



PEOPLE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
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**Thrusting the Intercultural Communicative Competence
Skills in EFL Learners Through the Learning Styles**

Case study: Third year university students

SUBMITTED BY:
KELLAM DJEDIAN Hicham

Chair: Mrs. BEKRI Leila

Supervisor: Miss. BENTAMRA Soumia

Examiner: Mrs. BENSTAALI Leila

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Dedication

To you dear mother and father, I dedicate this work.

I also dedicate it to my sister and brother.

As I dedicate it to my friends and colleagues.

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Great appreciation is extended to my supervisor Soumia BENTAMRA for her considerable help, advice and guidance.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the possibility of thrusting the intercultural communicative competence skills through the different learning styles. It also aims to raise the learners' cultural awareness and provide them with the necessary skills to communicate effectively across cultures. In data collection, the researcher uses two questionnaires and an interview. Therefore, the research includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. Teachers' questionnaire is tended to provide the researcher with information about the integration of ICC in different subjects. Learners' questionnaire aims at discovering the learners' awareness about ICC and to explore their styles of learning. Teachers' interview addressed specialized educators in ICC in order to know their impression about the current situation of ICC. The result obtained from the research tools demonstrates that thrusting the intercultural communicative competence considering the learning styles is possible through the use of multiple and authentic materials. Finally, the present study is concluded with some strategies that may enable both teachers and learners to deal much more effectively with cultural aspects of teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

Keywords: Intercultural communicative competence, learning styles.

List of abbreviations

EFL: English as a foreign language.

CC: Communicative Competence.

ICC: Intercultural communicative competence.

ILT: Intercultural language teaching.

List of Tables

Table2.1: The teachers' degree.....	19
Table2.2: The teachers' experience.....	20
Table2.3: Teaching language and culture.....	21
Table2.4: Learners' awareness about other cultures.....	22
Table2.5: Progression of learners' level.....	27
Table2.6: Difficulties while communicating in English.....	28
Table2.7: Literature as a source for cultural information.....	32

List of figures

Figure 2.1: Nature of language.....	20
Figure 2.2: Clarifying the relationships between culture.....	21
Figure 2.3: Tolerating the cultural differences.....	22
Figure 2.4: Materials used in introducing cultural elements.....	23
Figure 2.5: Choosing materials through the learning styles.....	24
Figure 2.6: Literature as a source of cultural elements.....	24
Figure 2.7: valuing intercultural communicative competence.....	25
Figure 2.8: Integrating intercultural communicative competence.....	25
Figure 2.9: Considering learning styles while dealing with culture.....	26
Figure 2.10: The style that represents quick learners.....	26
Figure 2.11: The materials based on learning styles in facilitating teaching intercultural communicative competence.....	27
Figure 2.12: Natives as friends.....	28
Figure 2.13: Grammar and vocabulary for communicating effectively.....	29
Figure 2.14: Similarities with different countries.....	29
Figure 2.15: Difficulties while listening to natives.....	30
Figure 2.16: Ignoring culture as a reason of difficulties in communicating with natives.....	30
Figure 2.17: Necessity of studying culture.....	31
Figure 2.18: Means to understand cultural elements.....	31
Figure 2.19: Meaning of ICC.....	32
Figure 2.20: materials to improve the English language	33
Figure2. 21: The learners' learning styles.....	33
Figure2. 22: The benefits of learning styles.....	34

Table of contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements.....	II
Abstract.....	III
List of abbreviations.....	IV
List of tables.....	V
List of figures.....	VI
Table of content.....	VII
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter one: The intercultural dimensions and the learning styles	
1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2 Teaching language VS teaching culture.....	3
1.2.1 Nature of language.....	3
1.2.2 Culture.....	4
1.2.3 Linguaculture.....	5
1.3 Intercultural dimensions in language teaching.....	5
1.3.1 Communicative competence.....	6
1.3.2 Critics of communicative competence.....	7
1.3.3 Intercultural communicative competence.....	8
1.3.3.1 Learners as intercultural speakers.....	9
1.3.3.2 Factors of the intercultural competence.....	9
1.3.3.3 Cultural awareness.....	10
1.3.3.4 Culture in language teaching.....	11
1.3.3.5 Materials to promote ICC.....	12
1.4 Learning styles.....	14

1.4.1 Perspective of learning style.....	15
1.4.1.1 The visual learners.....	15
1.4.1.2 The auditory Learners.....	15
1.4.1.3 The kinesthetic learners.....	16
1.5 Conclusion.....	16

Chapter two: Methodology and Data Analysis

2.1 Introduction.....	17
2.2 Purpose of the study.....	17
2.3 Research design.....	17
2.4 Population.....	17
2.4.1 Teachers.....	17
2.4.2 Learners.....	18
2.5 Research tools.....	18
2.5.1 The learners' questionnaire.....	18
2.5.2 The teachers' questionnaire	18
2.5.3 The teachers' interview.....	19
2.6 Analysis of data tools.....	19
2.6.1 Questionnaires.....	19
2.6.1.1 Teachers' questionnaire.....	19
2.6.1.2 Learners' questionnaire.....	27
2.6.2 The interviews.....	35
2.7 Conclusion.....	37

Chapter three: Discussion of the findings

3.1 Introduction.....	38
3.2 Discussion of the findings.....	38
3.2.1 Discussions of the teachers' questionnaire.....	38
3.2.2 The discussions of the learners' questionnaire.....	40
3.2.3 Discussions of the teachers' interview.....	41
3.3 Major findings.....	43
3.4 Limitations of the study.....	44

3.5	Suggestions and recommendations.....	44
3.5.1	Suggestions and recommendations for learners.....	44
3.5.1.1	Raising awareness.....	44
3.5.1.2	Collaborative work.....	45
3.5.1.3	Further research.....	45
3.5.1.4	Interaction with natives.....	45
3.5.2	Suggestions and recommendations for teachers.....	45
3.6	Conclusion.....	46
	General Conclusion.....	47
	List of references.....	49
	Appendix (A).....	51
	Appendix (B).....	54
	Appendix (C).....	56

General Introduction

Learning a foreign language has long been focusing on studying the grammar of that particular language, but in recent decades the emphasis turns to be more on learning a language for communication and, even more importantly, for social interaction.

Learning a language involves understanding its culture, rather than focusing only on learning linguistic codes. This led to the emergence of the intercultural oriented view, the integration of language and culture, of language education. According to Byram and Fleming (1998), the integration of linguistic and cultural learning enhances and facilitates the process of communication and interaction. A perspective presented by the English National curriculum documents suggests that the learner should be aware of the society and the culture of the native speakers, but this is not sufficient he/she needs also to know about his/her society and culture and the relationship between them. To encourage the contact between learners and speakers of other language, there was a need for the development of language learner's intercultural communicative competence since it helps learners to analyze and interpret foreign cultures.

The term ICC refers to the understanding of different cultures and using this knowledge to communicate across cultures. The application of this concept requires the awareness of the learners about the term ICC and the teacher who can deal with mixed ability classes during the process of making them communicating across cultures. The needs for raising the cultural awareness and communicating across cultures motivated us to look for ways that allow learners and teachers to be familiar with ICC without neglecting the learning styles.

In the EFL context, raising the intercultural communicative competence awareness is the interest of many researchers and learners, the greater awareness they acquire about this term the more communicative learners across cultures they become. Therefore, this study looks for the possible ways that lead to develop the ICC awareness taking into consideration the learning styles. The present research adopts two questionnaires; one is addressed to the third year university students at Mostaganem and the other one, to the teachers at the same university to find out if they consider the intercultural concept in both teaching and learning a foreign language, and an interview is done with specialized teachers in ICC to see their impression about the existence of this module in our context. The main question upon which this research was built is: **How can intercultural communicative competence be developed in learners with different learning styles?**

So, this work is carried out to answer the following questions:

- To which extent is the ICC integrated in our classrooms?
- How can learners raise the intercultural communicative competence awareness?

The mentioned questions cannot get an exact answer yet some hypotheses are proposed:

- The intercultural communicative competence skills can be developed in learners with different learning styles probably via the use of materials based on learning styles, such as videos, songs, role play and literary texts, to mobilize the different abilities.
- Intercultural communicative competence might be neglected to a certain extent which explains the difficulties in communicating across cultures.
- Tolerating the cultural differences as a primitive step may be the way to understand others' culture.

This work is divided into two main parts, a descriptive part which includes one chapter about the review of related literature, and an empirical part which includes two chapters, one is devoted to the methodology of this research, analysis of the research, and the research design, whereas the last chapter deals with the discussion of the results and giving some suggestions and recommendations to both teachers and learners.

CHAPTER ONE

The Intercultural Dimensions and the Learning Styles.

1.1 Introduction

Increasing mobility and modern communication which replicates interaction through the use of modern technology paves the way to the emergence of a new field called intercultural education. Learners find themselves working, communicating and even living with people from different background, those people are different from them linguistically and culturally. This leads educators to prepare learners for the demand of the brave new world and intercultural assignments resulting from globalization. (Taylor and J Weir 2009)

Learning a foreign language means that the learners are supposed to deal with two different cultures in the classroom, their own culture and that of the target language. In this perspective, teachers need to thrust the intercultural skills in their learners without neglecting the learning style of each learner. This chapter discusses different notions relating the most important components of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) to the different learning styles.

1.2. Teaching Language VS Teaching Culture**1.2.1 The Nature of Language**

Teaching a foreign language, in general, is a challenging task which depends on the understanding of the nature of the language. The way teachers approach and understand language determines to a large extent their way of teaching that language. The theory of language the teacher possesses and influences the teaching process. Teachers who consider the language as a structural system focus more on teaching the grammar and emphasize the linguistic code of the language. The adherents of this view argue that grammar is the cornerstone in teaching any language, therefore; the emphasis was more on teaching the correct form as a primitive step in language teaching. On the other one hand, the language as a communicative system means understanding its purpose covers communication. According to Davies (2005) language is the basic system of communication for humans, this view of perceiving language as a means of communication does not differ much from the structural one since communication is meant to be the use of grammar in transforming thoughts however this was not sufficient for Carey, 1989 who claimed that communication cannot be considered merely as exchanging information, it reflects the culture of a specific social group with the sense of creativity, yet the understanding of language is still restricted there for a larger perspective is needed because the structural system focuses on the form mostly while the communicative one emphasizes meaning.

Shohamy, (2007) claims that considering language education as an intercultural objective demands a broader theory of language on characterizing language as being, in his words, “open, dynamic, energetic constantly evolving and personal”.

