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**EFL Learners' Attitudes towards Using Cultural Assimilators in
Improving Learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence**

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTERS IN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated:

To my dear parents

for their endless love and support.

To my adorable brothers Alla Dine and Ayoub

*for their encouragement in moments of difficulty
and stress.*

To my friends Romaisa Naili and Boutheyne

Lechekhab

for their love and care.

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I am grateful to myself for completing this dissertation within the given time.

Abstract

The present work aims at investigating the attitudes of EFL learners towards using culture assimilators in improving the learners' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in the Algerian program of teaching English at university . This study took place during the academic year (2019/2020).Hence, it is hypothesized in this study that using cultural assimilators will develop students' intercultural communicative competence and learners will have a positive attitude towards the target language culture and towards culture teaching in general, For accomplishing the work, a descriptive research method has been conducted and to achieve the research aims and to test the hypothesis, a questionnaires was distributed one for the teachers and one for the learners. Accordingly, the findings of the study reveal that learning culture through culture assimilators technique significantly improves first-year master degree students' intercultural communicative competence. Both questionnaires demonstrate that learners and teachers are aware of the interconnectedness of culture and language. Besides, the majority of teachers do not know what aspects of culture to teach or how to teach and ignore the most important techniques for teaching culture. Learners' questionnaire reveals that learners are interested, motivated and curious to learn about other cultures to be able to communicate with native speakers.

Key Words: Culture assimilators, Intercultural communicative competence, attitudes, EFL learners.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English language teaching

ESL: English as a second language

CC: Communicative Competence

ICC: Intercultural communicative competence

FL: Foreign Language

Q: question

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General

Introduction

Introduction

Nowadays learning a foreign language is no more a choice especially English language that is considered as a universal language and an effective and functional tool for intercultural communication. However, teaching a foreign language is a complex process that requires the use of many methodologies, strategies and techniques. Moreover, and language are interconnected, Incorporating cultural content into the language teaching process is have always been a challenging issue for many teachers because it requires them to consider what to teach and how to teach in order to improve learners' English proficiency. Therefore, the rapid development of the world and technology offers many opportunities to people to communicate with others from different cultural background. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and cultural awareness have become an integral part of English classrooms, learners' need for communication can not be ignored .In this regard, developing intercultural communicative competence become more important in the last years and researches in this field emphasize intercultural communicative competence ICC in language teaching .

1-Statement of the Problem

Culture and language are complementary to each other, incorporating culture into language teaching have been one of the crucial topics in foreign language teaching. Although many language teachers realize the importance of incorporating culture into their classrooms, they do not always know what aspects of culture to teach or how to teach. Furthermore, culture assimilator is one technique of teaching culture that helps learners to improve their intercultural communicative competence, enhance their abilities, their way of thinking and it makes teaching and learning process easier and fun. Nowadays, it is very important to educate learners and prepare them to interact with native speakers of the target culture. The problem; however, is that EFL learners at the University of Abbes Laghrour of Khenchela, who experience old and ineffective techniques of learning culture that are suitable for beginners not advanced levels like

master students are more likely to have a weak ability to develop and raise their intercultural communicative competence and find difficulty handling conversations with native speakers. Consequently, culture assimilators seem to be an effective and enjoyable teaching technique that helps students to raise their ICC. Hence, this research attempts to demonstrate that culture assimilator is an effective means that would improve the students' ICC as well as the quality and flexibility of learning.

2. Background of the Study

Teaching and learning a foreign language requires incorporating the cultural elements and cultural values of the target culture, it is not limited to language proficiency or linguistic competence. It has long been recognized by linguists and anthropologists that the forms and uses of a given language mirror the cultural values of the society in which the language is spoken. Krasner (1999) states that "teaching language in isolation cannot make a learner of the language competent in that language". As Bennet and Allen (2003) indicate " the person who learns language without learning culture risks becoming a fluent fool" (p.272).Improving a learners' ICC is ought to be very substantial as well as important more than any other competencies. ICC field emerged in 1950s in Robert Lado works as he linked language and culture in an educational way and in Edward T. Hall works as he mentioned the relation between culture and communication, in the early 1970s this term emerged in Europe, 1980s started to be used in teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Applying it in the classroom is complex process requires the use of good technique like culture assimilators that is mainly used for cross-culture training but has not been developed extensively for the EFL classroom, The Purpose of this study is to develop assimilator episodes for teaching them in an EFL classroom, this technique requires learners to be interrelated to the target culture as well their own culture the importance of comparing the two cultures similarities and differences that enforce the FL learner's critical view towards both of them for a better

understanding of the target language. Throughout our academic years we spent in our department, we have noticed a lack of teaching culture using the appropriate techniques that suit the level of students. In culture sessions teachers only focus on defining culture and make learners aware of the general elements and characteristics of culture, they neglected totally to prepare them to communicate with native speakers and raise their ICC by discussing real-life aspects of the target culture. That's why we decided to conduct such research to look for the reason for not using appropriate teaching techniques of culture and also to see if culture assimilators are one way to enhance learner's intercultural communicative competence.

3- Objectives of the study

The present research mainly aims to highlight students' and teachers' attitudes concerning the role of culture assimilator in ameliorating students' intercultural communicative competence. It also intends to encourage teachers to use the appropriate teaching culture technique for advanced levels. Besides this study focuses on examining how Abbes Laghrour students of English improve their cultural knowledge through the use of cultural assimilator. This work also attempts to provide insights into the current situation of teaching culture of the English language in EFL classes and propose some solutions to the main problems encountered by most EFL teachers.

4- Research Questions

To achieve the aims of the present study, we set out to answer the following questions:

- 1- Does culture assimilator develop learners' ICC?
- 2- What are the attitudes of Abbes Laghrour University teachers towards using cultural assimilators in raising learners' ICC?
- 3- How important is using the appropriate teaching technique for cultural knowledge mastery?

- 4- To what extent culture assimilator helps students in acquiring foreign language and culture beyond the classroom?

5-Research Hypothesis

In order to answer the research questions, we will base our research on the following hypothesis that shall be confirmed or rejected by the end of this research:

- We hypothesize that using cultural assimilators will develop students' intercultural communicative competence.

6- Significance of the Study

This study is significant for both students and teachers, it has offered valuable information about cultural assimilators and how students will get an enjoyable way to learn the target language and be aware of real incidents in the foreign culture. Similarly, teachers will be more flexible to implement new teaching techniques and styles in culture sessions .the results of this study, hopefully, will improve learner's ICC, integrating intercultural communicative competence into English teaching has not yet received the attention it deserves in Algerian curricula, therefore, by revealing more about Abbes Laghrour teachers and learners attitudes towards ICC and the use of culture assimilators may help to raise awareness in ELT and the findings may be a benefit to curricula designers and teachers. .

7. Research Methodology

7.1. Research Approach and Design

There are two main research approaches a qualitative and quantitative approach. According to Creswell & (2007) the research approach influences the research design which refers to the procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies (p. 58). . Burns and Grove (1993:777) define quantitative research as “a formal, objective, systematic process to describe and test relationships and examine cause and effect interactions among variables”. They also describe a qualitative approach as “a systematic

subjective approach used to describe life experiences and situations to give them, meaning” (Burns & Grove, 2003, p. 19).

The most suitable method for this study is the quantitative research. This quantitative study adopted a descriptive survey design. Polit & Hungler (1993) states that "a survey obtains information from a sample of people by means of self-report, that is, the people respond to a series of questions posed by the investigator"(p.148). In this study the information was collected by a questionnaires distributed to the students as well as a teachers by the researcher to answer the study questions that using cultural assimilator technique in culture teaching will improve learners ICC .

7.2. Population and Sampling

a- Population

A population is described as a group of individuals who possess specific characteristics and from which a sample is drawn to determine the parameters or characteristics (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007,p.112)

The target population for this study included EFL students from Abbes Laghrour university in Khenchela, the researcher narrowed down the population to first-year English Master degree students ,The total number of the students' population is ninety (90) students The students are from different genders, males and females, aged 22 to 24 years old and more. The first year English master degree students were chosen as a population because students at this level have already prior knowledge about theoretical aspects of culture and they are ready to be taught using new techniques in order to enhance their intercultural and communicative competence.

b- Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting few participants from the sampling population. According to Fink (2003) "A sample is a proportion or a subset of a larger group called a

population... A good sample is a miniature version of the population of which it is a part – just like it, only smaller" (p. 1).

Probability sampling is used in this study. The participants for this study were selected through one of the four types of probability sampling techniques which is simple random sampling. It is based on the random selection which gives individuals an equal and independent chance to be selected. A convenient sample of forty (40) subjects was selected from the whole population.

7.3. Instrumentation

The researchers designed a survey questionnaire as the main data collection tool. Brown (2001) defines questionnaires as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (p.6). The main advantages of questionnaires can be summarized as: Questionnaires are very practical they save time, effort, and money. A large group of respondents can be addressed in such a short period. They are easy to administer, and analyze. As far as this work is concerned, the researcher used two questionnaires; one for the teachers and one for the learners.

7.4. Data collection Procedures

Data collection for this study was gathered using primary sources to represent participants' intention about the role of cultural assimilators as a teaching technique in developing learners' intercultural communicative competence through a descriptive method. The main data collection tool for this study was a survey questionnaire composed of 15 various questions.

Considering the circumstances that synchronized with the time of the preparation of this research, the most important of which was the quarantine; it was difficult for the researcher to personally distribute the questionnaires to the sample members, hence, an online survey

questionnaire was the solution. The sample was selected through a Facebook group; Abbas Laghrour 1st year English Master Students (appendix C) and (appendix D).

7.5. Data Analysis Procedures

In this study, we opt for descriptive analysis to summarize and organize the data. However, after collecting data from the attitude questionnaire, we analyzed them by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). All data are presented and analysed in tables and graphs, statically reported in form of numbers and percentages to be interpreted in a descriptive form after each graph.

