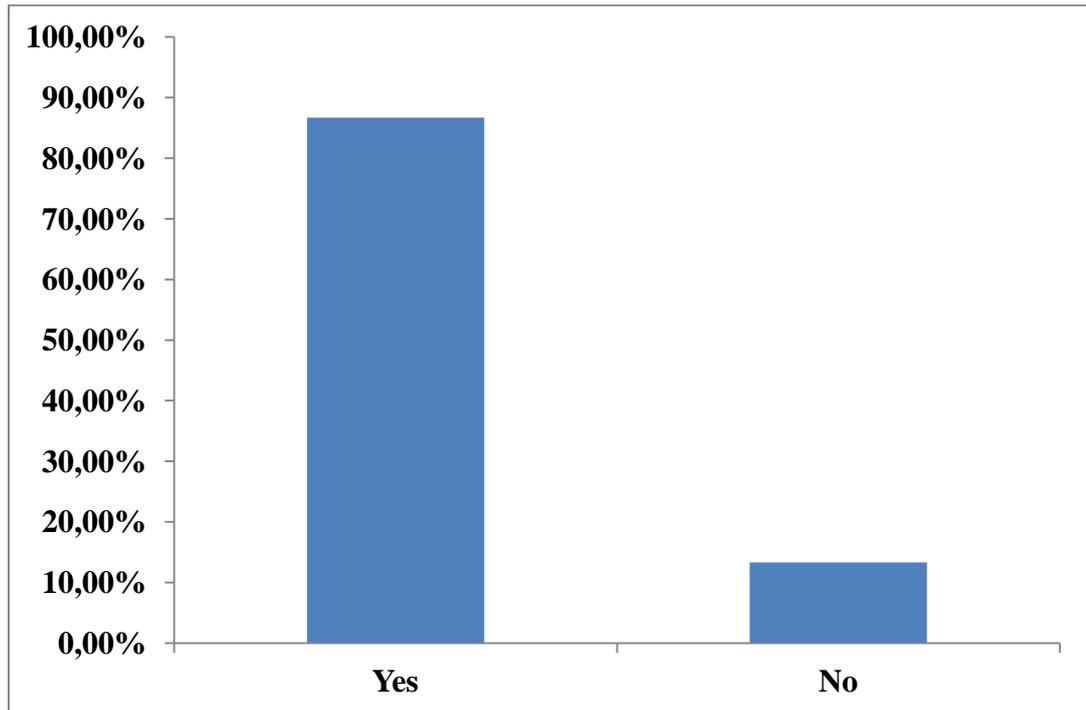
**Figure N° 2-4: Sources of students’ knowledge about Culture**

For this question, three choices were given to the sample. As the findings, most of the students acquired their target language culture from the media but this case was not far than the answers given about the case of classroom (40%). A few students had ticked more than one column. The figure above demonstrates what had been said. Thus, just a few students said that language culture can be acquired outside the classroom and the media(11,11%).

- 5- As a non-native speaker, is there any difference between you and a native speaker in terms of behaviour, manners and way of life?**

Yes	39	86,66%
No	6	13,33%

**Table N° 2-6: Difference between native and nonnative speakers**



**Figure N° 2-5: Difference between native and nonnative speakers**

Most of the students as a non-native speaker confirm differences and divergences concern towards native speaker in terms of behaviour, manners and way of life, for these causes, they appreciate more to learn about these cultures. The rest did not give the situation any important attachment.

- 6- Would you like to learn more about other English speaking countries culture?  
(USA, Canada, UK, Australia)**