Language as a social practice aims to make sure that learners get the chances to go further their previous knowledge with the ability to use and analyze language spontaneously. This view where language is seen as social practice gathers both the structural and the communicative views in performing real-life situations. Moreover, the social practice system includes other social aspects such as culture. In this respect, Gadamer says: “language is fundamentally a social, cultural, and historical phenomenon. (Anthony, Liddicoat and Angela Scarino, 2013 p.15)

1.2.2 Culture

Culture is generally defined as a way of life, a context in which a community of people exists lives and shares some common beliefs(Brown p81). To date, no standard definition of the term culture has been identified. Culture was defined by Brown (2000),in his own words,’’ *way of life. It is the context within we exist, think, feel, and relate to others*’’. (p.176) .Teachers refer to subjects such as literature, geography and arts in order to define the term culture. Those subjects are important but, other components are required to be included in the foreign language classrooms(Làzàr, 2007.p7)

According to Halverson(1985), the subjects mentioned above are mainly related to the “big C” while “ little c “ includes abstract elements such as attitudes, beliefs, value and communication styles that have no subjects refer to them in schools. But, Bennett(1997) claims that ‘ To avoid becoming a fluent fool , we need to understand more completely the cultural dimension of language’’ (as quoted in Làzàr,2007)

UNESCO(2001) defines culture as ‘a set of distinctive traits, spiritual and material, intellectual and effective which characterize a society or a social group’.(quoted in Taylor&Weir.P237). Street(1993) sees the notion of culture from another perspective. He claims that in culture, the focus should be on its actions rather than its definitions. Probably,it creates names for ideas and things. But,the aim behind studying culture should be; knowingthe way of making those definitions, that’s why culture is a verb.(As mentioned in Kelly, teaching and researching language and culture.p19)

According to Gail Robinson (1985) teachers' definitions of the term culture can be divided into three components: products which include literature, art, music, and artifacts. Ideas contain belief, values and institutions. Behaviours embody customs, habits, dress, foods and leisure. (Tomalin&Stempleski, 1993.p7)

1.2.3 Linguaculture

The term "linguaculture" refers to that close relation between language and culture. The term was first used by Agar (1994).

'The lingua in linguaculture is about discourse, not just About words and sentences. And the culture in linguaculture is about meanings that include, but go well beyond what the dectionary and grammar offer ' (as mentioned in Brown ,p81)

Agar explained that language and culture are interconnected, they cannot be separated. In this respect he states, "Culture is in language, and language is loaded with culture". Similarly, Brown(2000) demonstrated that culture and language cannot be separated without losing the value of one of them. He states 'A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language' (p.177). Moreover, he demonstrates that the awareness about the solid relation between language and both visible and non-visible elements of culture is required whenever teaching or learning an additional language, because those elements exist within the use of language. (p.157)

1.3 Intercultural Dimensions in Language Teaching

Bruner claimed that education should be an opening to culture. Language teaching and learning became seen as a way of getting in touch with another culture and its people , in this respect Stern(1983) demonstrated that cultural factors and social context are parts of language teaching that educators cannot teach for long without going through them .(Taylor & Weir,2008 p236).Similarly , Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (1997) claimed that language teaching profession involves more than knowing only the grammar rules ,learners need also to be able to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways .(p4)

Our social identities are involved during the process of communicating with others, because when people interact together, the content, way of talking and their acts represent a

specific social group, so acquiring only the grammatical competence is not enough. Learners need also to have knowledge of what is appropriate language, and this is the main concern of the concept communicative competence. (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey.p5)

1.3.1 Communicative Competence

The term communicative competence (CC) was first introduced by Dell Hymes in 1972 as an alternative to Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence. According to Chomsky(1966) each one has innate capacities of generating the grammar rules in which their mental is programmed to generate language rules, while Hymes claims that learning a language requires being within its social context; therefore, the communicative competence emphasizes on the use of a language in a specific situation. In other words, learning a language must involve more than grammar and structure, it deals with the use of the language in real life situations with native and non-native speakers. For Hymes, individuals need to carry some knowledge and skills that enable them to understand and produce utterances. (Kelly,2002 p.105)

Hymes argues that the acquisition of first language requires the acquisition of both grammar competence and the ability to use that language appropriately in which the focus, for him, was on the sociolinguistic competence. Moreover, he transfers the idea of first language acquisition with the native speakers as a model and includes it as the aim and the objective of foreign language learning and teaching. (Byram1997)

The work of Hymes was developed by several scholars among them the model of Canale & Swain(1980). The model identified four elements of CC embedding grammatical competence. This element is concerned with what is formally possible in terms of mastering language rules, and it is similar to the linguistic competence presented by Chomsky. Discourse competence is related to the ability of connection and interpretation of individual messages considering cohesion and coherence. Sociolinguistic competence involved being familiar with the language forms and use in concrete situations according to the social context in which communication takes place. Strategic competence deals with finding out ways such as paraphrase and repetition to cope with unfamiliar situations in case of having breakdowns in communication. (Brown.2000.p247)

Van Ek (1986) introduces a "framework for comprehensive foreign language learning objectives". According to van Ek the foreign language teaching (FLT) needs to treat the learner as an individual. Here, the focus shifts from stressing the communication skills to

giving more important to the social development of learners (Byram,1997).Van Ek (1986) in his model 'communicative ability' added two other elements to the components presented by Canal & Swain ,socio-cultural competence and social competence. The sociocultural competence enables learners to be productive in several cultures by showing some participatory(common) elements between the two different languages and contexts. The social competence refers to that motivation, attitude, empathy and ability to accomplish successful relations with different social groups.(Làzàr with Martina, Huber, Lussier, Matei, Peck 2007)

1.3.2. Critics of communicative competence

Habermas was among the scholars who rejected both the idea of Chomsky and the sociolinguist Dell Hymes. He argues that communicative competence is used in a very limited way. For him, CC should contain systematic rules that lead to an ideal speech situations. Habermas, in his own words 'Dell Hymes, among others, makes use of the term communicative competence in a sociolinguistically limited sense. I don't want to follow this convention'(as quoted in Richheit& Strohner.2008.p.17) .Similarly, Byram (1997) also criticizes the idea of Hymes, since it's suggests that learners of foreign language should have the same competences as natives speakers in which the natives are models and the learner is supposed to imitate them .In this case, for Byram, the identity and cultural competence of the learner is neglected. Moreover, Hymes model is concerned with communication between people from the same social background, but it is not really useful at the level of cross-cultural communication.(p.8,9)

Taylor and Weir (2008) also believe that models of communicative competence which focus on developing linguistic, discursive and sociolinguistic competence are insufficient because of the link between languages, culture and thought which require a new approach of study. For them these elements are essential and "they have to be revisited to include ICC". (p.240)

1.3.3 Intercultural Communicative Competence

The term intercultural communicative competence appears as an extension to the term communicative competence. Byram (1997) used the six components presented in van Ek's model as an initiating point to the development of his model ICC. He argues that the model of van Ek carries some important components that are associated with communicative and interactional ability. Van Ek's model started with highlighting the way and the context or place in which the foreign language is used, it covers the idea of using language according to

its context. Yet, Byram(1997) argues that the analyses of van Ek need other social factors to be included. He criticizes van Ek's model for viewing the natives as a model in implicit manner, he says 'there is a tendency to view the learner as an incomplete native speaker.'(p.11)

According to Byram, it is impossible and unreachable purpose to have the same competences as native speakers. Moreover, the native speaker model requires that the learner abdicates his own culture, and acquires that of natives. Instead, the learner needs to evolve an intercultural style.(Byram1997)

As Byram, Kribkova& Starkey (2002) mention "language teaching in an intercultural dimension continues to help learners to acquire the linguistic competence needed to communicate in speaking or writing, to formulate what they want to say/ write in correct and appropriate ways" (as mentioned in Thomé-Williams, 2016).From that, it is evident that the ICC offer the learner with the opportunity of language learning and the appropriate way to using it in different context. ICC is said to be important in a sense that it offers students with linguistic, communicative and intercultural abilities that enable them to communicate appropriately in cross-cultural situations.

It is widespread that the second and foreign language acquisition aims to promote the learners with abilities that enable them to communicate with people that are deferent from them linguistically and culturally, in a world full with cultural diversity. For such reason learners need to acquire ICC. Thus, the intercultural dimensions were introduced by The Council of Europ's 'Common European Framework as aims of language teaching, it enables learners to communicate effectively and establish relations with the other interlocutors that are deferent from them culturally and socially. .(Byram,Gribkova and starkey). But, according to Làzàr with Martina, Huber, Lussier, Matei, Peck (2007) language learning and teacher education is still neglect the cultural dimension and emphasize on stressing the linguistic code of the language.

1.3.3.1 Learners as intercultural speakers

As mentioned above, the communicative competence models view the native speaker as a model that learners need to follow and imitate, while the intercultural dimensions in language teaching aim to make learners intercultural speakers, in which the identity and the cultural differences of both learners and natives are taken into considerations. (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey). The idea of seeing native speakers norms as aims of foreign language education has run its course and the intercultural speaker model preside. Byram and Zarate (1994) has suggested that learning a foreign language does not entail being near native speakers competence, instead the focus should be on developing learners as intercultural speakers. (as mentioned in Byram and Fleming, 1998.p16)

Byram (1997) introduces the concept 'intercultural speaker', as he says "to describe interlocutors involved in intercultural communication and interaction." (p.32). In this quote, Byram clarifies that the intercultural communication requires from the interlocutors to be intercultural speakers.

According to Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001), the intercultural mediators is the "intercultural speaker" who, as they state, "has an ability to interact with 'others', to accept others perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, and to be conscious of their evaluations of difference". (as mentioned in Thomé-Williams, 2016). So that, the intercultural speaker is the one who is aware about the differences, and has the ability to tolerate them. Byram (1997) in his book, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* explains that the intercultural speaker recognizes the daily life activities and even the hidden elements of different social groups.

1.3.3.2 Factors of the Intercultural Competence

Taylor and Weir (2008) demonstrated that the models of communicative competence neglect specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed for the learners in order to communicate and interact successfully in cross-cultural communication with people from different social groups and identities. (p.240)

Knowledge, skills and attitudes are identified by Byram (1997) as important components in his model ICC, in addition to social competence, strategic and socio-cultural competence presented by van Ek (p.48). Knowledge of the social and cultural practices of both: the learner's own society and culture and that of speakers of other languages. Learners

need also to have an idea about different cultures and countries. Besides that, knowledge of process of interaction is essential for ensuring the success of communication.(Byram,1997)

Byram, Gribkova and Starkey claimed that the teacher doesn't need to give the learner everything about others cultures in term of knowledge, rather "the teacher's task is to develop attitudes and skills as much as knowledge, and teachers can acquire information about other countries together with their learners; they do not need to be the sole or major source of information"(p.8)

Attitude refers to the willingness, curiosity and openness to accept the criticism. It requires from the interlocutors to expect problems and accept being as the mirror of a certain social group. Skills are divided into two categories: the skill of interpreting and relating and the skill of discovery. The former relies, to a large extent, on the background knowledge of the interlocutor. This skill, by necessity, takes forms of translating documents or events from the other's culture to one's own without any face to face interaction. The later take place when the person needs to construct knowledge and expands his understanding of the cultural elements that are related to specific situations and social groups.(Byram,1997)

The intercultural mediators need also to be aware about the influence of values in performing standpoints toward others. Hence, critical cultural awareness is an important factor that allows the intercultural speaker to evaluate critically the different values and practices that exist in one's own and other cultures.(Byram, Gribkova and Starkey)

1.3.3.3 Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is about accepting the differences since that what could be characterized in a culture as correct actions might be wrong, inadequate or even taboo for another. People are not alike, they share dissimilar beliefs. Developing cultural awareness prevents the occurrence of cultural conflicts. It saves the learners from the danger of ethnocentrism and stereotype.