8. Operational Definition of Terms and Variables

1-Attitudes: can be defined as the tendency of individuals or groups of individuals to feel and behave in a particular way and how they respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, or situation.

2-ICC: intercultural communicative competence refers to the ability to communicate and interact effectively in different cultural contexts.

3- Cultural assimilator: are short descriptions of an incident or situation followed by four possible choices about the meaning of the behavior, action, or words of at least one person from the target culture and persons from other cultures.

9. Limitation of The Study

a- Limitation of place: this study was applied in the department of English in the University of Abbas Laghrour-Khenchela. It wouldn't be said that it is generalizable to any setting. Rather, the study perfectly fits in the same settings with almost the same conditions.

b- Limitation of subject: this study is limited for first-year master English students of Abbas Laghrour University, students at this level wish to be aware about different teaching techniques that will improve their ICC and because after one year they will be future teachers, so they need

to be aware of the new teaching techniques like cultural assimilators .There were difficulties in bringing subjects to take part in the study because of quarantine .

c- Limitation of tools: “questionnaire and interview “are not actually sufficient and it requires other tools.

10. Structure of the Study

This study is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter the theoretical one which is devoted to review previous works, it is divided into two sections: ***Section one:*** This section attempts to shed light on the necessity of developing learners' intercultural communicative competence; Definition of culture ,CC, ICC , as well as the discussion of how developing intercultural communicative competence in the classroom and its benefits.

Section two: deals with teaching culture, the history of teaching culture, the importance of teaching culture, culture in the context of language teaching and learning, followed by the importance of implementing culture assimilators technique inside the language classroom.

In the second chapter or field work, the researcher, describe, analyze, interpret the learners' and teachers' questionnaire. In the end, the researcher suggests forward some relevant recommendations on using culture assimilators for improving learners' ICC in acquiring a foreign language.

Chapter One

Theoretical Foundations

Section One: Culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence

Introduction

The impacts of globalization have been felt in several fields. Today's diversifying world provides opportunities to interact and communicate with people from different cultures. In this regard, many countries have learned the English language as a foreign or second language because it is the most widely spoken foreign language and it serves both local and global needs. Knowing the English language is no longer a choice, it is a necessity. The 'lingua franca' nature of English language raised the issue of 'Intercultural communicative competence'. Therefore, in our multicultural and interconnected world, intercultural communicative competence is very important and necessary; many language teaching programs include the concept of ICC into their curriculum. Moreover, the awareness of ICC has received short shrift as well as it has been very largely neglected for many years in the teaching of a foreign/second language and still not clear how to incorporate ICC into classroom practices, especially when compared to the other competencies and aspects like the linguistic competence

1. Culture and Communication

1.1. Culture

Defining communication and culture leads to a definition of intercultural communication and ICC. Culture as an inseparable part of human groups and societies has been a subject of study in various schools of thought and disciplines. Moreover, due to its complex nature. Kramsch (1998) described culture as "membership in a discourse community that shares common social space and history, and common imaginings" (p.10). Here according to Kramsch culture is related to shared language and knowledge. Culture is inherited from one generation to another. Geertz (1973) defined culture as "A historically transmitted pattern of meanings represented in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, eternize, and develop their knowledge and attitudes toward life"(p.89). Also, culture is "the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and

the tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time" (Brown, 2000, p.177). Culture is not only how we do things, it represents our thoughts, attitudes, expectations, goals, and values which help people of one community to interact with each other.

Diaz-Rico (2014) offered a simple definition for culture: "Culture is the explicit and implicit patterns for living, the dynamic system of commonly agreed-upon symbols and meanings, knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, behaviors, traditions, habits that are shared and make up the total way of life of a people" (p.243).

In a nutshell, the aforementioned definitions come to agree that culture is an umbrella term that includes daily interactions, the way of thinking, feelings, reacting, behaviors, knowledge, beliefs, language, communications, values, attitudes, art, customs, food, clothing, relationships and religions.

1.2 .Communication

Communication has been studied by different disciplines; one of these disciplines is intercultural communication, whose interest was to examine how people from different cultures communicate with each other, and the extent to which different cultures affect communication fluidity.

Communication is the chief skill that humans use when interacting, it is defined by Neuliep (2015) as "the dynamic process of encoding and decoding verbal and nonverbal messages" (p.17), and for "*The Longman Dictionary of Language*" Teaching and Applied Linguistic communication is "the exchange of ideas, information, ..., between two or more persons. In an act of communication, there is usually at least one speaker or sender, a MESSAGE which is transmitted, and a person or persons for whom this message is intended (the receiver)" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002,p.89). When people who speak different native languages and possess dissimilar cultures communicate there is a high probability for misunderstanding as the content would be interpreted differently by the interactants.

1.3. Intercultural Communication

In the past, intercultural contact rarely occurred because most social groups lived in small isolated geographical areas. But, through time and due to different factors, such as globalization, the rise of international trade, military conquests and wars, individuals coming from different cultural groups started to contact and take part in interactions with other individuals from other linguistic and cultural groups.

The process in which two individuals from different cultures communicate (sending and receiving messages across languages and cultures) is called “intercultural communication”. In other words, intercultural communication is how to communicate successfully with people who are culturally different from you.

The anthropologist Edward T. Hall, was the first one who used the term " intercultural Communication" in his book *The Silent Language* in 1959. Hal defined intercultural communication from an anthropological perspective. Samovar and Porter (1997) argued that” intercultural communication as the study of communication between people whose “cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough” to change their communication. (p.70).Furthermore, Neuliep (2015) defined intercultural communication as "what happened between individuals who have different cultures when they exchange information using verbal (language) and nonverbal symbols".

Furthermore ,in the educational field intercultural communication means exchanging information about languages and cultures to learn the target language or to achieve goals in teaching the target language. FL learners can learn more about the target culture and language by communicating with native speakers to teach them about their native language and culture. Besides, an English language teacher who teaches ESL languages their students to interact with different cultures.

1.4 Communicative Competence (CC)

Communicative competence considered as a central notion in sociolinguistics and other socially oriented approaches to the study of language. “Communicative competence” was developed by Dell Hymes to describe the knowledge that speakers and listeners have in order to effectively communicate in different social contexts. CC means not just knowing the verbal and nonverbal symbols, but “when to speak or not, what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation” (Saville Troike, 2012, p. 106).

Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence, as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations. In other words, CC means the ability to communicate, interact and using language in a manner that is culturally accepted and appropriate to make meaning, decode messages and fulfill social tasks. Moreover, according to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence is a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication.

Through the impact of communication in language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the core of language education, in the classroom; CC is based on native speakers’ ways of interacting without focusing on students’ differences in languages, backgrounds, knowledge, and skills (Swan, 1985).

2. Intercultural Communicative Competence.

Intercultural communicative competence has become an integral part of the English classroom; many scholars from different disciplines have defined ICC. According to Byram (1997), “intercultural communicative competence is to be able to interact and communicate in an effective manner with people from different cultures”. Chen and Starosta (1996) also agree on the same idea that the ICC is the ability to settle on cultural elements and to develop appropriate and effective behaviors of communication patterns that help in realizing various cultural identities of interactants’ in a certain environment; for them, intercultural communicative turn a

mono-cultural person into a multi-cultural person. Besides, Deardorff (2004) defines ICC as the ability to effectively communicate an intercultural situation based on one's intercultural knowledge, backgrounds, attitudes and skills.

Lambert (1993) claims that intercultural competent individual is the person who has the knowledge and awareness of different cultures and the differences between them, also respect cultural differences and has the skills to communicate and interact appropriately. Byram (1997) argues that intercultural competent individuals are successful in building relationships and negotiating in the foreign language with its speakers. Thus, acquiring the intercultural communicative competence is beyond exchanges, it is about building relationships with individuals from different worldwide.

Moreover, when ICC is incorporated in language classrooms, learners' have a chance to experience how to use the target language properly with building relationships and understanding individuals from different cultures, therefore, they have a chance to gain an insider perspective of different cultures (Morller & Nugent, 2014). So as to develop learners' ICC, educators and teachers main role is to guide students in being sensitive to other cultures in the same time being aware of their own cultures, and learn how to see the world through the others 'eyes, and accept the differences in order to improve communicative ability and knowledge.

According to Byram (1997) there are five formulations of knowledge and skills types , called factors of ICC, or "saviors" .teachers and learners need these knowledge and skills to help them be competent in ICC and mediate between cultures. Besides, they help educators to design communicative curricula, or frameworks for teaching English. In order to know how to communicate with others the first formulation is knowledge of self and other. The second one is skill, which is how an individual understands, translates, and share information. The third formulation is critical cultural awareness in acknowledgement of the political aspect. The fourth

formulation is the skill for discovering information from other cultures. The last formulation is knowing how to relativize oneself, and value others' beliefs and attitudes.

Figure A: Factors in Intercultural Communication Source: Byram, M. 1997 (Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters, p 34)

	Skills Interpret and relate (Savoir comprendre)	
Knowledge Of self and other; of interaction: individual and societal (Savoirs)	Education Political education critical cultural awareness (Savoir s'engager)	Attitudes Relativizing self and valuing other (Savoir être)
	Skills Discover and/ or interact (Savoir apprendre/faire)	

2-1. Intercultural Communicative Competence in Classroom

Applying ICC in the classroom is complex; teaching ICC should go beyond general language competencies and communicative skills. Besides, in order to achieve this goal, students need to think beyond their culture and cultural differences and overcome the barriers generated from those varieties. However, incorporating ICC into classroom does not necessitates the use new methodology, instead as many researchers suggest (Byram et al. 2002; Corbett, 2003) foreign language teachers can also use many methods that they are familiar with such as role-play, cooperative activities, tasks and so on. Here the difference lies in the focus on the development of ICC and designing the tasks or activities in a way that naturally promotes intercultural advanced learners.