Yes	41	91,11%
No	4	8,89%

Table N° 2-7: Students’ need to learn about other culture

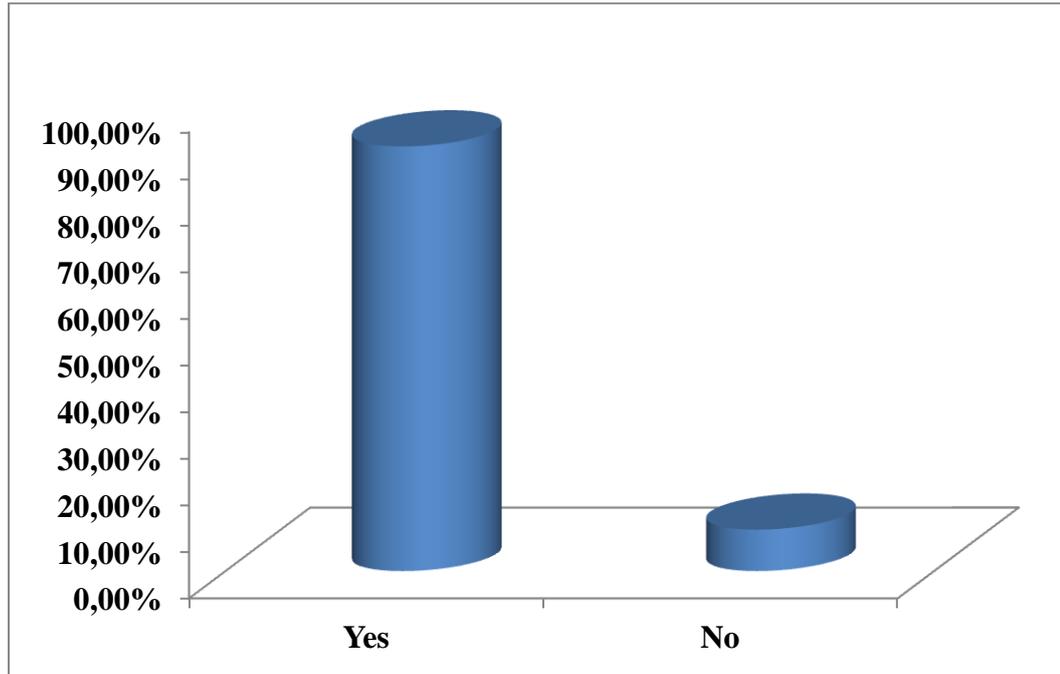


Figure N° 2-6: Students’ need to learn about other culture

Most of the students demonstrate empathy and concern towards learning about other cultures (91, 11%) Few of them responded by saying no (8,89%). Our ascertainments show that the students have a kind of readiness for learning and accepting different things from other cultures

7- Do you compare the Algerian culture to the English culture?