"In order to communicate effectively in English, students need more than just competence in English grammar and vocabulary. They must also have an awareness of the culturally-determined patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication which speaker of English follow" (Tomalin&Stempleski 1993, p105)

Tomalin&Stempleski (1993) in their book “Cultural awareness” point out that the cultural awareness requires knowing both cultures (own and the target) with the ability to explain the differences in case of having a breakdown in communication.(p.5)

“Cultural awareness is the term we have used to describe sensitivity to the impact of culturally-induced behaviour on language use and communication” (Tomalin&Stempleski 1993, p5)

Damen (1987) refers to Hall when she describes cultural awareness as the understanding of both cultures, not only in term of differences and similarities in the way of thinking and behaving, but also recognizing the target culture. Moreover, Damen defines cultural learning as a natural process that allows humans to acquire the necessary knowledge for reactiveness in a societal group. (Làzàr et al 2007)

Tomlinson (2001) argues that cultural awareness is related to the understanding that there is no perfect or unique culture; it involves admitting the existence of otherness with the ability of differentiate and understand the own and the interlocutors’ culture. Learners need to develop their cultural awareness since, according to Tolinson and Masuhara (2004), it enables the students to tolerate the cultural differences and raise their empathy. (Zahra Ghorbani 2012)

1.3.3.4 Culture in language teaching

Liddicoat (2001) argues that language learners are aware about the importance of culture in constructing a successful communication. Kramch (1993) states that Culture is an important element in language teaching, because whenever a person speaks, he/she brings some cultural aspects to the situation which is related to his/her own culture. This last leads to misunderstanding in cross cultural situations since the interpretation of the speeches and acts can differ from one culture to another. (Liddicoat,2001.p47)

Although the presence of culture in language teaching, according to Liddicoat, culture is presented inappropriately, since the teaching of culture is largely based on the understanding of culture, whether it is static or dynamic. For him, the static view of culture is based on giving some information about the foreign culture, these information are generally taken from the visible side of culture, history and literature; Moreover, this view has a sense of separating language from culture or, as he says, “the core problem here for the teaching of language and culture is that there is no clearly articulated link between cultural knowledge

and language use, nor of the way information is taught will affect the learner as a user of language".(p48)

In contrast to the static view of culture, the dynamic one is concerned with its practical side of culture. It is also concerned with understanding culture through practices and actions. In this respect, Liddicoat (2001) pointed out that learning a culture requires more than just knowing about it; rather, it involves a total readiness, willingness and engagement with the target culture.(p50)

Moreover, to highlight the importance of dynamic culture, Liddicoat (2001) examines the intercultural language teaching (ILT) as a process of language teaching which relies on the dynamic view of culture. For him, ILT is standing for acquiring different cultures, for such purpose, learners need to know about their own cultures as a primitive step, he also clarified that the learner are supposed to integrate, not assimilate, other cultures. Simultaneously, the learners are required to place themselves in the 'third place'; in other words, the learner is supposed to be a mediator between the two cultures.(p.53)

1.3.3.5 Materials to promote Intercultural communicative competence

In order to promote the learners' ICC skills, teachers need to use a variety of materials in their classrooms. Byram, Gribkova and starkey argued that the teachers need to use authentic texts and authoritative materials as source of information in a way that fit the needs and the learning styles of learners. They suggested the use of visuals, audio recordings and multiple aids materials. Similarly, Byram and Fleming (1998) emphasize on the use of techniques, activities and materials in the foreign language classrooms in a way that develop the learner's understanding of the foreign culture.(p.206)

Làzàr with Martina, Huber, Lussier, Matei, Peck (2007) in "*Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence*" proposed the use of literature, films and songs as useful materials that develop learner's intercultural competence. For them, literary texts are rich with cultural and social aspects of language. It gives a clear image about a certain social group , their practices, way of thinking and living. For such reasons literature can be considered as an authentic source of cultural information that describes a community of people, so learners can gain and grasp the basic cultural elements that enable them to develop their intercultural competence.

Làzàr et al (2007) argued that teachers disregard the use of literature pretending that learners find it difficult and the lacks in the linguistic side prevents learners from enjoying literary texts. But, literature has been simplified and many studies have dealt with culture and literature. The writers of this book also expressed their desire in including intercultural communication into language teaching .Films and songs , for them, seem to be more comfortable to the teachers grace to the spread of student-centered approaches; Moreover, music creates a positive relax atmosphere, a sense of “*dulce et utile*” in the classrooms and enhance the learner’s knowledge about other cultures.

The use of films as a teaching material is required, since it contains mainly the visual and auditory side of cultures such as customs, traditions and intonation. Through the use of films learners are going to benefit ,to a large extent, by observing speakers of other language in action, this way allow them to collect as many ideas as possible related to other cultures without being in their context; Thus, they develop their intercultural competence . Those materials can be even used as scholars say “valuable springboards” in term of role play, discussions, and activities that make learners more familiar with different cultures.(p.19)

Byram and Fleming (1998) also illustrated the value of literature in understanding culture by picking the example of Collie and Slater (1992) who clarified that novel, play and short story help readers to come across persons from different social backgrounds , since both visible and non-visible elements of the writer’s (in case of short stories and novel) or actors (as it the case in play) culture appear clearly; thus, through literature readers imagine the situations in which other lives.(p.204)

Tomalin&Stempleski (1993) asserted that realia is a well-known term for teachers; it gathers multiple objects related to different cultures such as images, photographs, symbols, cartoons and newspapers. Those objects make learners feel as if the target culture exists within them in classroom. Moreover, realia creates a concrete situation where learners can differentiate between the English speaking culture and their own, because learners feel more comfortable and learn more when using physical objects. (p39)

1.4 Learning styles

“It is supposed that learning is the process of gaining more knowledge or of learning how to do something”. (Pritchard, 2009.p1). Learning is seen as a way of constructing a certain knowledge that results a change in behavior, understanding and the way of thinking. Similarly, Kimble and Garmezy (1963), state that learning involves an everlasting change in behavior, supported by a frequent practice. (As mentioned in Brown 2000, p7)

A new side of learning process called learning preferences comes to the existence after research which, as Pritchard says, “Identifies humans as more or less receptive to different stimuli”. This means that learners vary in choosing the proper instrument during the process of learning (p4). Learning styles or learning preferences refers to the different ways, manners and methods of learning that the individual uses in order to learn new ideas and information. It is also defined as a favorite manner of educating and grasping new knowledge.

It is widespread that each learner has his/her preferred style of learning; this latter can be a challenge for teachers and course designers, they need to discover the learners’ style in order to vary their methods of teaching accordingly, under the assumption that learner’s motivation to learn relies, to a large extent, on the awareness of their weaknesses and strengths. (Coffield;Moseley;Hall;Ecclestone,2004.p1). Similarly, Pritchard (2009) emphasize on the importance of knowing and being conscious about the effectiveness of learning styles, since the level of learners may backtrack when the teacher stresses only a specific style of learning, for such reason, teachers are supposed to vary the materials in classroom according to the learner’s styles in order to fit their needs. (p42)

The idea of varying the materials in classroom according to the learner’s styles facilitates the teaching of ICC, in a sense that multiple materials can be used in promoting ICC in a way that suits the manner of learners in doing and presenting things. Ellis (2004) highlighted the ways that allow language pedagogy to benefit from the different learning styles as follow:

“There are some fairly obvious ways in which language pedagogy can benefit from an understanding of learning style. One is through attempts to match the kind of instructional activities to learners’ preferred learning styles. Another is through encouraging learners to identify their own natural way of learning to ensure that they can learn efficiently. A third application is to help learners to see the advantages of learning styles

other than the one they incline to and thereby to become more flexible in the way they learn.” Ellis (2004)

The idea of matching the instructional activities to learners preferred learning styles reflect the ability of thrusting the ICC skills through the different learning styles, by selecting both the appropriate activities and materials that suit learners interests. It is also beneficial to help learners in using multiple ways of learning, in order to enhance and develop their learning process.

1.4.1 The Perspective of Learning Style

Not surprisingly teachers recognize the importance of learning styles in maximizing the potential of success in language learning and teaching. Learning styles have attracted increasing attention from researchers, which leads to the appearance of number models of learning styles. Neil Fleming’s VAK / VARK are the most frequently mentioned model of learning styles that characterizes three different styles of learning: visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

1.4.1.1. The Visual Learners

Those students have the tendency to learn by observing things, the use of visual aids such as images, photographs, maps, posters, slides and screenshots are all beneficial for that type of learners, and they try to ensure that things are legibly enough in the blackboard, and these learners also use their minds for the purpose of refreshing their memories and remember ideas. The teacher of ICC can use a variety of materials that describe the different cultures and suit the visual learners such as pictures, graphs and realia.

1.4.1.2. The Auditory Learners

Auditory learners become more comfortable in learning by listening. Hearing and reading loudly, for them, are the best ways to access knowledge; besides that, students who are auditory feel grateful and learn more if recording materials such as audio tapes are available; Moreover, they study operatively through discussion, repetition and summary. Those learners can learn best about other cultures through the use of songs and videos. The teacher can also put them in a direct contact with people from different cultures through social media websites, this allow them enjoy talking and interviewing natives in a real cross-cultural context.

1.4.1.3. The Kinesthetic learners

Kinesthetic students enjoy learning by doing. These particular learners have the desire of involving themselves in the activities in order to learn more effectively, they learn through practice, moving in the classroom, and the physical activities motivate them to study. They like also to manipulate and touch things. The teacher can design lectures from real life examples that develop their cultural understanding and fit the needs of this type of learners. It is beneficial for them to present courses that involve cultural elements and work on all their parts of sense (touch, taste and hearing).

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been devoted to review what scholars and researchers claimed about our topic of interest. First, some definitions of the key concepts in the present research were presented throughout the different paragraphs, the definition of the term intercultural communicative competence also is provided with the important notions related to that field. Next, the materials needed in teaching the intercultural communicative competence were explored. After that, the researcher looked into the different styles of learning and their importance during the process of teaching ICC.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology and data analysis

2.1 Introduction:

In the literature chapter, key concepts and dimensions linked to intercultural communicative competence and learning styles were defined. Also, it dealt with the materials used in order to thrust the intercultural communicative competence skills among learners. This chapter is tended to present the practical side of the present research work; as a starting point, it will clarify the purpose behind this investigation. Then, the research design, population and the research tools are going to be described.

2.2 Purpose of the study

This study aims to thrust the ICC skills in EFL learners without neglecting their styles of learning. The objective is to examine whether the teachers apply the ICC skills in their classrooms, and to see the learner's ability to function in other cultures. The findings of the analyses and interpretations will determine which type of recommendations to be suggested to the teacher, in order to develop the learner's intercultural communicative competence

2.3 Research design

This study relies on the use of two structured questionnaires, one is provided to third year license students at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem while the second is given to nine teachers at the same university. This research is a mixed of qualitative and quantitative method since it mainly contains statistics gathered from the questionnaires and responses taken from the interviewed teachers.