The best techniques that help improving ICC in classroom are those designed for cross-cultural training such as cultural assimilators in which educators provide their learners' with episodes. This technique involved using all skills. The students are required to read the episodes with certain responses, testing their reading skills. They had to discuss the episodes, there by using their listening and speaking skills. They were asked to write journal topics that required them to practice their writing and also helped them develop the content of their essays.

2.2 .Components of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

There are two components of intercultural communicative competence, verbal and nonverbal communication.

2.2.1. Verbal Communication

Verbal communication uses verbal Language. According to Martin and Nakayama (2000); Verbal communication or language has four components: pragmatics, phonetics: semantics, syntactic components. The first component, pragmatics, is the study of language in the social context, The phonetics component, is the study of sounds in language. Semantics is the study of meaning of vocabulary words and how to use them in communication. The last component, syntactic component is the study of grammar, and how changing the order of a sentence affects the meaning of communication.

Education of the English language should respect and understand that the components of verbal communication or language vary among various learners in order to improve students' second-language acquisition. Learning these components gives ESL and EFL learners and educators greater linguistic competence. However, this linguistic competence must have a relationship with culture and communication in order to develop into ICC .It is important to be knowledgeable about the components of verbal communication in order to be competent in intercultural communication.

2.2.2 . Nonverbal Communication

The second component of ICC is nonverbal communication. The communication that does not involve words based on body language and facial expressions. Neuliep (2015) states that nonverbal communication “focuses on the messages people send to one another that do not contain words” (p.281). These messages are sent through “facial expressions, eye gaze, gestures, body positions, and spatial orientation or proxemics” (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 158). Nonverbal communication varies among many cultures. Neuliep (2015) argues that there are many types of nonverbal communication. The first type is kinesics, which includes facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, and body movements. This type varies across cultures. The second type is para-language, which concerns adding meaning to a sentence by using different vocal qualities, such as intonation.

Moreover, ESL and EFL learners should understand nonverbal communication in order to understand their teachers. Educators should know about these ways or channels of nonverbal communication in order to interact effectively with others. Being aware of nonverbal communication among various cultures will help ESL and EFL learners and educators to : reduce misunderstandings between learners and other educators and it will be easy for them to understand second-language and foreign-language learners who are not fluent in English because learners will often use gestures when they lack vocabulary, educators can use nonverbal communication or signals to convey the meaning or lesson more easily because it has a positive effect on learning The fourth reason is that they can use it to gain students’ attention. Thus, educators should teach students how to use nonverbal communication in the English language (Macedonia, Muller, & Friederici, 2011).

To sum up, verbal and nonverbal communication are important components of ICC. ESL and EFL educators should have knowledge about them in order to communicate effectively with other educators and learners who are from different cultures. In addition, they should teach

students these components that are related to the English language, so educators can reduce conflicts that learners will face in the future. Each type of communication has its own ways or styles that help people to understand other cultures.

Conclusion

Developing learners' intercultural communicative competence is the responsibility of language teachers in order to prepare learners to interact in intercultural and diverse environments .Intercultural communicative competence in general is an effective communication between two individuals who are from different cultures. Also, ICC is the ability to understand the target language and culture in order to teach and explain it to English language learners because they need to comprehend the target culture in order to understand texts. ICC requires various skills or savors or factors to help learners be competent in ICC . Finally, developing intercultural communicative competence is very important and must be combined with language learning,

Section Two: Teaching Culture Using Cultural Assimilator Technique

Introduction

Language and culture are closely interconnected; students cannot have a comprehensive grasp of a language without understanding its culture. Teaching culture has always been a challenging issue for many teachers, it is a complex task that includes many techniques and strategies. Generally, the main goal for teachers is developing the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and Speaking. However, nowadays learners' needs are beyond developing the four skills; they started to be aware about the central function of language which is communication so they started to focus on developing their intercultural communicative competence to be able to interact and decoding the incoming information .Several techniques developed for introducing culture into language teaching one of them is cultural assimilators that is mostly used in cross-cultural training.

In this section some light will be cast on culture teaching and language. It is started by discussing the history of teaching culture, Culture in the context of language teaching and learning, the importance of culture in language teaching .addition to cultural assimilator technique, the advantages of using one of the cross cultural training techniques in teaching culture in teaching culture.

1. The History of Teaching Culture

The history of teaching culture began to attract scholar's attention on the sixties and won considerable attention during the eighties and the nineties. Up to now, so many perspectives have influenced the teaching of culture .As Lessard Clouston (1997) notes, people in the past, learnt a FL to study its literature, and this was the main medium of culture. He claims that "it was through reading that students learnt of the civilization associated with the target language" (p.27).

Before the 1960s the emphasis was on teaching aspects like history, art, literature of the target culture until the 1960s, where the focus shifted to study of culture anthropologically -

differently stated- the behavioral patterns of everyday life. Allen's (1985) summary of the trends of the early FL teaching stating that: "... prior to the 1960s, the connection between language and culture were carefully drawn" (p.138). Also Flewelling (1993) explains that in the sixties students learned the civilization through reading associated with the target language" (p.339). In the 1970s, several approaches appeared like the "communicative approach". The history of teaching culture has made inconsistency between culture in foreign language teaching and language learning.

2. Culture in the Context of Language Teaching and Learning

Incorporating cultural content into the language teaching process has always been a challenging issue for teachers. Teachers have mostly been forgotten that teaching a foreign language does not just mean teaching the rules and how to use the four skills perfectly. It also requires teaching the culture of that language. "When should teachers teach culture? How should culture be taught? Why is it necessary for students to learn about the target culture at all?" (Fleet, 2006 , p.5). How can teachers incorporate culture into foreign language classrooms in terms of fostering learners' cultural awareness and communicating insights into the target culture; how to teach culture for effective language learning?" (Wang, 2008, p .3).

2.1. Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

Teaching a foreign culture is not an easy task. Teachers should be knowledgeable about several aspects and elements of the culture to be taught. , Kramersch (1993) claims that a foreign culture and one's own culture should be placed together in order for learners to understand a foreign culture. Learners' interaction with native speakers or text will require them to construct their meanings rather than having educators simply transfer information about people and their culture".

The main role of teachers in the classroom is to make students aware of the important traits and aspects in the target culture as well as developing their cultural awareness about their

own culture and the target one because awareness in teaching enables learners to use language skillfully that leads to the acquisition of a second culture. It is also important for teachers to prepare learners to interact with real-life issues in the target culture and train them how to use language beyond classrooms. Issues of communication and culture are important elements for language teaching. . “Learners must not only be aware of language, but they must be taught how language is actually used in everyday interaction and what is characteristic in a given culture” (Dufva, 1994, p.19)

Furthermore, teaching culture is a mutual process that requires students' involvement in the process of teaching. "Learners need to engage actively in the interpretations of the world and compare and contrast the shared meaning of both their own and foreign cultures" (Byram & Morgan, p50).

Teaching culture in an effective, enjoyable manner will increase learners' motivation to learn any foreign language which greatly affects the learning process, most learners like culturally based activities such as singing, dancing, role-playing,

2.2. Culture in Foreign Language Learning

Learning a culture of a target language is very important in achieving success in learning the new language. Culture learning is the process of acquiring the culture-specific as well as culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process that engages the learner cognitively, behaviorally, and affectively (Paige et al., 1999).

Moreover, culture learning is a process of learners' interpretation and making sense of their inner and outside. Teaching cultural facts or information has not enabled learners to understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets (Kramsch, 1993). The purpose of culture learning is making students “understand why the speakers of two different languages act and react the way they do, whether in fictional texts or in social encounters, and what the

consequences of these insights may mean for the learner" (Kramersch 2003, p.32). Paige (1997) suggests that culture learning would include:

- Learning about the self as a cultural being
- Learning about culture and its impact on human communication, behavior, and identity.
- Culture-general learning, i.e., learning about universal, cross-cultural phenomena such as cultural adjustment.
- Culture-specific learning, i.e., learning about a particular culture, including its language.
- Learning how to learn, i.e., becoming an effective language and culture learner.

To conclude, culture in foreign language teaching and learning has shed the light on the importance of the teaching culture in foreign language learning and the idea that culture is not about information but understanding. Hence, to learn about culture, it is important to focus on gaining insight into the way of living in a particular cultural context. This will allow the learner to understand how language is used and how things are said and done in a cultural context.

2.3. The Importance of Teaching Culture

The value of the teaching culture with the sole aim of improving second language learning sheds more light on many issues related to teaching and learning English. "The interdependence of language learning and cultural learning is so evident that one can conclude that language learning is culture learning and consequently, language teaching is cultural teaching" (Gao,2006, p.59).

In order to communicate appropriately the speaker needs to be aware of ways of addressing people, make requests, agree or disagree with someone because what is acceptable in the speaker's community may not be acceptable in the target language speech community, Wei (2005) claimed that "Language has a dual character both as a means of communication and a carrier of culture" (p.56).Furthermore, Smith (1985) for instance, explains that, the presentation

of an argument in a way that sounds fluent and elegant in one culture may be regarded as clumsy and circular in another culture (p. 2).

More importantly, teaching culture plays a very important role to help students become successful language learners, develop their communicative skills, and their intercultural and international understanding. Teachers, therefore, should carefully organize and incorporate teaching culture in lesson plans and curriculums "To present and elicit cultural information, coach and model cultural behaviors, guide and conduct cultural research and analysis" (Moran, 2001, p.138).

Overall, we deduce from the above that teaching culture is an important part of the process of acquiring a second language appropriately, which helps the learners to differentiate between their social community and the social community of the target language. Understanding culture may help students know and encourage sympathy towards the people of that target culture so that they will have positive attitudes about the target language.