Yes	13	28,89%
No	32	71,11%

Table N° 2-8: Students comparing between Algerian and English culture

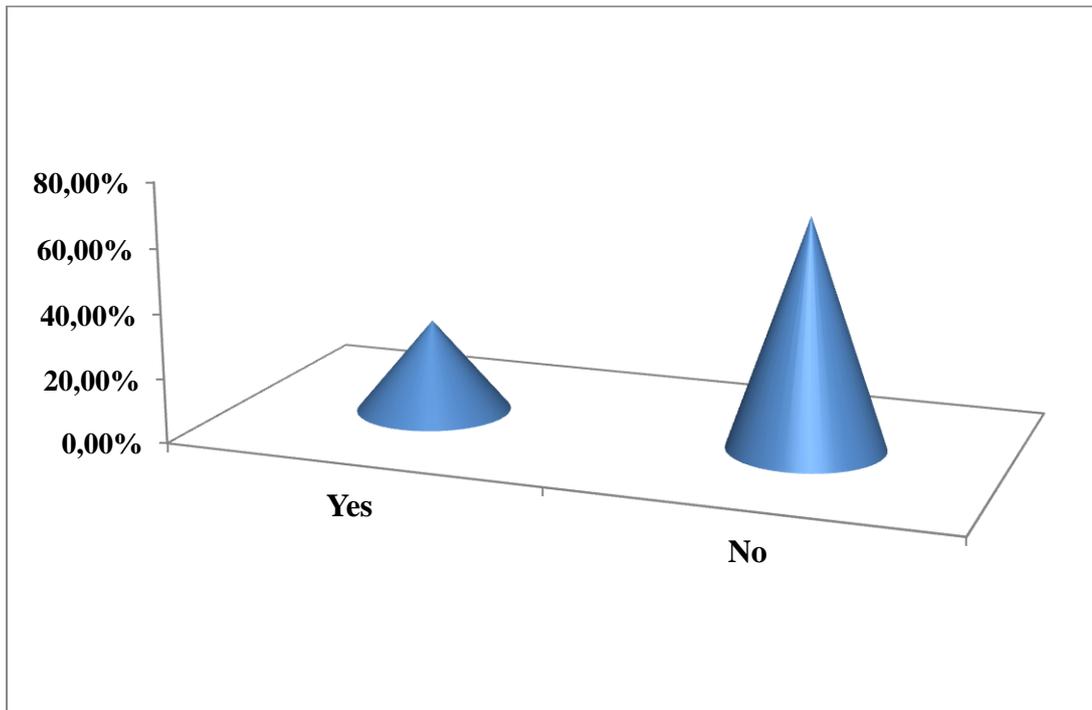


Figure N° 2-7: Students comparing between Algerian and English culture

The majority of students answered NO, just a few said yes. The majority said the differences are more clear and apparent and there is no similarities between the Algerian culture, and the English one. So we need to learn more about them, this was their reflect.

2.4 Discussion

The current research aims at checking out to what extent is culture present in the Algerian, classroom, at the University , as well as discovering both teachers and students point of view towards the importance of culture teaching. Some questions were asked to both the teachers and the learners.

As demonstrated in the results, teachers and learners advocated a significant importance for the teaching of culture. Additionally, foreign language higher education places emphasis on the need for addressing the culture in foreign language classes. Although they recognize its importance, the teachers ' perception of culture seems as being to lack some aspects. As far as the teaching of culture is concerned, the teacher's main problem that hinders the effectiveness of its occurrence is the lack of time. It is true that all teachers give importance for cultural discussions, however, the minority deals with cultural related topics in each session. It is worth to understand the reason behind this lack of time . The fact of not having enough time to deal with cultural aspects of the target language can be explained by the teacher's interest and focus on developing the language skills.

According to them, students will be evaluated during the examinations on their linguistic knowledge and not culture. In fact even teachers confirm this fact when having an informal discussion with them . If students were evaluated during examination on the cultural knowledge, the current situation would appear totally different. The implementation of culture related topics in examinations would increase the learning of culture. Additionally, some teachers propose to have extra and separate session for the teaching of culture. Such classes should be implemented in the curriculum. Yet, this does not mean that this kind of lessons are free from the teaching linguistic-related topics and this is due to the fact that culture and language are interrelated, we cannot consider one in the absence of the other.

Though it is true that all teachers recognize the importance of culture, and deal with culture related topics from time to time, the first suggested hypothesis which states that the teaching of culture is not regularly done seems to be correct. It is worth mentioning that teachers place emphasis on the language skills because they are considered as being responsible for the results of examinations.

Additionally, the results have shown that teachers do not make use of the activities and the techniques proposed by many scholars for the teaching of culture. In their English classes, teachers do not even know about such techniques. This fact was confirmed when the teachers were provided with the question 7 in the interview related to the ways of teaching culture.

The lack of awareness about the appropriate techniques that enhance the implementation of culture appears to be the reason behind skipping culture related themes. In such situation, in order to successfully implement culture in daily session, cultural themes should be precise and concise.

All teachers (3/3) assumed that most of the topics included in class are teachers' suggestions, this came to support the view that all of them are aware of the importance of including cultural issues into their lessons and argue that there will be always something missing in learner's language proficiency and use , if culture is left out in their language learning. However, they often fail to do so due to reasons such as: lack of time, overloaded curriculum and shortage of material.

The results reveals that the most of students are interested in the English language culture. Their answers to the first question of the questionnaire confirm that the majority 60,00 considered culture as being very important for learning. However, they do not make more effort to know , learn about the target culture. Their answers to Q8 and Q9 reveals that they are not aware enough about the target culture. According to them most of their knowledge about English culture, they acquired it from media and not in the classroom.this was their answer to Q4.