2.4 Population

For the purpose of checking the hypothesis that examines the way of thrusting the intercultural communicative competence skills among learners with deferent styles of learning, teachers and students are selected as population. Both teachers and students are from the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem.

2.4.1 Teachers

As it is mentioned previously in the research design, nine teachers at the university of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis were asked to respond to the questionnaire, all of them were selected randomly, and most of them have experience of more than 5 years.

2.4.2 Learners

The total number of third year license students at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis is one hundred and fifteen (150) divided into eight groups. Sixty among them were chosen from the total population. The third year license students are supposed to be familiar with the cultural elements and ICC in general, for such reason they were chosen as population to respond to the questionnaire.

2.5 Research tools

In the current work, and for the purpose of having reliable data, two different kinds of research tools were selected. Two questionnaires were used as a tool that enables the researcher to investigate and gather quantitative data, and an interview addressed to teachers in order to obtain qualitative data and examine the hypotheses and the validity of the research.

2.5.1 The learners' questionnaire

The large number of the L3 students and for the purpose of obtaining different ideas, the researcher chose the use of questionnaire. The questionnaire contains fifteen vary questions, multiple choices, close-ended and open-ended questions. The aim behind this questionnaire is to collect information about student's awareness of the sensitivity of the cultural elements in studying the English language.

2.5.2 The teachers' questionnaire

The teacher's questionnaire tended to gather data about the existence of ICC in teaching different module, for such reason the teachers were selected randomly. The questionnaire consists of sixteen questions and it is divided into two parts as follow

The first part: this part contains background information (Q1 - Q2) which provides the researcher with some personal information related to the participants such as the degree and the experience of the teacher in the domain of education.

The second part: intercultural communicative competence and the learning styles (Q3- Q16). This part is concerned with collecting information about teaching the ICC, the presence of the cultural elements in teaching different modules, the different materials that are used in teaching ICC and the effectiveness of the learning styles in changing the method of teaching that field.

2.5.3 The teacher's interview

In the teacher's questionnaire, teachers who respond to the questions are not specialized in the ICC, because this study highlights the existence of cultural elements in different modules. But, in the interview the researcher chose specialized teachers in ICC for the purpose of viewing the present situation of ICC in our department. The aim of this interview were to explore the extent of advantages and success from teaching ICC, the materials used by specialized teachers and the difficulties that face them in teaching culture, and also to investigate if the ICC teachers' pay attention to the learner's needs and learning styles.

2.6 Analysis of data tools

In this section, the analysis of the data will be presented in form of statistics shown in tables and figures.

2.6.1 Questionnaires

2.6.1.1 Teachers' questionnaire

Part one: Background information

Question 1: degree and specialty

This question aims to know the degree of the teacher. The result shows that 5 teachers (55.55%) have the Master/ Magister degree while 4 of them (44.44%) have the Doctorate degree.

Option	Number	Percentages%
BA (License)	00	00.00%
MA (Master/Magister)	05	55.55%
PHD (Doctorate)	04	44.44%
Total	09	100%

Table 2.1: The teachers' degrees

Question 2: how many years have you been teaching?

Option	Number	Percentages
1-10 years	4	44.44%
11-20 years	3	33.33%
21-30 years	2	22.22%
Total	9	100%

Table 2.2: Teachers Experience

Knowing the teacher's teaching experience assert the validity of the research and give the opportunity of realizing the aim of this study. This question shows that 4 teachers (44.44%) teachers have the experience of 1-10 years while 3 teachers (33.33%) have experience of 20 years, the rest 2 teachers (22.22%) have been teaching for more than 21 years.

Part two: Intercultural communicative competence and learning styles.

Question 3: What is the nature of language?

This question aims to explore which theory of language the teachers possess and to see how teachers understand and consider the language. This question carries five options, the results present that 3 teachers (33.33%) view the nature of language as communication and social phenomenon. 2 teachers (22.22%) view it as communication, another 2 teachers (22.22%) consider it as social phenomenon, while the rest 2 teachers (22.22%) gather all the options.

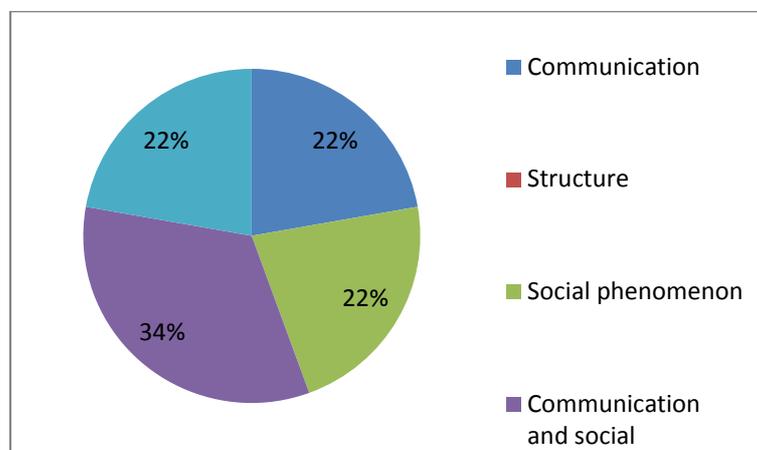


Figure 2.1: Nature of language

Question 4: What do you teach?

The aim behind this question is to know whether the participants teach language or culture in isolation or they approach them integrally. As a result, all teachers 100% said that they teach both language and culture.

Option	Number	Percentages %
Language	00	00%
Culture	00	00%
Both	09	100%
Total	09	100%

Table 2.3: teaching language and culture

Question 5: Do you help your learners to see the relationships between their own and other cultures?

This question is intended to see the extent to which teachers devote time for explaining differences and similarities between cultures. The majority of teachers (67%) explain the differences and similarities to their learners, while (33%) of them present it sometimes.

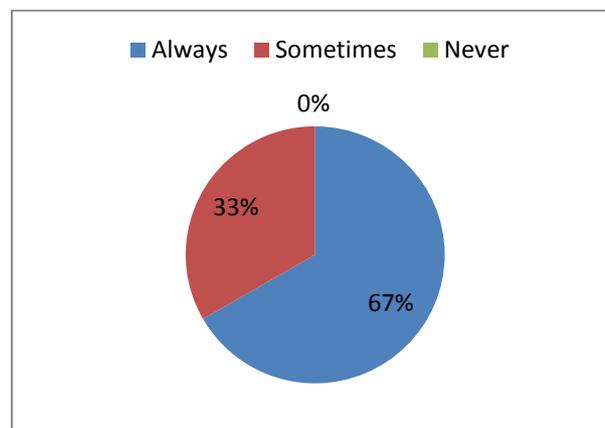


Figure 2.2: Clarifying the relationship between cultures

Question 6: Do you think that learners are aware of the cultural diversities?

This question aimed to know to what extent learners are interested and motivated at knowing the variations in culture. The result shows a balance (44.44%) between teacher's answers with yes and to some extent concerning learner's awareness about the cultural

diversities but 11,11% of teachers inform that their learners are not aware about cultural diversities.

Option	Number	Percentages %
Yes	4	44.44%
No	1	11.11%
To some extent	4	44.44%
To a great extent	0	00.00%
Total	9	100%

Table 2.4: Learner’s awareness about other cultures

Question 07: Learners tolerate the cultural differences. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

This question starts with a statement, and the question aims to see whether teachers support the idea presented in the statement or not. It is also aimed at investigating the attitude of learners toward other cultures. Multiple answers were available for the participants, the result shows that 6 teachers (66.66%) agree while 22.22% disagree with the statement.

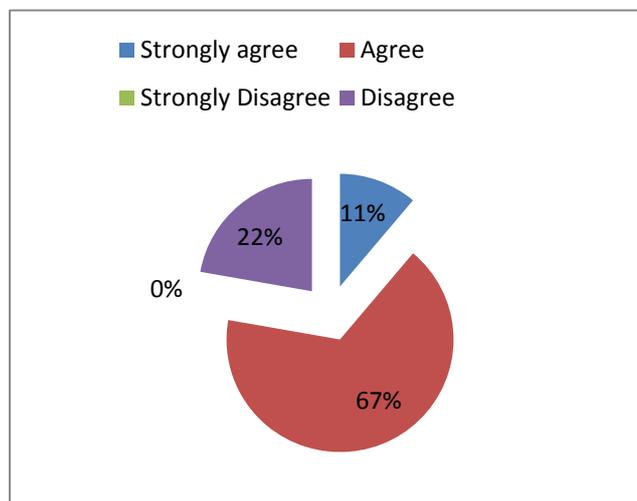


Figure 2.3: Tolerating the cultural differences

Question 08: What is intercultural communicative competence?

This question is open-ended for the purpose of collecting the teachers’ own definition of the term intercultural communicative competence since they belong to different specialties. Some teachers answer as follow:

- The ability to deal with cultural differences
- Probably, the ability to interact and communicate with others from different cultural/social background
- It is teaching cultural aspects of a foreign or your own country in your lectures
- Is to be able to understand different cultures without being lost and to have the ability to share characteristics with people since we live in the era of globalization.
- Capacity to adapt to another culture, especially linguistically and socio-linguistically.

Question 09: What do you use to introduce cultural elements?

The aim behind this question is to discover the materials used by the teacher in presenting the cultural elements. The result shows that 5 teachers (55.55%) use the entire materials. 1 teacher (11.11%) use videos and songs, another teacher (11.11%) use only songs while 2 teachers (22.22%) use the literary texts. Since the question is open, teachers state other materials such as:

- Stories, books, handouts, jokes, proverbs, and idioms

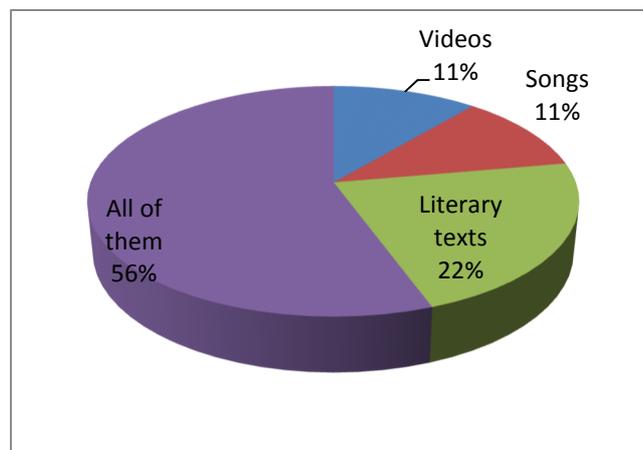


Figure 2.4: Materials used in introducing cultural elements

Question 10: Do you think about your learners' learning style when choosing such material?

This question is intended to see whether teacher take into consideration the different learning styles during the process of selecting materials. The teachers responses revealed that (56%) of teachers always consider the learning style while (44%) of teachers answers with sometimes.