3. Models of Teaching Culture

Models of culture have been designed and developed to accomplish appropriate culture teaching. To start with, the Brooks model that is based on a society's everyday life and the interaction between a person and his immediate social environment. This anthropological conception of teaching culture, which emphasizes the importance of culture not for the study of literature, but language learning, stems from his strong belief that culture resides in the very fabrics of peoples' daily life. Brooks (1960, 1968) developed two models for the teaching of culture: "a profile of ten-point culture and a paradigm of meanings of the term culture .He has an ideational view of culture and language and insists on the close relationship between the two .He was among the first scholars to emphasize the idea of dealing with culture in foreign language teaching and to suggest that the concept of culture" must be developed according to the needs and insights of those immediately concerned" (Brooks,1968)

In the first model "a profile of ten-point culture" Brooks presented the form of a scheme which includes the following; symbolism, value, authority, order, ceremony, love, honor, humor, beauty and spirit. For him, these are "the focal points .in the fabric of cultures makeup"(Brooks, 1968).

Furthermore, Brooks'(1968) paradigm of meanings of the term culture consisted of five types: Biological growth, personal refinement, literature and the fine arts patterns for living and the sum total of a way of life, (p.210).

The aspects which he considered most suitable for teaching culture in a foreign language class, are the one related to patterns of living. Claire Kramsch is another figure who favored the integration of teaching culture in language classroom. The important aspect of kramsch"s model is the importance she attaches to context. She holds that the core feature of teaching culture is the cultural context, this interaction between text (oral or written) and context enables the learners to interpret cultural phenomena and to mediate between their culture and the foreign culture

Overall researchers have provided different models to make teachers move from teaching culture along with language to teaching culture within language and what is important is the techniques the teachers use to teach culture.

4. Techniques for Teaching Culture

Even though many language teachers realize the importance of incorporating culture into their classrooms, they don't always know what aspects of culture to teach or how to teach them. There has been a great variety of techniques developed for introducing culture into language teaching; such as culture capsule, culture cluster, the audio-motor unit, creating an authentic environment, the slice of life technique, self-awareness technique... each one is used for a purpose depending on learners' needs, level, social and cultural backgrounds.

5. Cultural Assimilators Technique

There are several techniques that have been developed specifically for presenting culture in the foreign language classroom; one of them is cultural assimilator. Before tackling how the assimilator can be integrated into the language classroom the assimilator needs to be defined. The culture assimilator is a technique designed for training persons from one culture to better understand the behavior of persons from another culture in addition, it facilitate their ability to function in a different cultural context, Fiedler et al (1971) define the culture assimilator as "a programmed learning experience designed to expose members of one culture to some of the basic concepts, attitudes, role perceptions, customs and values of another culture"(p.95).Based on the idea that culture is a set of behaviors, values, norms, and customs, they recommend analyzing the subjective culture of the two groups to get an understanding of those customs values and perceptions.

The perceptions and the interpretation of a situation may differ radically by individuals who come from two different cultural background or different subjective cultures. In this case, each individual is making different attributions about the situation. "By subjective culture we mean a cultural group's characteristic way of perceiving its social environment"(Triandis, 1971, p. 3).Attributions are defined by Albert 1983:"inferences about the causes of behavior". The culture assimilator is designed to examine the attributions that individuals make based on their subjective culture and to reduce the misunderstandings that occur in cross cultural situations.

5.1. Theoretical Background and the Evolution of Culture Assimilators

There are two important elements of culture assimilators that have not changed over the years in the evolution of the assimilators, one deal with the learning process, i.e., isomorphic attribution and the other deals with its content, i.e., critical incidents.

5.1.1. Attribution Theory

Attributions are inferences about the cause of an event or a person's motives. Attribution theory began with Heider's (1944, 1958) seminal analyses of how people perceive and explain the actions of others. According to Heider (1958) "people operate very much like quasi-scientists in their attribution activities. They observe an event, and then often in a logical, analytical way, attempt to connect it to possible causes and various effects". Attributions are considered to be dependent on the norms, affect, roles, and the consequences of actions seen as operating in a social situation.

Therefore, attributions are crucial determinants of how one will evaluate another's behavior. Triandis (1975) introduced the concept of "isomorphic attributions" to discuss the situation in which a person attributes the behavior of another to the same reason the other attributes his or her own behavior. When isomorphic attributions occur, it clarifies why the other has acted the way he or she has. According to Triandis (1977) "The cultural assimilator is a programmed learning instrument that can be used to teach people from two different cultural groups or make isomorphic attributions regarding the behavior of people from a specific culture". In general, differences in attributions can lead to misunderstanding and conflicts. Two individuals from different cultures are more likely to face such discrepancies, due to their cultural background differences in norms, attitudes, and values.

5.2. Critical Incidents

In order to enable the individual to examine the attributions that he or she is making based on his or her own perspectives and subjective culture, the individual must be presented with concrete situations. The concrete situations that the culture assimilator employs are called critical incidents. The critical incident was originally developed by Flanagan (1954) who utilized the technique for investigating effective and ineffective job behaviors. Flanagan (1954)

noted that "completeness and clarity are the two important characteristics of critical incidents".

The basic premise of the critical incident is identified as follows:

"The basic premise of the critical incident is identified as follows: (a) a situation in which two persons from different cultures interact; (b) a situation in which a person from one culture finds himself or herself in conflict, in the midst of a misunderstanding, or simply puzzlement; and (c) a situation which can be interpreted in a fairly unequivocal manner, given sufficient knowledge about the culture" (Fiedler et al, 1971, p. 97).

The culture assimilator consists of several critical incidents; each critical incident is followed by alternative responses to the episode of to four or five alternative responses, following the alternative responses are feedback; explanations in which the individual is informed whether their choice was appropriate or not and why they also provide the individual with more information about the culture (Fiedler et al. 1971, p. 98). Fiedler et al.(1971) add that one of the "most important functions of feedback is to expose the learner to some of the major themes characterizing the two cultures with which he is working" (p.99). Culture assimilators are designed to provide various emphases. "(1) Interpersonal attitudes that address a contrast between the home culture and the target culture; (2) the customs or norms of the other culture; (3) the contrasting values of the two cultures; and (4) the various social situations that maybe encountered at work, home life..." (Fiedler et al.).

5.3. Types of Culture Assimilator

5.3.1. Cultural-Specific-Assimilator

The early culture assimilators were developed usually to prepare Americans to live in another culture, example: Thailand, Iran, Honduras ... They helped the trainees learn inductively to avoid certain behaviors that are not acceptable in the host culture for example: "A man greets a female in Thailand without touching her" or "One does not criticize a colleague in Honduras". In other words, the trainees learn a number of dos and don'ts that are grounded in

“behavioral settings” (Triandis, 1994, p. 26). Clearly, it can be argued that strength of the culture-specific assimilators is that they provide context for learning new behaviors but a weakness they do not provide a cognitive framework for understanding cultural differences. A content analysis of two recently developed culture-specific assimilators for Japan (Ito & Triandis, 1989) and Venezuela (Tolbert, 1990) supported the same idea that culture-specific assimilators are weak in providing meaningful explanations for cultural differences. Brislin Landis and Brandt identify the following benefits from the use of a culture specific assimilator.

1. Greater understanding of hosts, as judged by the hosts themselves.
2. A remarkable decrease in the use of negative stereotypes on the part of trainees.
3. The development of complex thinking about the target culture, which replaces the oversimplified, facile thinking to which hosts react negatively.
4. Greater enjoyment among trainees who interact with members of the target culture, feeling reciprocated-by-hosts;
5. Better adjustment to the everyday stresses of life in other cultures.
6. Better job performance in cases in which performance is influenced by specific cultural practices that can be covered in the training materials.

5.3.2. Cultural-General-Assimilator

Before Brislin created a cultural-general-assimilator, the culture assimilator has traditionally been used in a situation where cultures interact one-on-one. Fiedler et al. (1971) designed their assimilators for Americans interacting with another culture. However, Brislin et al.(1986) have created a culture-general assimilator to help members of any culture adjust to any other culture. Incidents that are used in the culture general assimilator involve people from various cultures, not just Americans. The incidents in the culture general assimilator also represent situations that might be helpful for the tourist or the student or someone working in

another culture. So the assimilator is designed to assist people with various goals interacting in various cultures.

For ESL students, the culture-general assimilator would be more useful than the assimilator initially designed by Fiedler. The main reason for this is that the ESL classroom is often culturally heterogeneous. It would not be beneficial to have an assimilator that focused on two cultures in the heterogeneous classroom. The general type of assimilator would also be more useful because the goals for being in the United States may vary from student to student.

5.5. Development of Cultural Assimilator Episodes

There is an involved process in the development of the culture assimilator for which Albert (1983) gives a clear step by step explanation. The first step that Albert describes is the development of the episodes. This can be done in several ways: through direct observation of interactions, personal interviews, questionnaires, or group discussions (p.191). Albert also adds two other ways that episodes can be generated: through ethnographic and historical events or by analyzing the subjective cultures of the two cultural groups (p.191).

The next step in developing the culture assimilator is constructing the episodes. The incidents generated are often too specific or too general to be used in the assimilator, so the developer must extract the most useful episodes from the ones generated. Albert discusses the criteria for a good episode:

"The episode should be a clear and straight forward representation of the original conflict situation. These representatives should capture the essential features of the situations with enough detail to be vivid, yet not so much as to detract from the central issues •• And they should "speak" to the intended audience in terms of both content and language use"(p.192).

The following step is what Albert calls "the elicitation of attributions". This is the step where the alternative responses that appear at the end of the critical incident are elicited, the next step that Albert lists is the selection of attributions. This is a step that is often done at the time of

elicitation of attributions. After the assimilator episode is created, there is a validation process for the episodes. Albert (1983) reviews the evaluations and concludes, "It is clear from all of the studies conducted so far that the culture assimilator is an effective instrument for imparting cultural information. ... And it facilitates interpersonal relations between the trainees and members of the target culture" (p.209), she states also that the culture assimilator is "ideally suited for educational purposes". In addition, "The culture assimilator is basically a cognitive instrument and the evidence suggests that it is very effective as a culture learning and training device" (p.210).