To conclude, the responses of teachers and students confirm that they are aware about the importance of teaching and learning language culture .but, teachers focus mainly in their teaching on developing the language skill. On the other hand, L2 students do not spent any effort in learning culture to enhance their knowledge about the English language culture.

**2.5. Conclusion**

This chapter gave an insight into the situation of culture teaching and learning in Algerian EFL classrooms, in Mostaganem University. It has been done through an interview with teachers of University, and a questionnaire addressed to L2 students. The obtained results reveal that there is a significant difference between the teacher's and the student's opinions about culture teaching and learning. While teachers regard all topics for culture teaching as being important, students prefer some topics over the others. Culture related themes should be selected in a way that they would attract the students interest. The teacher's sources of culture teaching materials vary significantly.

Although the dominant materials are said to be the books and the internet. Teachers should not be slaves for instructed teaching materials, instead they should be creative to capture the student's motivation.

Despite all teachers admit that culture teaching in EFL classroom in University is very important, they do not implement it regularly and appropriately in their classes. Moreover, teachers are not aware of the techniques and method that facilitate the implementation of culture.

# Chapter Three Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Recommendations for implementing Culture in the classroom

3.2.1 Integrating Culture through Speaking and Writing

3.2.1.1 Speaking skill

3.2.1.2 Writing skill

3.2.2 Integrating culture through grammar and vocabulary lessons

3.2.3 Further Suggestions for Teaching Culture in University

3.3 Conclusion

**3.1 Introduction**

On the basis of the above mentioned results, some recommendations are suggested within the current concluding chapter aiming to contribute in the improvement and the amelioration of culture teaching in EFL classrooms in Mostaganem University. The results have revealed that the main problem that persists and hinders the effectiveness of the teaching of the target language culture in EFL classrooms was that the teachers prefer to focus more on the syllabus, and teaching the two skills since students are mostly evaluated on them during the examinations instead of teaching them about the target culture.

Alternatively, this chapter puts forwards some arguments supporting the importance of implementing or integrating culture within the teaching of the two language skills (speaking and writing). In fact, it has been proved that the teaching of culture can occur, in a way or another, during the speaking class, writing, and grammar and vocabulary lessons as well. It is true that this is not an easy task to realize, but the good teacher should manage to balance between the teaching of the language and the teaching of its culture. This can be done through the teaching materials, the techniques and the activities that the teacher designs for the realization of his/her lesson. By doing so, foreign language students will be able to master the linguistic knowledge on the one hand, and retain the cultural knowledge on the other hand.

**3.2 Recommendations for implementing Culture in the classroom**

Students at university are not directly exposed to the target culture, which is the case for all foreign language learners, because they are learning it from their own country. Consequently, they have a little chance to interact or communicate with its natives. As a suggestion, it would perfectly work if the teacher manages to bring the target culture for the students, in the classroom. Alternatively, this can be done through the use of the audiovisual media. The latter is a helpful and a useful vehicle that brings the knowledge about the target language as it is used by its natives and describes the target culture as well. In addition to this, students should be given the opportunity to use the foreign language for real purposes and thus they will develop their intercultural communicative competence. Moreover, communicating with native speakers can also help the students a lot for developing their intercultural communicative competence. This communication can take place via social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, or via e-mail or even through telephone or letters. Additionally, students demonstrate interest to such things. Therefore, the teachers should take profit from the student's interest and make them learn without

even paying attention that they are learning. The teacher can consider the students/natives chat as classroom activities.

The teacher can take the student's content of their discussion with their e-friends or pen friends or phone friends and discuss on it in the classroom. It would be very interesting, if teachers of different specialties exchange ideas and cooperate with each other, so that the teachers will provide their learners with a broad view of the target culture.

Reflection on cultural issues is not worthy for foreign language students. It makes them aware of their native culture and prepares them to better deal with people belonging to different cultures. Nissila (1997 p.71) summarizes the importance of reflecting on cultural issues as follows :

« Reflection is a key to the internalization of knowledge : the trainees' conceptions become more definite and comprehensive through reflection.School pupils should also be given time to reflect and talk about their experiences of foreign cultures. Once the process of becoming sensitive to another culture has started ,pupils as well as the trainees will continue making observations and resolutions »

As the results have shown , most of the teachers prefer teaching the two language skills speaking and writing over the teaching of culture since learners will be assessed on them during the examinations.As an alternative, teachers should try to implement culture through the two language skills.