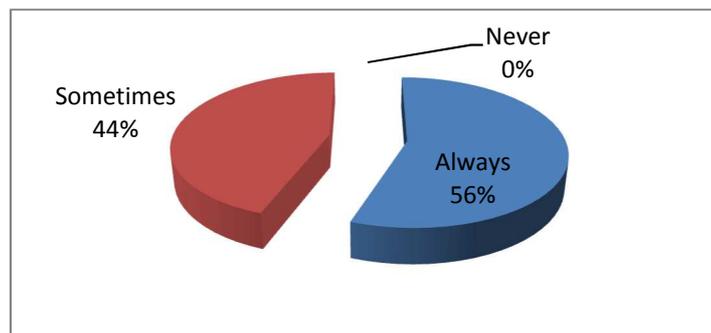


Figure 2.5: Choosing materials through the learning styles

Question 11: Do you think that literature is a source of cultural aspects?

The aim behind this question is to know whether teachers view that literature as a means of exploring others cultures. The result shows that all the teachers 100% view literature as a source of cultural elements.

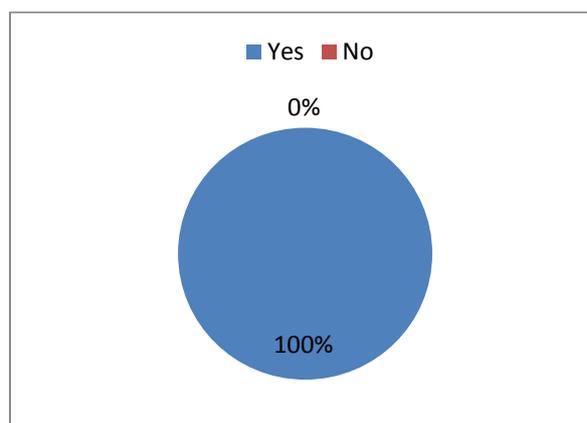


Figure 2.6: Literature as a source of cultural elements

Question 12: Intercultural communicative competence is crucial in foreign language teaching. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

This question aims at discovering the degree to which teachers value the ICC in teaching a foreign language. The majority of teachers (88.88%) strongly agree with the statement and 11.11% agree.

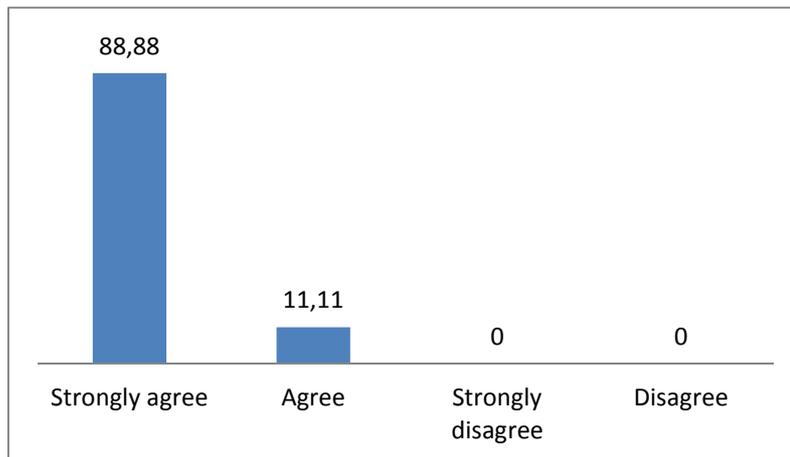


Figure 2.7: Valuing the intercultural communicative competence

Question 13: To which extent is intercultural communicative competence integrated in your classroom?

The question aims at figuring out the existence of ICC within different modules, the result shows that (44.44%) of teachers consider it integrated to some extent, (33.33%) of them to a moderate extent and (22.22%) integrate it to a great extent

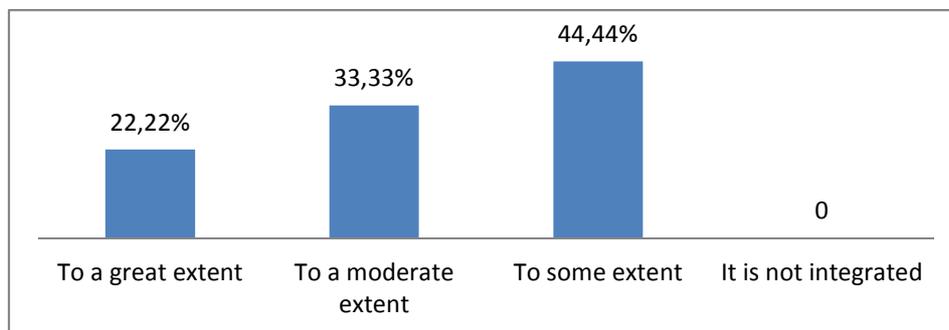


Figure 2.8: Integrating intercultural communicative competence

Question 14: Do you take into consideration the learning styles while dealing with cultural elements?

The aim of this question is to see whether the representing of the cultural element based on the learning style of the learners. Result clarify that all teachers 100% consider learning styles while teaching culture.

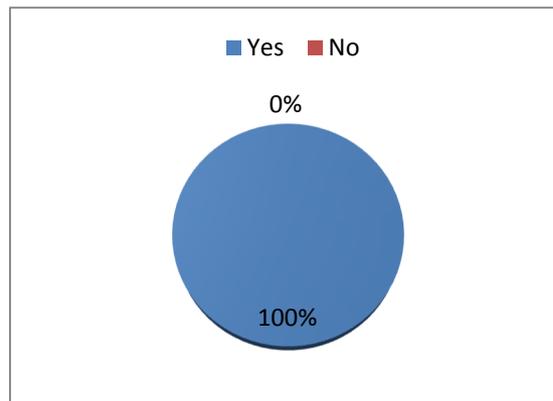


Figure 2.9: Learning styles within culture

Question 15: Which style represents quick learners?

The aim behind this question is to see the dominant style of learning. The table indicates that 3 teachers (33.33%) view the visual style as the dominant one, 11.11% for the auditory, and another 11.11% for the kinesthetic style. 22.22% view the visual and auditory as the dominant one and the other 22.22% for the visual and kinesthetic.

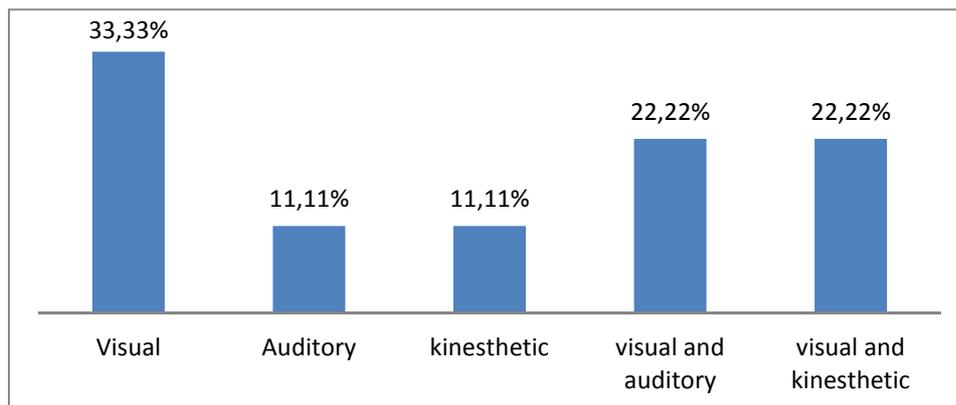


Figure 2.10: The style that represents quick learners

Question 16: Do you think that the material chosen according to learning styles facilitates teaching intercultural communicative competence?

Here, the aim is to investigate whether the choice of materials depending on the learning style is helpful and thrust the ICC skills, the results show that 56% of teachers consider it useful, 22% from them view it useful to a great extent and the other 22% agree with the idea to some extent.

This question is open for questions in order to gather some opinions that would make teaching ICC more effective. Some teachers state that:

- Students need to witness first hand, using authentic materials to see, feel and taste cultural elements in any given language
- I did an experience with my students and I noticed that they were motivated
- I believe that extra tools , such as, visual aids and audios as well as literary text can boost our learners’ intercultural communicative competence. I encourage dedicating extra hours for free discussions or reserved hours for clubs’ participations, such as, reading novels or short stories and then group discussions and feedback.
- This will help you decide which pits your learners’ interest and needs; so I would get their attention and make them more interested in knowing about the target culture.

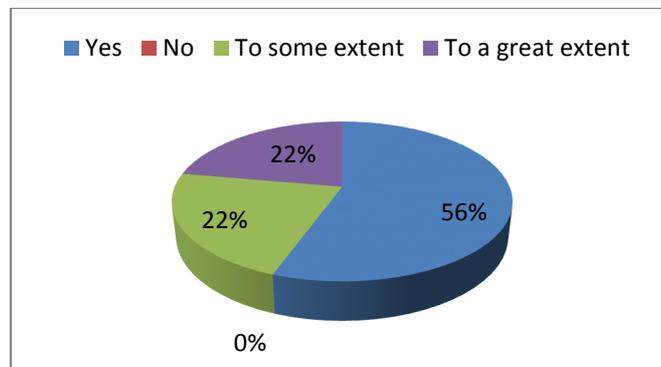


Figure 2.11: The materials based on learning style in facilitating teaching ICC

2.6.1.2 The learners’ Questionnaire

Part one: General information

Question 01: Has your level progressed as L3 learner?

Option	Number	Percentages %
Yes	43	71.66
No	4	6.66
a little	13	21.66
Total	60	100

Table 2.5: Progression of the learner’s level

The aim behind this question is to examine/check the improvement of the learner's level in comparison to the previous years. The result indicate that 43 learner (71.66%) progressed, 13 students (21.66%) has a little progression while 4 (6.66%) of them has no progression.

Question 02: Do you still find difficulties while communicating in English?

Option	Number	Percentages %
Always	1	1.66%
Sometimes	42	70%
Never	17	28.33%

Table 2.6: Difficulties while communicating in English

This question aims at investigating whether learners interact in English. It aims also at knowing if learners face difficulties in using that language. The result makes it clear that the majority of learners (70%) sometimes find difficulties in communicating, 28% do not have any difficulty while the other 2% always find it difficult to communicate in English.

Question 03: Do you have native speakers of English as friends?

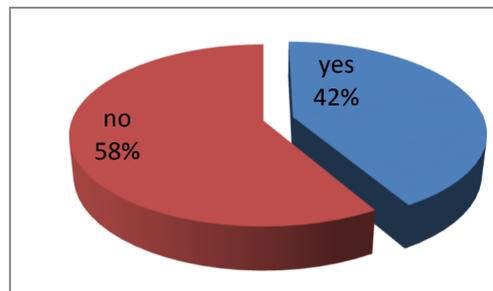


Figure 2.12: Natives as friends

The question aims at discovering whether the learners get in touch with the English culture. In other words, this question helps the researcher to see if learners face real situations where the other culture is represented in a direct way. The findings show that 58% of learners do not have native speakers as friend while 42% are in touch with natives

Question 04: Do you think that mastering grammar and vocabulary enables you to communicate effectively in English?