5.6. The Format of Cultural Assimilator Episode

In typical assimilators, each incident is followed by three or four attributions, with one or two tending to be attributions made by people in the target culture, and two or three usually being interpretations that members of the learners' culture typically select. The learner is asked to select the attribution chosen by people from the target culture. After the learner chooses an attribution, culturally relevant feedback is given to him or her. If an incorrect choice is made, the learner is asked to make another choice. The learner is instructed to keep trying until he/she selects the attribution chosen by members of the target culture (Albert,1983).

5.7. Procedures for Developing Assimilator Item: by (Tolbert & Mclean, 1995)

- 1-Choose a culture or social group that you know or would like to know more about.
- 2-Choose a problem that you would like to teach others about through your assimilator item. This problem should involve some type of misunderstanding due to culture, gender or other social group membership.
- 3-Write your scenario using information gleaned from personal experiences, the experiences of others with an intercultural experience , observations you have made about intercultural interactions, or reading you have done about culture and human behavior .

4-Provide four possible responses to use in your assimilator item. One response should provide a culturally accurate explanation for the incident; write three additional explanations that, although believable to cultural outsider, do not adequately explain the incident.

5- Provide a separate rationale for each response explaining why it is –or is not- the best explanation for the incident.

5.7.1. Example: The Development of the Venezuelan Culture Assimilator (Tolbert & McLean, 1996)

A U.S negotiation firm assigned Paul, a top negotiator, to buy raw materials from Venezuela. Paul had been abroad for several years in other Latin American countries, so he knew both formal and street Spanish. During some of negotiations with the Venezuelan firm, Paul brought the presentation down to an informal level of speech. He noticed that the Venezuelans were listening attentively and seemed to follow the ideas and business plan he presented. He was joking around and talking like «one of the boys «since he was confident about the Latin business atmosphere. The Venezuelans listened politely until the end of the presentation. When Paul was finished they thanked him and he left.

A week later Paul manager called him into his office. Paul told him how wonderful the trip the Venezuela was and that he was anxious to hear what had happened. The manager then told Paul that he was about to ask him the same thing -what had happened? The Venezuelan firm called his company and refused to do business with them in the future .Paul was very upset and had no idea what had happened.

* Why did the negotiations between Paul and the Venezuelan firm not produce the results he expected?

a. Paul should not have taken the initiative in changing the atmosphere and the relationship with the Venezuelans to an informal level he should have respected the tone set by the Venezuelans. Because of his actions he was perceived as condescending.

b. Paul's company made the unfortunate assumption that Paul was qualified to enter the Venezuelan culture successfully because of his prior experience in Latin America. Paul relied too heavily on his presumed understanding of the culture. He assumed that all Latin American countries were the same, and he was too informal for the Venezuelan culture.

c. By dropping to an informal level so quickly, Paul creates doubt in the minds of Venezuelans as to the seriousness of the proposal and his company. In Venezuela, a company's approach is a very important part of maintaining its reputation.

d. The company was not ready to make a decision yet .The Venezuelans need to call more meetings with Paul and get to know him, perhaps over lunches or dinners. The deal needed to be discussed more.

You answered (a):

You selected a. When looking at this situation from a U.S. perspective, it is a reasonable response. However, being informal is not necessarily the same as being condescending. While Paul should have respected the tone set by the Venezuelans, there is a more plausible response to this scenario.

Please choose again.

You answered (b):

You selected b. This is a good choice. Some Latin American countries do encourage informal business relationships, but that is not the case in Venezuela. Paul should have explored the Venezuelan norms of business relationships before acting in a more informal manner. It is dangerous to assume commonalities in values, beliefs, and practices within countries that merely share a common language. There is another choice, however, that was preferred by Venezuelans.

Please choose again

You answered (c):

You selected c. This is the choice chosen most often by Venezuelans. Venezuelans prefer a formal to semiformal work environment and mode of communication. Breaking that norm created doubt in the Venezuelans' minds as to how professional and credible Paul and his company were, in Venezuela, a company's credibility is often determined by its approach to business. The business approach is a very important part of establishing and maintaining one's reputation.

You answered (d):

The Venezuelans needed to call more meetings with Paul and get to know him, perhaps over lunches or dinners. The deal needed to be discussed more. You selected d. Perhaps the company may not have been ready to make a decision yet. However, the actual response of the Venezuelans was to threaten not to do business in the future with the company, which is a stronger message than simply saying that they are not ready to make a decision. Such a dramatic response is more indicative of an error of something that he did rather than something that he failed to do.

Please choose again.

5.8. Cultural Assimilator and Other Techniques: example: Culture Capsule / Culture Cluster

There are two techniques that have been developed specifically for presenting culture in the foreign language classroom, the culture capsule (Taylor and Sorenson, 1961) and culture clusters (Meade and Morain, 1973). The culture capsule, as explained by Seelye (1984) consists of "a paragraph or so of explanation of a minimal difference between an American and a target custom, along with several illustrative photos or relevant realia" (p.129). According to Taylor and Sorenson (1961) Culture capsule is a brief description of one aspect of the target culture followed by a discussion of the contrasts between the learner's and the other culture. In this technique, the teacher presents the information orally. It is also possible that students prepare a culture capsule at home and present it during class hours. The oral presentation is often

combined with realia and visual aids, as well as with a set of questions to stimulate discussion. One capsule should not take up more than 10 minutes.

The culture clusters technique was first proposed by Meade and Morrain in 1973. Clusters are combinations of conceptually related culture capsules. Two or more capsules which belong together can form a cluster. A cluster should be concluded by some sort of activity, for instance a role-play and a group work. Parts of culture clusters can be presented in succeeding lessons. Meade and Morrain (1973) give an example of a French country wedding, which is divided into 4 capsules (1) the civil ceremony, (2) the religious ceremony, (3) the wedding banquet, (4) acting out a country wedding.(p.17). Henrichsen (1998) claims that; "culture capsules and clusters are good methods for giving students knowledge and some intellectual awareness of several cultural aspects, but he warns that they generally do not cause much emotional empathy".

The culture assimilator is a third technique, which was originally developed by a group of psychologists for cross cultural training. The assimilator episodes also begin with a minimal difference, a paragraph or so describing a situation in which a cross cultural misunderstanding has occurred. The students are then required to choose the correct response that explains the situation. They are then given immediate feedback through explanations of each response. The difference between the assimilator and the capsule is that the explanation of the minimal difference is given to the students as part of the presentation of the capsule and with the assimilator, the student is required identify the difference (Seelye, 1984, p.129).The culture assimilator has been recommended widely and implemented in the language classroom to enhance learners intercultural communicative competence.

5.9. Advantages of Culture Assimilator Technique

There are several advantages of the assimilator over the traditional method of reading books for cultural information. Albert (1986) argues that the cultural assimilator advantages are:

(a) trainees are active participants, (b) the programmed learning format that is used gives the trainees immediate feedback on the choices they have made, (c) it can be used individually or in groups, (d) it can be used alone or with a facilitator, (e) other training approaches and techniques may be used with cultural assimilators.

Furthermore, Seelye (1984) claims that "Assimilators are more fun to read; they actively involve the student with a cross-cultural problem; and they have been shown to be more effective in controlled experiments" (p.117).

Another advantage is that culture assimilators are a problem-solving strategy. In addition, the explanations that are provided at the end of the assimilator episode are valuable because they not only explain the correct answer for the situation, but also the incorrect answers.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, teaching culture is very important and should become a more vital part of foreign language teaching because culture and language are interwoven we cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. In this way, EFL teaching should lead to a better understanding of both one's native culture and the target one. Teachers should act as mediators in teaching the culture to help learners to use target language and provide them with the necessary communicative and intercultural skills to express themselves and to present their own culture in the target language as well as the target culture.

So many techniques were produced to incorporate teaching culture in language class. The culture assimilator, a proven technique that has been developed for and successfully used in cross-cultural training, has been also used to teach culture in the foreign language classroom. Several characteristics make culture assimilators desirable and appropriate to teach culture: they are enjoyable for the students, they engage the student in a problem-solving activity, and they can be incorporated into a variety of classroom activities, such as group discussion or role play. In addition, this chapter, we explored that culture Assimilator episodes can successfully be used as a tool for teaching culture.

Chapter two

Investigating Cultural Assimilators' Use and the Learners Attitudes toward Them

Introduction

After finishing with the theoretical part, the purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology used to conduct the present study and to check if there are any impact of using cultural assimilators as a teaching technique to improve the learners' intercultural communicative competence in EFL classroom. To serve the needs of our research, we are going to cope with presenting and analyzing the gathered data that was collected through a questionnaire and teachers' interview that have been submitted and carried out with first-year master students of English at Abbas Laghrour University of Khenchela. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section outlined students' questionnaire description, analysis and interpretation and the second section deals with description, analysis, interpretation of teachers' questionnaire.

Section One

1. Students' Questionnaire

1.1. Description of students' Questionnaire

The learners' questionnaire is designed as the main data collection tool, regarding the students' opinion about the importance of teaching culture and their attitudes towards using cultural assimilator technique to improve their intercultural communicative competence and enhancing the process of acquiring English as a foreign language. Therefore, the questionnaire consists of seventeen 15 question items, which are arranged in a logical way. The investigator structured the survey using variety of question types including: closed-ended questions where the participants are asked to tick the appropriate answers and open-ended question where they are allowed to give their own answers and justifications. The questionnaire items they are organized in three sections, each section provides specific information.

Section one: background information (Q1-Q3/a. b)

It includes general information which contains three items to gain background information about the participants (age, gender), their motivation and purpose to study English.

Section two: Students' perception towards Culture and Intercultural communicative competence (Q4-Q9)

This section contains six items, tends to explore students' attitudes towards culture and intercultural communicative competence. The first two items deal with students' level concerning English culture and culture motivation. The next five items deal with communication and weaknesses in handling conversation with native speakers and the importance of developing ICC.