### **3.2.1 Integrating Culture through Speaking and Writing skills**

#### **3.2.1.1 Speaking skill**

Culture is present in our social interactions; this is through the position that one adopts or that or that the others associate and attribute for themselves, what Goffman refers to as 'footing'. The latter can be reflected through the tone of the voice, intonation, pronunciation, body language and kind of language (register) used. These factors show how the participants assume their roles in a given context.

The socio-cultural factors affect the type of conversations. The style of conversation that one adopts depends both on the situation and the circumstances where the interaction takes place and also on the cultural context in general. Discourse variations vary according to culture variation, even though having the same context of situation people who are unlike culturally will have different reactions. It is true that people have the possibility to adopt different styles. However, the cultural conditions govern the selection of a particular type of conversation.

Teachers should make the students aware of the cultural aspects of the spoken language. They should possess the ability to distinguish between what is foreign and what is native. Students should be retained in activities such as role playing where they have to attribute the cultural aspects related to the foreign language. Additionally, it is necessary to design activities in which students make use of both the linguistic and cultural correct forms of the target culture in the speaking session.

The non-verbal communication is a powerful tool for the teaching of culture in speaking lessons. Savignon considers communication as being:

« communication is not the rapid fire exchange of linguistically accurate complete sentences. It is sometimes slow, sometimes painful, sometimes non-verbal exchange of thoughts between human beings » (1972 p.66)

Peck stresses the need for dealing with non-verbal communication such as gestures in the classroom by saying : « Gesture, although learned, is largely an unconscious cultural phenomenon. Gesture conveys the ‘feel ‘ of the language to the student and when accompanied by verbal communication , injects greater authenticity into the classroom and makes language study more interesting » . Scanlan (1997) thinks that the analysis of non-verbal communication is of a great importance and that this ability should be given the same importance as the other skills. Morain(1997) coined the concept of ‘visual literacy’. The latter means the ability to understand the visual signs like gestures, facial expressions, and hands movements related to the foreign language culture. For Morain the understanding of the non-verbal communication helps in avoiding misunderstanding of other people who are unlike culturally.

The visual media are very helpful for increasing the learner’s awareness about the non-verbal aspects of the target culture. The teacher can invite the students for watching a movie in the target language that carries non-verbal communication scenes, then giving instances from the movie about the non-verbal communication and discussing them. Moreover, it would be very beneficial for the students if the teacher handles topics related to the non-verbal communication such as the distance that one should keep when talking to someone or to smile to a stranger or how to sit with strangers in restaurant. Importantly, face to face interactions with natives are good opportunity for the students to observe such gestures.

Foreign language students have to be well informed about the target culture communicative strategies and styles being verbal or non-verbal. Teachers should train the student on how to deal with people from another culture keeping their own tradition and

way of leaving, in deed what they should importantly focus on is to teach them how to respect and tolerate the others way of living.

### 3.2.1.2 Writing skill

Kramersch's (1998,p.53) argues : «*The invention of writing around 3000 BC transformed oral tradition, transmitted through storytelling, bardic epics, mythical re-enactments and performances, into textual tradition, handed down by scribes*». In fact, writing is an important activity that transmits the cultural knowledge. The content of any written passage reflects the author's culture including the way of writing, the purpose of writing, how this purpose is achieved, the situation and the circumstances of writing, in short, the way a piece of discourse should be written is shaped by culture. Thus discourse differs from one culture to another. Each culture has its specific genres such as the type of topics and themes, the language, and the audience. However, the audience criteria are not shared cross-culture, in this context Kramersch asserts : «*What might have been intended as an American children's story might be viewed by foreign readers as an adult cautionary tale*» (1993, p.122).