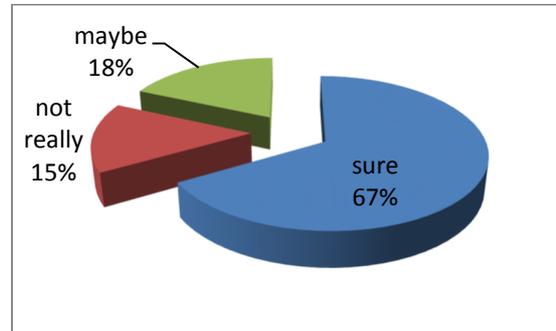


Figure 2.13: Grammar and vocabulary for communicating effectively

The aim behind this question is to discover if the learners are aware about the important of other elements such as culture in communicating effectively or the mastery of grammar and vocabulary is enough for them. The result shows that 67% of learners think that grammar and vocabulary is enough for them, 18% answered with maybe while 15% view it as being not enough for communicating effectively.

Question 05: Are there any similarities in religion, life style and traditions with other countries?

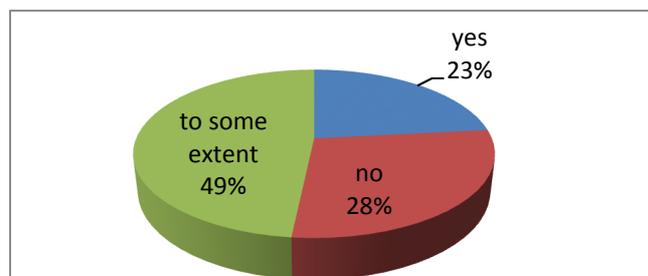


Figure 2.14: Similarities with different countries

The aim of this question is to know if the learners are aware about the cultural differences between countries. The result show that 49% of learners think that there are similarities to some extent, 23% are sure about the existence of similarities while 28% deny the presence of similarities with other countries.

Question 06: Do you find difficulties to understand English when listening to natives?

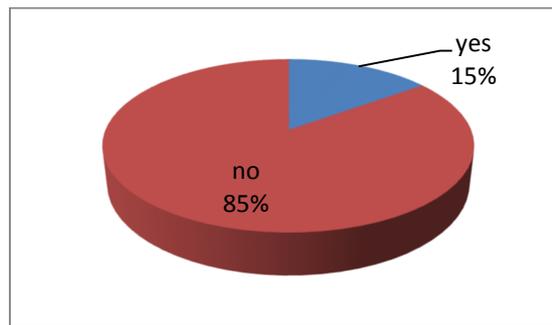


Figure 2.15: Difficulties while listening to natives

The aim of this question is to figure out the problems that lead to misunderstanding between cultures. The result shows that most student (85%) do not face problem while listening to natives, however 15% of them admit the entity of difficulties and since the question is open, learners state some reasons behind those difficulties as follow:

- They speak too quickly
- Due to their different accent
- Because I am not native and I am not good in listening
- Because they are natives and their vocabulary is really developed.
- **Question 07:** Do you think that ignoring the other's culture in one of these reasons?

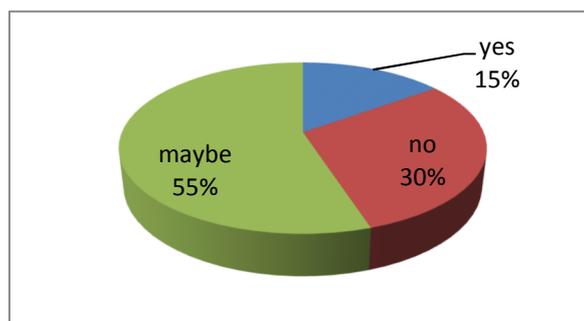


Figure 2.16: Ignoring culture as a reason of difficulties in communicating with natives

The aim behind this question is to see if the ignorance of the others' culture may create difficulties to the learner. The results show that 55% of learners doubt that ignoring culture may create a difficulty in communication with natives. 30% do not consider ignoring culture as an obstacle while 15% perform a difficulty for them.

Question 08: Do you think that studying culture is as necessary as studying language?

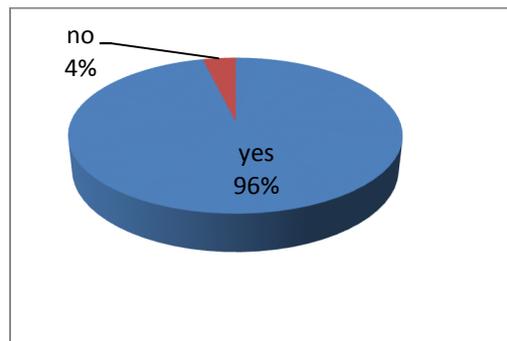


Figure 2.17: Necessity of studying culture

The aim of this question is to figure out whether students are aware about the importance of studying culture. The result obtained clarify that the majority (96%) of students admit the importance of studying culture while few (4%) of them view it as being not necessary.

Question 09: To better understand the cultural elements you need.

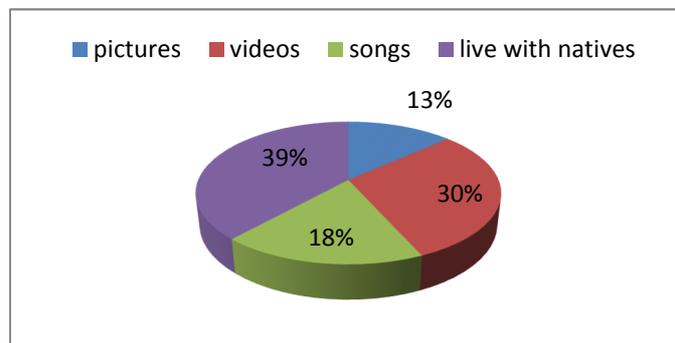


Figure 2.18: Means to understand cultural elements

Multiple answers are offered in this question for the aim of exploring the preferable materials for learners, the choice of material also indicate the way students prefer to learn with. The results show that 39% of students prefer to live with natives. 30% prefer the videos and 18% choose songs, the rest 13% select pictures for the purpose of understanding cultural elements.

And since the question is open-ended, learners mention other materials such as:

- Books, movies, and stories.

Question 10: Does studying literature as a module provide you with information about other cultures?

Option	Number	Percentages %
Yes	36	60%
No	08	13.33%
To some extent	16	26.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 2.7: literature as a source of cultural information

L3 learners are supposed to be familiar with the literature, since they study it as a module; this question aims at investigating if learners benefit from literature in collecting information about other cultures. The results indicate that 60% of learners find literature as a source of cultural aspects, 27% view it useful to some extent, while 13% do not find literature rich with cultural information about others.

Question 11: Do you know what intercultural communicative competence means?

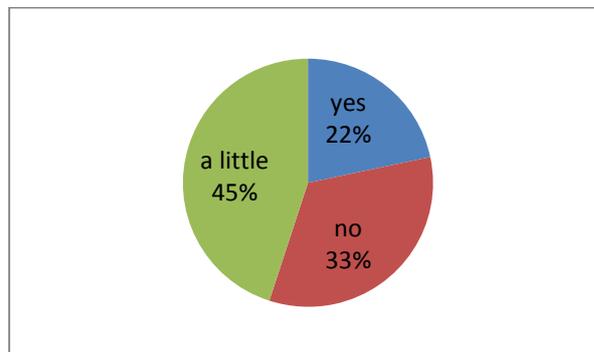


Figure 2.19: Meaning of intercultural communicative competence

The results show that 45% of learners have a little knowledge about the term intercultural communicative competence, while 33% of students have no idea about it, but the rest 22% are familiar with the term.

Question 12: You improve your English language through:

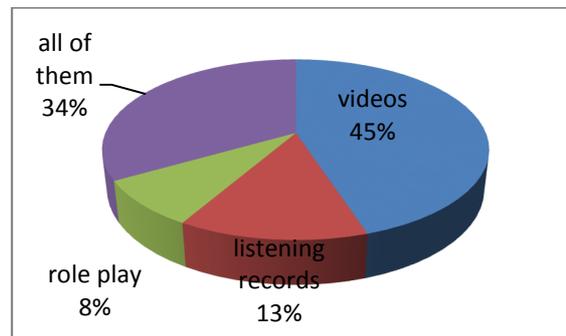


Figure 2.20: Materials to improve the English language

The aim behind this question is to know the way learners enhance their level in the English language. The result shows that 45% of learners use videos to improve their level, 34% of them use all the mentioned materials, 13% prefer the listening records and the other 8% enhance their level through role play. Other ways were suggested by learners such as: speak to natives, books, discussions, movies and courses.

Question 13: Which one do you prefer?

This question is related to the previous one, the aim behind it is to know the learners' styles of learning. Students answer as follow:

- I prefer to watch videos, because they provide both visual and auditory material for better grasping
- Watching documentaries, historical movies and series
- Listening to songs
- Role play and reading books
- I prefer role play because you can talk freely

Question 14: Which one do you rely on in class?

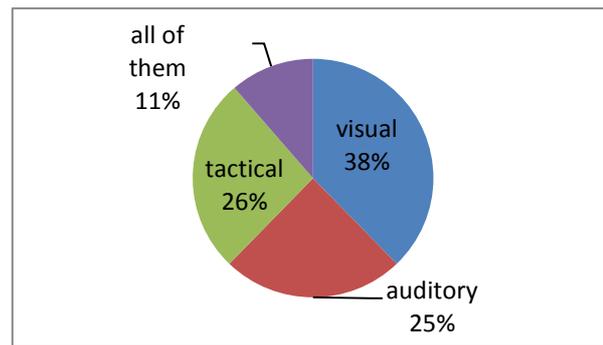


Figure 2.21: The learners' learning styles

The results show that 38% of learners rely on the visual style of learning, 25% are auditory learners and 26% prefer to learn with the tactical style while 11% of students rely on all the styles during the learning process.

Question 15: Is it beneficial for:

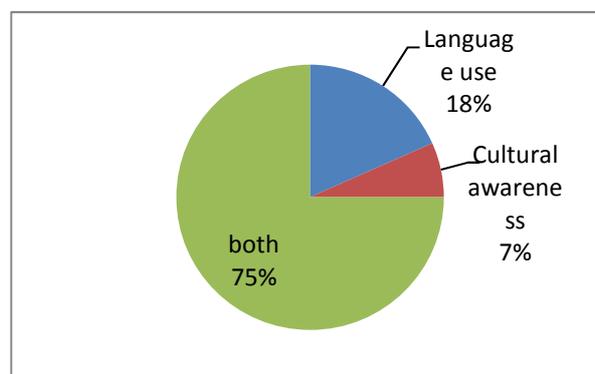


Figure 2.22: The benefit of learning styles

The last question is related to the previous one, the aims behind this question is to know if students take advantage of their learning style in learning both language and culture. The result shows that 75% of students find their learning style beneficial for learning both language and culture, 18% find it useful for language use and the rest 7% benefit from it in developing their cultural awareness.

2.6.2 The interview

This interview was done at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis Mostaganem, all the teachers interviewed belong to the department of English, and it is important to mention again that they experience the teaching of ICC.

Question 1: How long have you been teaching ICC?

The aim behind this question is to know the experience of teachers in teaching ICC as a module. Teachers who have been interviewed have more than 5 years of experience. This indicate that they are skillful

Question 2: Is ICC recent freshening as a module?

The aim of this question is to investigate whether ICC appeared recently. Teacher's answers clarified that intercultural communicative competence is new as a module

Question 3: Do you find difficulties in teaching ICC?