Section three: learners' attitudes towards teaching culture using Cultural Assimilators technique (Q10-Q15)

This section contains six items, stresses on the importance of teaching culture using cultural assimilators and real life incidents and to know about the appropriate way to enhance students' communicative competence with native speakers. However, this section is actually the core of the questionnaire as it asserts whether cultural assimilators are an effective strategy for improving the students' ICC in EFL classroom from students' perspectives. This questionnaire was distributed to the individuals of the convenient sample with the aim of answering the research question "what are the different learners' attitudes toward the implementing of cultural assimilators and their importance in enhancing learners' intercultural communicative competence?"

1.2. Analysis of the Results

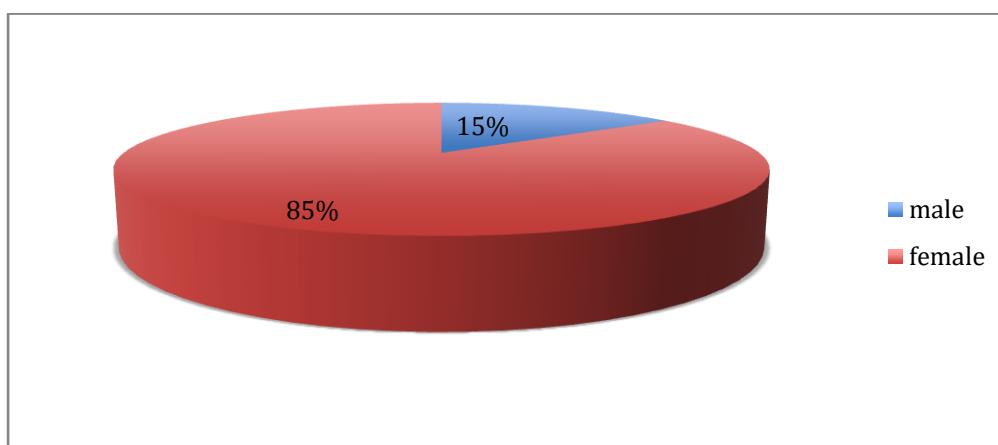
Section one: (Q1-Q3.a.b) background information

Question item 01: Gender

Table 1. Students' gender .

Options	Male	Female	Total
Students numbers	06	34	40
Percentage %	15%	85%	100%

Figure 1. Students' gender.



The table results show that the majority of students are females; they represent 85% of the whole population while the rest 15% represent males.

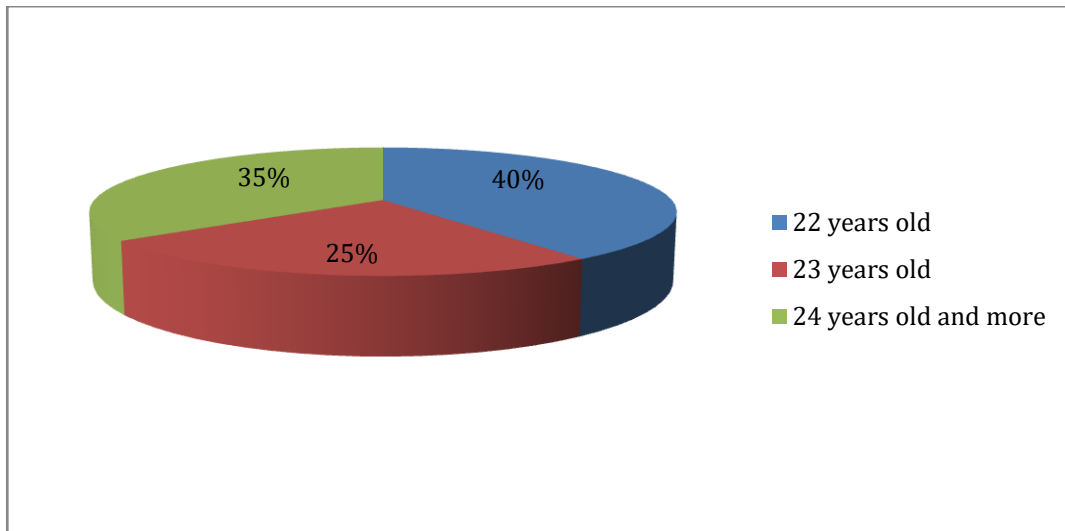
Question item 02: Age

Table 2. Students' age.

Options	22 years old	23 years old	24 years old and more	Total
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Students numbers	16	10	14	40
Percentage %	40%	25%	35%	100%

Figure 2. Students' age.



the table above shows that the participants ages are close to each other in which 40% of students are 22 years old and 25% are 23 years old and 35% whose ages are 24 years old and more.

Question item 03: Students' motivation to learn English language

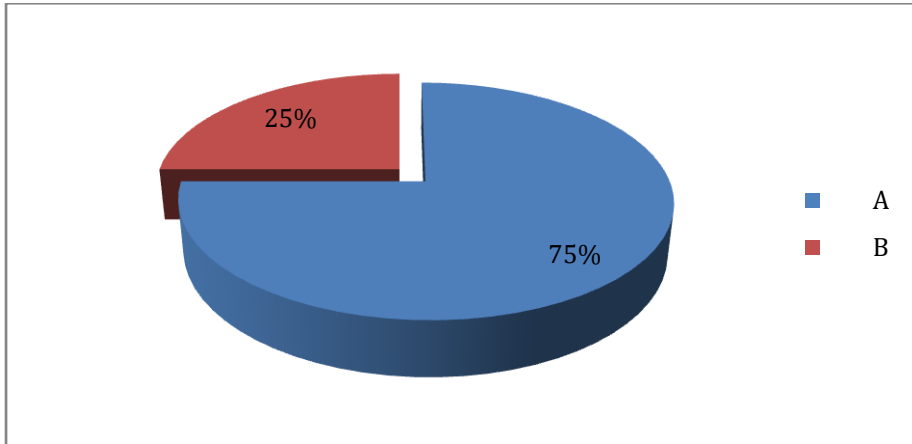
3.a. Are you motivated to study/ learn English language?

A-Yes , B- No

Table 3.a.: Students motivation to study English language

Options	Numbers of students	Percentage
A	30	75%
B	10	25%
Total	40	100%

Figure 3.a. Students' motivation to study English language.



This question describes learners' motivation towards studying English language in which 30 students (75%) claim that they are motivated to learn English, the rest 10 students (25%) claim that are not motivated to learn English language may be because they were obliged to learn English and it was not their first choice.

3.b. If yes for what purpose are you studying it? (You can chose more than one answer).

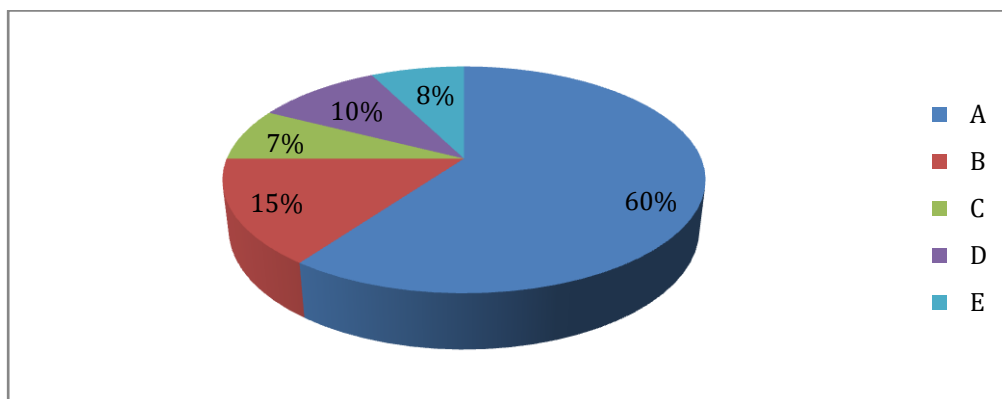
- You like it.
- To communicate with native speakers.
- For future job.
- You want to know about native speakers' culture.
- Others.

Table 3.b.: reasons behind students motivation to study English.

Options	Numbers of students	Percentage %
A	24	60%
B	06	15%
C	03	7.5%
D	04	10%
E	03	7.5%

Total	40	100%
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Figure 3.b. *Reasons behind students' motivation to study English*



this question attempt to find out the main reasons behind students' motivation to learn English, 60% argues that they like it, to communicate with native speakers 15%, for future job 7.5% and to know about others culture 10%, these are the main reasons behind learners' motivation to learn English however, others provide other reasons such as: To travel and develop their business, to study abroad, it is the largest spoken language in the world

Section Two: (Q4-Q9) Students' Perception Towards Culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence

Question item 04: Students' Level Concerning English Culture

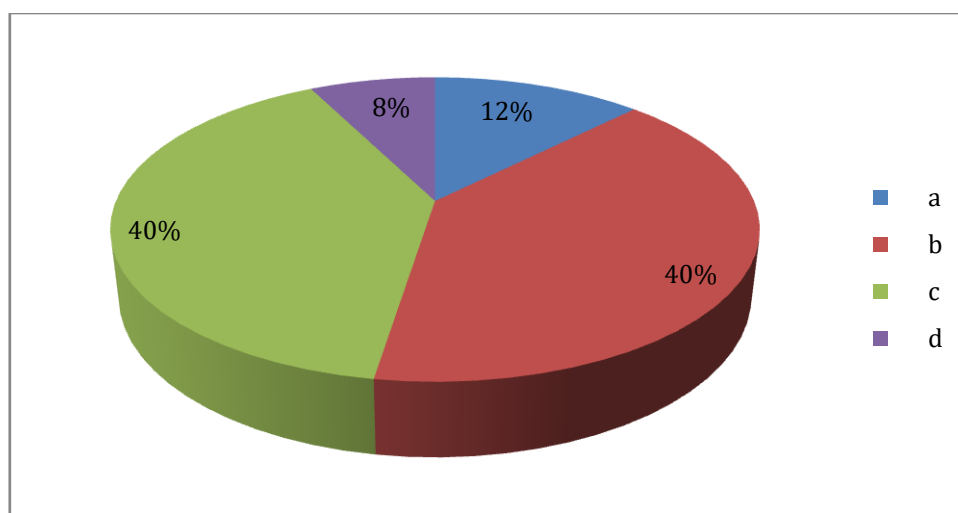
How do you consider your level concerning English culture ?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Poor

Table 04: students level concerning the English culture.