The genres that exist in a given culture may not exist in another culture . Conversely, it exists different kinds of writing which are associated to these genres. For example what is regarded to be an argumentative text in America and Britain resembles to an idea which is put forward by the author in order to solve a problem and the author tries to give arguments to support his idea. However, in some different cultures, argumentative texts do not follow this structure and do not have the same aim. Another example is that English texts are known by their linearity and hierarchy whereas an Arabic writing is widely known by its 'parallelism' and 'repetition'.

Written styles develop according to their sociocultural context. This is the reason why genres differ from one community to another. And thus it is not an easy task for foreign language learners to reach the native like proficiency in writing. Therefore, to develop their writing skill, it is necessary that teachers teach their students about textual patterns related to the foreign language. Foreign language teachers should bring their students to develop their grammatical competence at both the sentence level and discourse level.

Additionally, it is possible to implement culture in written tasks and activities such as asking the students to write letters to their native e-friends through email. The teachers should explain to them how such letters should be written.

**3.2.2 Integrating culture through grammar and vocabulary lessons**

Generally, the teaching of grammar consists of providing the students with some grammatical and structural points and then giving them a number of activities to practice what they have learned. The point is that teachers should implement cultural aspects in these activities. For example, in a simple past tense lesson the teacher can ask the students what princes Diana or the Queen Victoria did at that time instead of training learners on decontextualized and unnatural drills. In that way, teacher kills two birds with one stone, thus the students by doing such an activity, they grasp the grammatical point and retain the cultural knowledge.

The vocabulary of any language is a powerful vehicle for its culture. It describes its norms, values, beliefs, and people's attitudes. Indeed, words of a given language do not have their exact translations. This is because vocabulary has its cultural meaning that differs from one country to another. Therefore, in a lesson of vocabulary, teachers should not neglect the importance of the word's meaning and significance within their culture. Neglecting the importance of the cultural context of words when teaching foreign language vocabulary may result in inappropriate use of the target language and thus to misunderstanding and conflict. Hence, foreign language vocabulary should be taught within its cultural context.

**3.2.3 Further Suggestions for Teaching Culture in University**

Teaching and learning the foreign culture in English culture in appropriate way is not only the responsibility of teachers and students. Many times teachers and students complain about the lack of tools and materials for appropriate culture teaching to take place. Here it comes the responsibility of the authorities. The government is recommended to give a help and more support to improve teaching /learning English language and its culture in university. This support can take place by some suggestions as follow :

First of all , implement English language culture as a module in the curriculum. Providing the necessary tools and media to teach culture in the classroom to facilitate the explanation of the cultural aspects of the English speaking communities. Moreover, increasing the importance of English language by elevating the coefficient of the English in the secondary schools needed. More than that , English should be programmed at primary school level. Authorities need to motivater and attract learners by funding scholarships. In addition to authoritie's contribution, teachers and students should help each other inside and outside the classroom, since the effort of one part without the other would be useless and fruitless.

**3.3 Conclusion**

On the light of what has been said, one can see that culture should be an integral part of any lesson in EFL classrooms regarding its importance in providing foreign language students with the necessary knowledge that accompanies their knowledge about the language to have the certainty and the ability to handle face communication with native speakers that certainly belong to a different culture from their own.

Importantly, foreign language teachers should consider the teaching of culture as a fundamental phase in the realization of their courses. Culture serves as the sociocultural context of the two skills courses from which the learners grasp the information so that they will have complete and large view of the foreign language. Moreover, culture should not be conceived as an extra element or aspect for foreign language teaching, it rather should be taught regularly and frequently in each EFL classroom. In order for the teacher to implement culture in his or her classroom, the teacher should design a number of activities that assess not only the linguistic knowledge but also reinforce their cultural understanding. It is also worth noting that culture evaluation should be implemented in national examinations so that it will gain a better place than the current one.

# General Conclusion

## General Conclusion

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The current master project aims at exploring the importance of culture teaching in the Algerian Universities and the teachers' and students' attitudes towards it. Recent studies revealed that foreign language teaching and learning cannot be accomplished successfully without the teaching of its culture. The ideal foreign language classroom is the one in which the target language culture occupies an integral part. Several researchers view that language and culture should be taught together, and that they should not be separate. Language has limited functions when learned or taught out of its sociocultural context.