This question aims at figuring out the difficulties faced by teachers in teaching the ICC.as an answer to this question, teachers said that they face some difficulties at the beginning since learners were not really familiar with the term ICC and they come unaware about theirs' and the other cultures; but throughout courses the teaching process become much more easier.

Question 4: As a teacher of ICC, do you focus on the learners' culture or the target one?

The aim behind this question is to find out whether teachers highlight both cultures equally or they focus on one side, all the interviewed teachers explained that it is necessary to deal with both cultures because learners need to compare between the cultures for better understanding of the similarities and differences that shape each culture.

Question 5: Do you teach ICC as a mere theory or as a practical study?

This question aimed at discovering the way of adopting and teaching ICC. The teachers who have been interviewed claimed that teaching ICC involve both theory and practice, one teacher among three declare that she start with the practical phase then the theory take place for the purpose of gain the learners attention and interest.

Question 6: To which extent your learners understand the concept of otherness?

This question aims at exploring the extent to which learners are aware and tolerate other cultures. Teachers said that it is difficult for learners to accept others as individual and it takes time to develop their degree of acceptance and tolerance toward others.

Question 7: Do you believe that ICC is helping the learners in communicating effectively in cross-cultural situations?

The aim behind this question is to find out the role of ICC in enhancing cross-cultural communication. As a result of this question, teachers admit that teaching ICC is useful for learners.

Question 8: Do you think that your learners tolerate and accept the different cultures?

The aim behind this question is to find out whether learners tolerate the differences between cultures. As a result, teachers assume that not all the learners have this acceptance toward other cultures.

Question 9: ICC is neglected in the Algerian context. Do you agree with this statement?

This question is intended to find out the current situation of ICC in our universities. Teachers agreed with the idea presented in the statement, in the sense that the real value of ICC is not given its real value.

Question 10: By teaching ICC, do you think that you are helping your learner sufficiently to face real life situation with natives?

As an answer to this question, teachers believe that teaching ICC in a form of courses cannot be enough for learners, and their own efforts and willingness to acquire the necessary skills are required.

Question 11: How can you teach ICC through the different learning styles?

This question aims at knowing the strategies used in teaching ICC through the different learning styles. Teachers consider the use of authentic materials as a way of accomplishing a successful teaching of ICC through the different ways of learning.

2.7 Conclusion:

This chapter has been devoted to the methodology and data analysis gathered from both questionnaires and teachers interview. It has presented also the purpose of this study, the research design, participants which are learners and teachers, and the research tools. The next chapter, the researcher is going to discuss the findings, answer the research questions, and finally, some suggestions and recommendations are given to both teachers and learners.

CHAPTER THREE

Discussion of the findings

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings obtained from both questionnaires and teacher's interviews for the purpose of examining the trustiness of the hypothesis then; the researcher tries to answer the research questions. Some suggestions and recommendations are going to be presented in order to thrust the ICC skills in EFL setting with a considerable regard to the learning styles.

3.2 Discussion of the findings

The findings of teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview are going to be discussed in this section.

3.2.1 Discussions of teachers' questionnaire

It is important here to mention again that the teachers who responded to the questionnaire teach different subjects such as grammar, phonetics, translation and writing techniques.

The findings show that the majority of teachers have Magister and Doctorate degrees, and they are experienced teachers since most of them have more than 5 years of teaching, so that they are thought to be familiar with multiple learners in their classrooms.

The results related to the nature of language show that the majority of teachers consider language as a social practice and communication; it is possible to say that teachers encourage their learners to communicate more than stressing the language structure. This result helps the current research in a sense that language as a social practice and communication involves the existence of cultural elements.

According to the results and surprisingly, all teachers reported that they teach both language and culture; Moreover, the results of the question that hold helping learners to see the relation between their own and other cultures shows that teachers also do help their learners to differentiate between cultures; however, when it comes to learners' awareness about cultural diversities teachers' answers show less certainty since no one answer with the choice of 'to a great extent'. This latter explained that learners still need a more awareness about cultural diversities.

The findings show that teachers think that their learners tolerate the cultural differences. These results signify that learners are able to understand the other cultures since tolerating the cultural differences is considered as a primitive step for accepting the different ways of living and thinking. In other words, learners accomplished an important part that enables them to understand others' culture.

The results obtained from teachers' definitions of the term intercultural communicative competence indicate that some teachers just guess the meaning of ICC, but the responses were clear and based on the ability to communicate with others cultures.

The findings show that teachers use various materials during the process of introducing a cultural element, and most importantly they choose those materials according to the learners' learning styles. This indicates that teaching culture relies on the learning styles. When it comes to literature, the results show that all the teachers agree on the idea that literature is a source of cultural aspects; this means that both teachers and learners can rely on it as a material that enables them to grasp knowledge about their own and other cultures.

Despite the different area that each teacher belongs to, they do consider ICC crucial in foreign language teaching, this can be explained by their awareness about the importance of culture in language teaching and learning. So, teachers need to include as many cultural aspects as possible in teaching English as a foreign language, in order to fit the needs of learners and sustain their motivation in the learning process.

According to the results obtained from the question of integrating intercultural communicative competence in teachers' classrooms, teachers integrate it implicitly and slightly, whereas the ICC should be integrated explicitly and extremely since teachers view the language as a social practice in which language and culture are interrelated, culture is a part of language, and language is a part of culture.

The results show that all teachers think about their learners' preferences while dealing with cultural elements, this indicates that although the ICC and learning styles have different specifics, one may say that they can be used jointly with the use of materials. Besides that, the teachers' answers for the style which represent quick learners show that the visual style is the most dominant; others respond with a combination of the visual, auditory and kinesthetic styles, this means that teachers need to stress all the styles with some emphasis on the visual one in the case of the third year license learners.

The majority of teachers agree on the idea that the material chosen according to learning styles facilitates teaching intercultural communicative competence, these results signify that teaching ICC according to the learning styles is a useful idea that could enable learners to better understand the cultural aspects, and the possibility of teaching ICC through learning style relies on the choice of appropriate and authentic materials that suit the learners' learning styles.

3.2.2 The discussions of learners' questionnaire

The findings show that the overall level of learners has progressed in comparison to the recent years, however, they still have difficulties while communicating in English, and this means that they need more training on developing their communicative skills.

The results show that most learners do not have native speakers of English as friends, this indicates that learners have not experienced a direct contact with the foreign culture, it also means that the difficulties they have in communicating exist within their own context.

The learners' answers for mastering grammar and vocabulary as a sufficient way for communicating effectively show that the majority of them think that knowing the language enable them to communicate effectively in English. This denotes that students are not really aware about the role of learning the cultural aspects of different social groups in enhancing their communicative abilities. However, learners admit 'to some extent' the existence of cultural similarities with other countries while few learners deny the idea of sharing cultural rapprochements; this means that they view their own culture as being unique.

The findings show that learners do not find difficulties while listening to natives; but those who have difficulties explained them by not being natives, the different accents and pronunciation. Simultaneously, some learners admit that ignoring the others' culture can prevent them from understanding native speakers of English, this means that the ignorance of other cultures does create difficulties in communicating and may lead to misunderstanding between the interlocutors. So thrusting the learners' ICC skills is a must.

The results show that the majority of learners believe in the necessity of studying culture, this indicates that culture is needed for them and teachers should include more cultural elements in their lectures. Learners prefer living with natives for a better understanding of cultural elements; this means that learners want the opportunity to have a

direct contact with the target culture. Others find the use of videos, songs and pictures as sufficient materials for getting more information related to culture, in this case, educators are free to choose one of the varieties of materials that fits the different learning styles. Learners also inform that studying literature as a module provide them with information about other cultures; here, the teachers could use, for example, literary texts in explaining grammar rules and present some cultural diversities at the same time. The different subjects can be treated from a cultural perspective, to reach such purpose the teachers need to be selective in term of texts and activities and flexible during the choice of materials. From the results, it is possible to say that those materials do thrust the ICC skills in English as foreign language learners. (hypothesis)

The analysis shows that learners have a minimal knowledge about the meaning of intercultural communicative competence, few students are familiar with the concept and the rest do not have any idea about it. This led to the conclusion that ICC is not really highlighted in our context.

The results reveal that learners differ significantly on the way of improving their English language, some prefer the use of videos, and others find it more useful to learn with listening recordings while the rest have the tendency to learn by doing, as it is the case for those who prefer role play. However, there are learners who enjoy using all of these strategies. From the results obtained, it is shown that the three learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) are involved during the learning process; Moreover, each learner relies on a specific style in class and this can be challenging to the teachers, since they need to vary the materials, activities, learning experiences and even the teaching methodology in order to fit the learners' needs and interests. Learners consider the learning styles beneficial for both: language use and cultural awareness so that teachers can raise the latter through the different learning styles.

3.2.3 Discussion of the teachers' interview

The teachers, who have been interviewed, have the experience of 3 to 4 years in teaching intercultural communicative competence. For them, ICC is fresh as an area of study and new as an academic discipline.

In teaching ICC, it was found out that teachers focus on the learners' own culture and the foreign culture because this allows the learners to compare both and explore differences

and similarities between the two cultures. Moreover, teachers admit that learners do not really know their own culture and they miss many aspects of it, even if learners are familiar with certain aspects, they take them for granted which leads them to ethnocentrism while the presence of interculturality allows learners to rethink and analyze those cultural practices. Besides that, interculturality enriches the learners with the necessary skills that enable them to communicate effectively across cultures.

The interviewed teachers clarified that teaching ICC should base on theory and practice, they explained that there is no practice without theoretical foundation. Accordingly, the practical side helps learners to experience concrete situations that prepare them for a direct contact with different cultures.

The results show that all the interviewed teachers admitted that learners find it difficult to accept and understand the concept of otherness, for them, students consider their own way of thinking and living as being real way, as if there are no other possible ways of being. This means that students are in the phase of ‘my way is the best way’ and they need to develop an intercultural oriented view.

Teachers do believe that ICC helps the learners to communicate across cultures, but it doesn't mean that learners will have a full mastery of competencies and skills without being in the context. Similarly to the students, teachers believe that learners need to be involved in concrete situations ‘face to face’ with natives. Others consider the use of technology and especially social media means as the virtual context allows the student to communicate with others since cross-cultural situations are really rare in our context, in the sense that not all learners have the opportunity to go abroad.

When it comes to tolerance and acceptance of others, teachers stated that learners can have some tolerance toward others by the end of the courses; this indicates that teaching ICC is affecting the learners positively since it allows them to be more open-minded by raising their level of tolerance while learning about other cultures.

Teachers believe that ICC is a must, and it should be present, as a teacher says, ‘everywhere’ in the different subjects, they totally agree that intercultural communicative competence is not given its right states in the Algerian context and especially in EFL context. Educators highlighted that the implementation of cultural content should have started in earlier stages which are not, for teachers, the case in our educational systems, and learners

reach the university level with little awareness about different cultures. In addition to that, teachers believe that teaching ICC help the learners to better communicate across cultures, but the readiness and willingness of learners are required.