Options	Students numbers	Percentage %
A	05	12.5%
B	16	40%
C	16	40%
D	03	7.5%
Total	40	100%

Figure 04.Students' level concerning the English language.



The above table shows that 40% of students consider their level good concerning the English culture, in addition, another 40% of students consider themselves at an average level, 12.5% consider their level very good and 7.5% of students consider their level poor concerning English culture.

Question Item 05: Culture Motivation

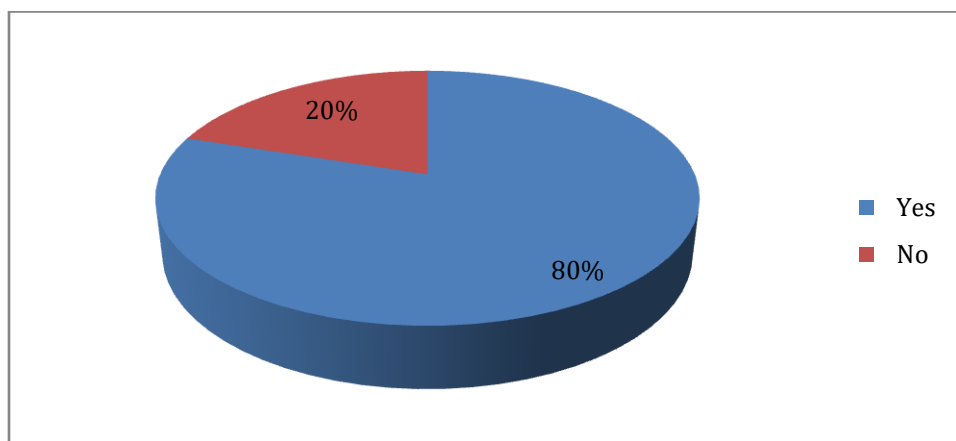
Does learning culture motivates students?

A – yes , B – No

Table 05. *Students' motivation towards learning culture.*

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	32	80%
No	08	20%
Total	40	100%

Figure 05. *Students' motivation towards learning English.*



As far as students answers, the majority of them 80% argued that learning culture motivates them while 20% of students claim that are not motivated towards learning culture.

Question item 06: importance of Communication

interacting with English native speakers make communication with them an easy task?

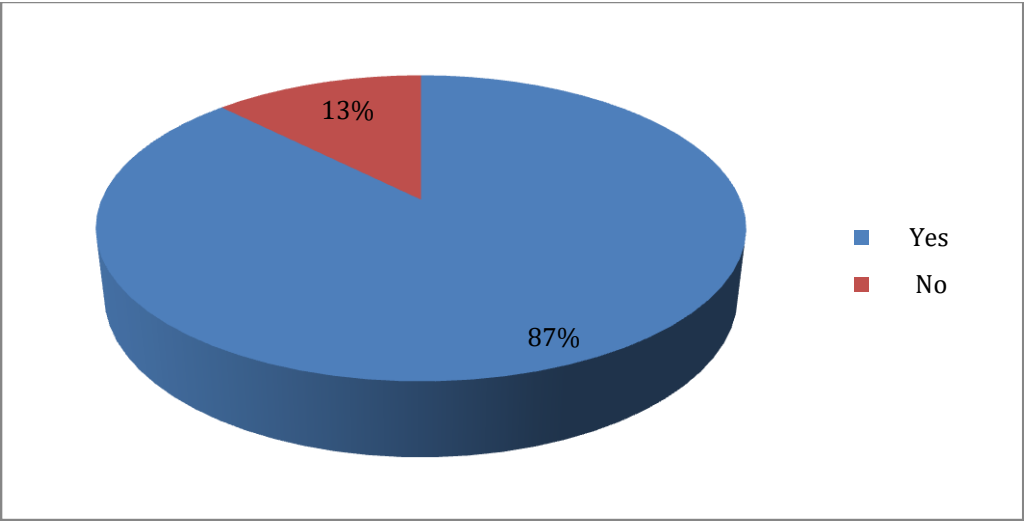
A -yes ; B - no.

Table 06. *The improvement of the students' performance through communicating with native speakers.*

Options	Students numbers	Percentage %
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Yes	35	87.5%
No	05	12.5%
Total	40	100%

Figure 06 .The importance of the students’ performance through communicating with native speakers.



The results show the improvement of the students’ performance through communicating with native speakers .because communication is very important for learners to enhance their performance to acquire the foreign language and understands foreign culture . We observe that most students, 85.5% confirm that interacting with native speakers make communication an easy task and may be beneficial for the EFL learners and is very useful in learning the target language. However (12.5%) of learners disagree that interacting with native speakers make communication an easy task .

Question item 07: Handling Conversation with Native Speakers

How do you consider yourself towards handling conversation with native speakers?

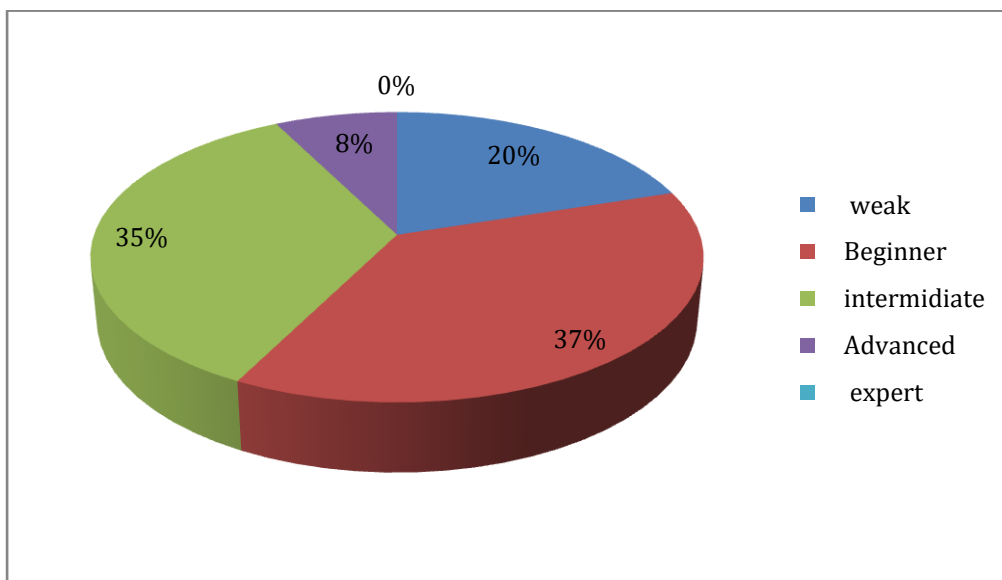
- Weak

- Beginner
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Expert

Table 07. Students'abilities in handling conversation with native speakers.

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Weak	08	20%
Beginner	15	38%
Intermediate	14	35%
Advanced	03	08%
Expert	00	00%
Total	40	100%

Figure 07 Students'abilities in handling conversation with native speakers.



As it can be observed in the table and the chart shown above, there is not much difference in the students' opinions about the level of handling conversation with native speakers. 20% consider themselves "weak" in handling conversation with native speakers. 38% of students are

“beginner” not far from them 35% of students consider themselves "intermediate" while 08% argue that are "advanced", not Surprisingly, the lowest percentage was found in the “Expert” and has received 0%.

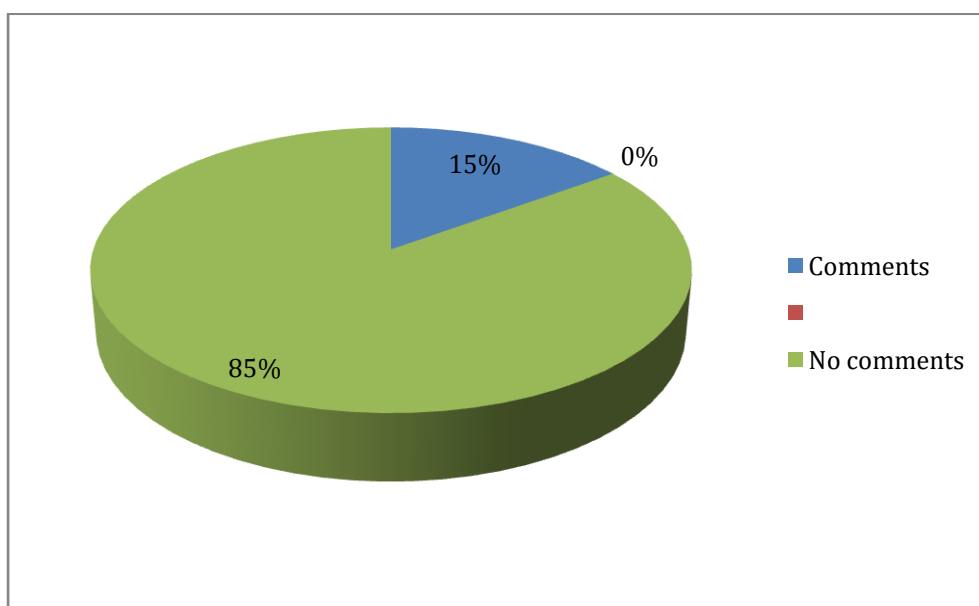
Question Item 08: Reasons of Students Weaknesses

If you consider yourself “weak” try to explain why?

Table 08. Reasons for students’ weaknesses

Options	Number of students	Percentage%
Comments	06	15%
No comments	34	85%
Total	40	100%

Figure 08. Reasons for students’ weaknesses



In accordance with table 85% of students did not answer or give any comment to the question it is probably because they consider themselves not fluent in speaking English or maybe it is because they have found it challenging. The other (15%) of students who answered the question , they claimed it is because they are afraid of making mistakes ,lack of vocabularies and

they are not familiar with informal English that is used outside classroom , lack of fluency in English .Also ,because native speakers speak too fast they found difficulties in understanding them.