Since the major aim of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate with its natives successfully, and certainly, those natives belong to a different culture. Thus, foreign language learners should develop an intercultural communicative competence which will enable them to confidently maintain an intercultural interaction without being afraid to fall into misunderstanding that lead either to humoristic situations or to conflicts. This intercultural communicative competence cannot be achieved without being aware of the target language culture. Therefore foreign language teachers should necessarily teach culture regularly and give it its importance in every lesson.

As the results of the current research revealed, although all the teachers admit the important role of culture in EFL classrooms at the University, culture is not regularly and frequently taught in their classes. This fact can be explained by the following reasons:

- The lack of time
- The lack of materials for teaching the target culture
- The ignorance of the appropriated techniques for teaching culture

One among the efficient ways for teaching culture is to select a number culture related themes and topics to be discussed during the class. Then, after choosing the cultural content, the teachers should think about the techniques and the activities whereby they conduct and evaluate their students learning. It is worth nothing that it is of a great importance that the teachers adopt a comparative approach for culture teaching. By doing so, the learners will not be only aware of the target culture, but they also start to think about their own culture critically and constructively.

The current research puts forward three hypotheses, the first one was that the teachers focus more on teaching the linguistic knowledge and the two language skills rather than focusing on culture. The second one was that the teachers may not be really aware of the

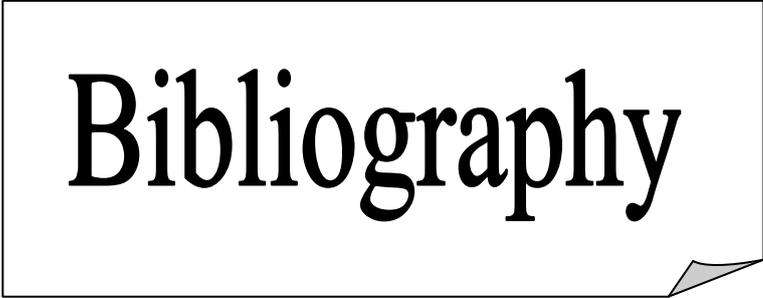
## **General Conclusion**

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appropriate ways and techniques for teaching culture. The last one was that teachers may not find enough time to deal with culture.

The results prove that the three hypotheses appear to be true. In fact? the teachers' answers revealed that they do not teach culture regularly. The reason behind this fact validates the correctness of the third hypothesis. The results also reveal that the teachers do not know how to implement culture in all their lessons. This fact proves that the second hypothesis is correct. Therefore, the improvement of culture teaching in EFL classrooms requires paying attention to the teachers training first of all. Teachers should be trained on how to teach the target culture as they were trained how to teach grammar lessons. Culture should be an integral part of each lesson.

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# Appendices

## Appendix One: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to answer this questionnaire by putting a cross(x) next to the chosen answer. Justify and explain when you are asked to.

1. You are male  female

2. According to you learning the English culture is :

Very important

Important

Not important

3. Learning about English people helps you to?

Get knowledge about their culture.

Know how English people use language.

Understand their behaviors.

4. Which aspects of culture interest you ?

History

Literature and arts

Rules of behavior

Way of life

5. Where did you acquire your knowledge about English culture ?

From the classroom

From the media

Elsewhere

Mention other sources from where you learned culture

.....

6. As a non native speaker, is there any difference between you and a native speaker in terms of behaviour, manners and way of life?

Yes

No

Explain

.....  
.....



## **Appendix Two: Teacher Interview:**

- 1-** How long have you been teaching English?
- 2-** Have you already taught about culture
- 3-** What does teaching English Culture include?
- 4-** Do you think that teaching English culture is important for learners?
- 5-** Do you think that your students are interested in getting some knowledge about the English culture ?
- 6-** To what extent do you include teaching culture in class?
- 7-** What do you use to teach them about English Culture?
- 8-** Please could you tell me how can these methods help, learners to get knowledge about English language?
- 9-** Do you think that there will be some innovation to teaching English culture at the university level.