According to educators, the materials and activities should be related to real life situations in order to make a real learning life experience for the purpose of realizing a successful communication and understanding of the other cultures. For them, teaching culture is challenging and it is helpful to implement ICC adjusted to the learning styles, the way to reach that is by selecting materials that correspond to the learning preferences.

3.3Major findings

The discussion of both questionnaires and interviews provided the researcher with useful insights about thrusting the intercultural communicative competence skills considering the learning styles, and the way of raising the learners' cultural awareness in addition to the materials that facilitate teaching ICC having different learning styles in class. This section is devoted to the discussion of the major findings of both teachers' and learners' questionnaires that can be explained as follows:

Although the teachers view the nature of language as communication and social practice and teach it accordingly, students still find difficulties in communicating in English, which means that teachers need to emphasize more on developing the learners' communicative abilities. Moreover, this study revealed that both learners and teachers confirm that intercultural communicative competence has an importance in teaching English as a foreign language. However, ICC is integrated symbolically in their courses while students are in need for the different skills that enable them to communicate across cultures.

Since both teachers and learners admitted that intercultural communicative competence is important in language teaching, its explicit integration in the different subjects is essential and useful for learners in order to thrust their communicative abilities in cross-cultural situations.

The findings show that learners rely mainly on the three different styles of learning: the visual, auditory and the kinesthetic style, and teachers use different materials and activities such as videos, songs, pictures and role play. So, it can be concluded that the teaching of ICC through the different learning styles is possible via the use of authentic materials.

The major findings of the teachers' interview can be explained as follow:

Teaching intercultural communicative competence is essential and it should be included in different subjects because, till now, it is not given its real value while learners are in need to the different skills that ensure the success of communication with people from different cultural backgrounds. The teachers' interview led also to the conclusion that learners are not really aware about their own culture, and the concept of otherness formalizes a difficulty for them, which means that integrating ICC in a different module should be in a more explicit way.

All in all, the findings assert the possibility of thrusting ICC through the different learning styles; this can be achieved by using a verity of materials such as songs, pictures, videos and realia which means that the suggested hypotheses are confirmed.

3.4 Limitations of the study

Limitations of this work took place during the process of collecting data especially the questionnaire that was served to the teachers, it spent a lot of time to collect it back because of teachers' preoccupation, time also was not really sufficient to work with additional tools. Moreover, lack of experience as being researcher created some difficulties to accomplish this work.

3.5 Suggestions and recommendations

Since both learners and teachers recognize the importance of studying culture and the fact that intercultural communicative competence is not given its right value, some suggestions and recommendations are given to teachers and learners based on the analysis in order to thrust the ICC skills through the different learning styles.

3.5.1 Suggestions and recommendations for learners

3.5.1.1 Raising awareness

Students need to have the willingness and readiness to accept the fact that there are different ways of thinking and living, and there is no perfect way of doing things. For such

reason, they need to prepare themselves for cross-cultural situations by suspending disbelief and respect the different cultures

3.5.1.2 Collaborative work

Learners should be collaborative with teachers concerning their preferred way of learning cultural elements; so that, the teacher can select the suitable strategies of teaching that fit their needs and allow them to better understand people from different backgrounds

3.5.1.3 Further research

It is also suggested for the learners to read about ICC in order to develop the skills that enable them to communicate appropriately in cross-cultural situations. Besides that, learners need to observe and compare the different cultures this allows them to know and learn more about theirs' and other cultures.

3.5.1.4 Interaction with natives

It is important for the learners to interact with native speakers of English in order to develop their listening skills and abilities to know about the foreign culture. The contact with natives is really helpful in enhancing the communicative abilities; this can be reached by acquiring an intercultural perspective.

3.5.2 Suggestions and recommendations for teachers

It is suggested that teachers should vary their teaching methodologies while presenting cultural elements to make sure that all learners will be involved in the activities and facilitate the learning process. Besides that, the teacher should give equal importance to the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the learners while teaching intercultural communicative competence.

The teachers should also use language in its cultural context in order to develop the learners' understanding of language and culture. Simultaneously, the educators should simplify and clarify that language and culture are interrelated that making a connection between them facilitate the communication in cross-cultural situations. Instructors should take into consideration the learners' needs and interests; so that, they can vary the activities accordingly. Therefore, they can choose the appropriate materials that make learning more effective.

Language teachers should bear in mind that learners learn language and culture in different manners, there are those learners who prefer learning with visual aids or learning by listening while others find it more useful to learn by doing and touching; so educators should think about those differences in learning in order to reach the educational objectives giving importance to learning experiences.

Teachers should create a positive atmosphere for learning. Using realia is suggested as an effective way that attracts the learners' attention and makes them engaged during the course. They also need to assess the learners' development in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Teachers should devote time for teaching culture in each lesson. In other words, language educators need to introduce and integrate culture in an explicit, systematic and organized manner. Eventually, the teachers should set the intercultural learning as a goal of foreign language teaching.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the discussions of the findings, the researcher first presented the result obtained from the analysis of data collection tools, then the findings of both teachers and learners' questionnaires with the results of teachers' interview were discussed. Besides that, the findings of the research instruments were summarized in form of a paragraph. According to the results, we conclude that our hypotheses are confirmed. After that, the researcher presented some limitations of the present study. Finally, the researcher presented some suggestions and recommendations for both learners and teachers.

General Conclusion

The aim of this research is to thrust the intercultural communicative skills in EFL classrooms considering the learning styles. The research objective is to investigate to what extent ICC skills are integrated into our context and to investigate whether learners are culturally aware and to provide learners with the necessary skills to communicate effectively across cultures.

Throughout this work, the researcher tried to answer the research questions and examine the validity/ trustiness of the hypotheses which defence the idea that choosing the materials according to the learners' learning style raise the learners' cultural awareness meanwhile the ICC is neglected in our context.

For the purpose of examining these hypotheses, the research work was divided into three chapters; the literature review in which the definitions of the different concepts related to both ICC and learning styles were presented. The different components of ICC also were explained in addition to the materials used in teaching ICC in relation to the learning styles.

The second chapter was devoted to the methodology and data analysis starting from explaining the purpose of the study and research design. Then, the population involved in this study with describing the research tools. Finally, the analysis of data collected from both questionnaires and the interview are presented.

The last chapter planned to the discussion of the findings gathered from the research tools. This chapter was concluded with some suggestions and recommendations addressed to both teachers and learners, for the purpose of enhancing the learners' abilities in cross-cultural situations. Based on the results done, the hypotheses have been strongly confirmed.

The findings of this study revealed the possibility of thrusting the intercultural communicative competence skills in English as foreign language classrooms considering the different learning styles. The findings have also shown that the cross-cultural communication is not given its right value in teaching the different subjects.

All in all, the appropriate use of authentic materials such as videos, songs and pictures enable the educators to thrust the intercultural communicative competence skills through the different learning preferences.

Besides that, teachers need to integrate culture in language teaching in order to enhance the communicative abilities of learners in cross-cultural situations. Finally, encouraging the learners' tolerance toward other cultures is considered as an important step for developing their understanding of other cultures.

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Appendix (A)

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teachers:

The teachers' questionnaire is intended to investigate the implementation of intercultural communicative competence in classrooms. Your help is much appreciated. Thank you in advance.

Part one: background information:

1-Degree(s) held:

- a. BA (License)
- b. MA (Master/Magister)
- c. PHD (Doctorate)

2-How many years have you been teaching?

.....
.....

Part two: Intercultural communicative competence

1. According to you, what is the nature of language?

- a) Communication
- b) Structure
- c) Social phenomenon
- d) Communication and social phenomenon
- e) All of them

3-Do you teach:

- a) Language
- b) Culture
- c) both

4- Do you help your learners to see the relationships between their own and other cultures?

Always Sometimes Never

5- Do you think that learners are aware of the cultural diversities?

Yes No To some extent To a great extent

6- Learners tolerate the cultural differences. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

7- What is intercultural communicative competence?

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

8- What do you use to introduce cultural elements?

Videos Songs Literary texts All of them

Others:
.....

9- Do you think about your learners' learning style when choosing such material?

Always Sometimes Never

10- Do you think that literature is a source of cultural aspects?

Yes No

11- Intercultural communicative competence is crucial in foreign language teaching. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

12- To which extent is intercultural communicative competence integrated in your classroom?

To a great extent
To a moderate extent

To some extent

It is not integrated

13- Do you take into consideration the learning styles while dealing with cultural elements?

Yes

No

14- Which style represents quick learners?

Visual

Auditory

Kinesthetic

Visual and kinesthetic

Visual and auditory

15-Do you think that the material chosen according to learning styles facilitates teaching intercultural communicative competence?

Yes

No

To some extent

To great extent

If yes, how

.....

.....

Appendix (B)

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear students,

This questionnaire aims at investigating intercultural communicative competence skills in EFL classroom considering learning styles, in order to help learners in communicating effectively across cultures. You are kindly asked to give honest answers. Thank you for your time and help.

1-Has your level progressed as L3 learner?

a) Yes b) No c) a little.

2-Do you still find difficulties while communicating in English?

Always Sometime Never

3-Do you have native speakers of English as friends?

Yes No

4-Do you think that mastering only grammar and vocabulary enables you to communicate effectively in English?

Sure Not really Maybe

5-Are there any similarities in religion, life style and traditions with other countries?

Yes No To some extent

6-Do you find difficulties to understand English when listening to natives?

Yes No

If yes, what could be the reasons:

.....
.....

7-Do you think that ignoring the other's culture in one of these reasons?

Yes No Maybe

8-Do you think that studying culture is as necessary as studying language?

Yes

No

9-To better understand the cultural elements you need:

Pictures videos Songs Live with Natives

Others

10- Does studying literature as a module provide you with information about other cultures?

Yes No To some extent

11- Do you know what intercultural communicative competence means?

Yes No a little

If yes: do you think that it is important in learning the English language?

Yes No Maybe

12-You improve your English language through:

Videos Listening records role play All of them

Others

.....
.....

13- Which one do you prefer?

.....
.....

14- Which one do you rely on in class?

Visual Auditory Tactical All of them

15-Is it beneficial for: Language use Cultural awareness Both

:

Appendix (C):

The teachers' interview

The aim of this interview is to explore the current situation of intercultural communicative competence in our context, and to investigate the ways of teaching ICC through the different learning styles.

1. How long have you been teaching intercultural communicative competence?
2. Is intercultural communicative competence recent refreshing as a module?
3. Do you find difficulties in teaching intercultural communicative competence?
4. As a teacher of intercultural communicative competence, what is your main focus the learners' or the target culture?
5. Do you teach intercultural communicative competence as a mere theory or as a practical study? And why?
6. To which extent do your learners understand the concept of otherness?
7. Do you believe that intercultural communicative competence is helping the learners to communicate effectively in cross cultural situations?
8. Do you think that your learners tolerate and accept the different cultures?
9. Intercultural communicative competence is neglected in the Algerian context. Do you agree with this statement? Explain why?
10. By teaching intercultural communicative competence, do you think that you are helping your learners sufficiently to face real life situations with natives?
11. According to you, what is the relation between intercultural communicative competence and the learning styles?
12. How can you teach intercultural communicative competence through the different learning styles?