Question item 09: Importance of Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

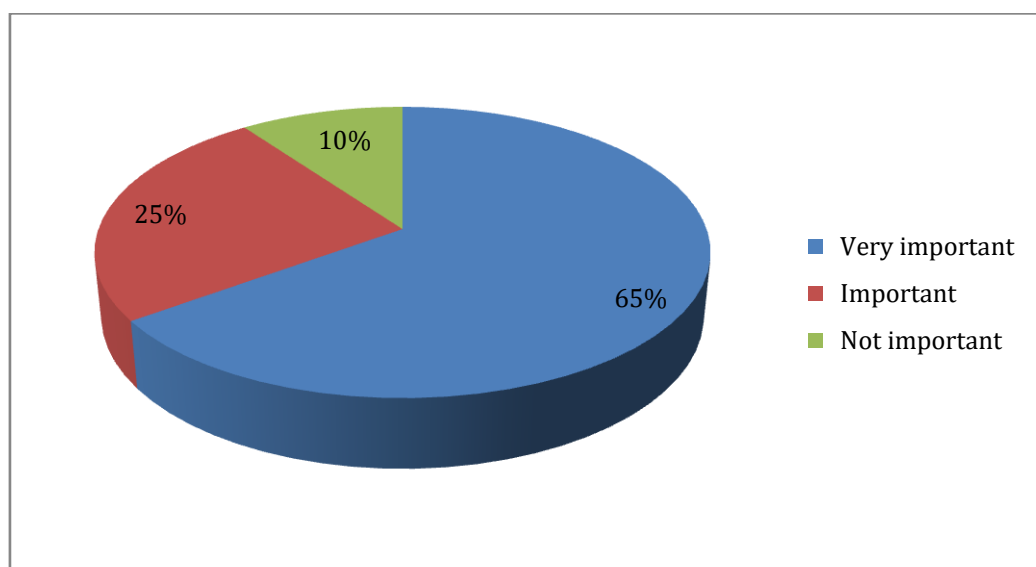
How it is important developing learners’ intercultural communicative competence?

- Very important
- Important
- Not important

Table 09.The importance of developing learners’ ICC .

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Very important	26	65%
Important	10	25%
Not important	04	10%
Total	40	100%

Figure 09.The importance of developing learners’ ICC .



We asked this question to know whether learners are aware about the importance of developing intercultural communicative competence , the results shows that is regarded as very important to 65% of students, however, 25% of students think it is important, and only 10% claim that developing ICC is not important .We can deduce that the majority of students are aware of the importance of developing learners ICC.

Section Three: Learners’ Attitudes Towards Teaching Culture Using Cultural Assimilators Technique

Question item 10: Developing Learners’ Knowledge about Foreign Language by Teaching the Target Culture

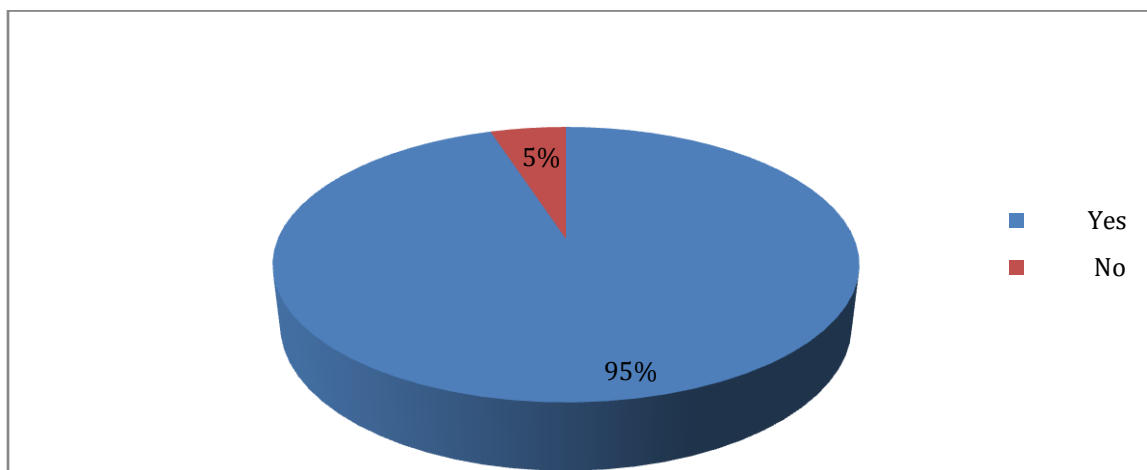
Does teaching target culture helps in enhancing students’ knowledge while learning the foreign language?

- Yes
- No

Table 10. The role of cultural teaching in enhancing the learners’ knowledge while learning a foreign language.

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	38	95%
No	02	05%
Total	40	100%

Figure 10. The role of cultural teaching in enhancing the learners' knowledge while learning a foreign language.



From the figure above, we notice that the majority of students' (95%) agree that teaching culture has an effective impact on learners in learning foreign language and enhancing their knowledge about the target language while (05%) of students' totally disagree about the idea of teaching culture enhances learner knowledge about the target language. We conclude from this question that learners' are aware about the relationship between language and culture we cannot separate the two.

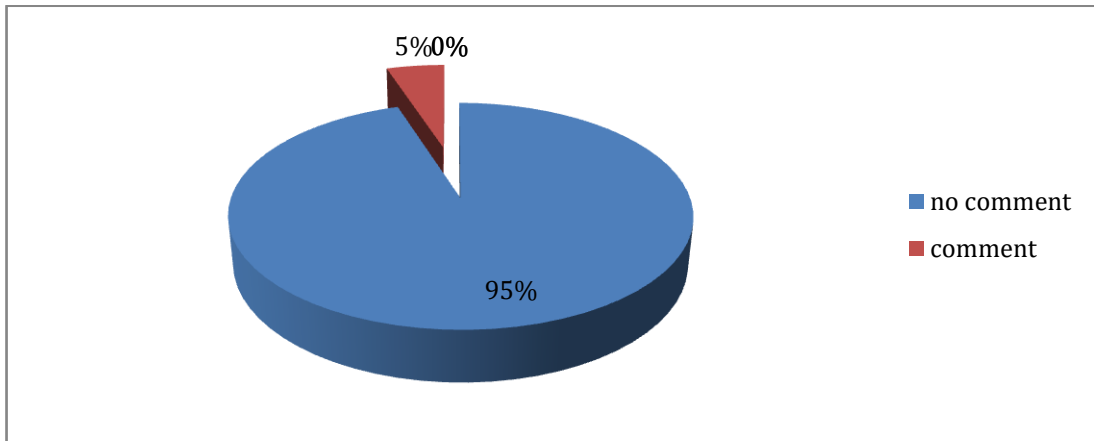
Question Item 11: Cultural Assimilators Definition

In your opinion, how can culture assimilator define?

Table 11. Students' definition of culture assimilators.

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Comment	02	05%
No comment	38	95%
Total	40	100%

Figure 11. Students' definition of culture assimilators.



We asked the current question in order to know if the EFL learners are aware about the technique of cultural assimilators. We noticed that most of the learners 95% confirm that they really face difficulties in defining this term, and this is due to the lack of an awareness and tolerance with the several techniques using in teaching culture . Furthermore, they are not familiar enough several techniques designed for teaching culture while we found just few of students 05% a general definition of this technique .

Question Item 12: Culture Assimilators Influence on Enhancing the Learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence

Does culture assimilators influence on enhancing the learners' intercultural communicative competence ?

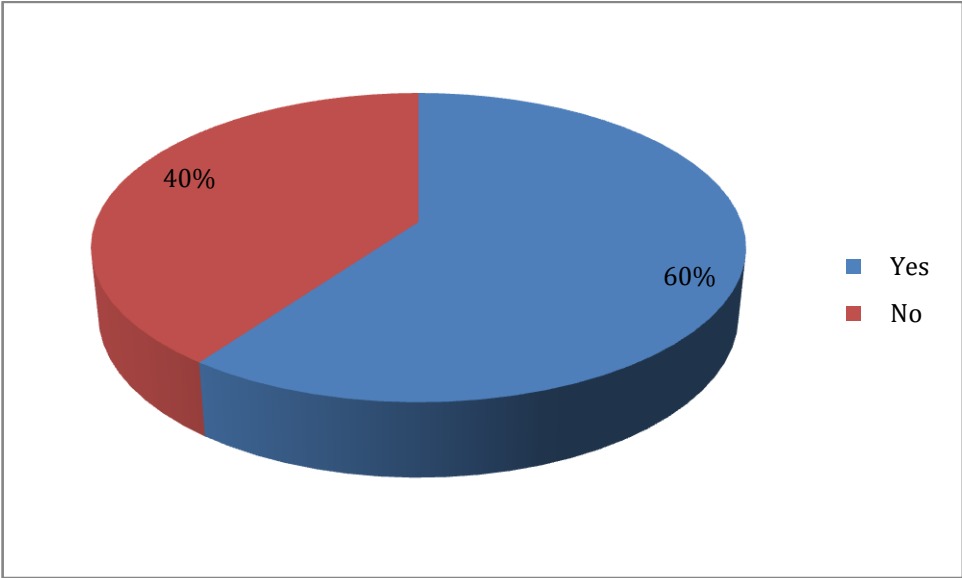
- Yes
- No

Table 12. The role of cultural assimilators technique in improving ICC.

Options	Students numbers	Percentage%
Yes	24	60%

No	16	40%
Total	40	100%

Figure 12.The role of cultural assimilators technique in improving ICC.



This question is about the importance of using cultural assimilators in teaching culture to enhance learners’ intercultural communicative competence, the above table shows that 60% of students are aware about the importance of this technique in improving their ICC however, 40% of them disagree and claim that cultural assimilators techniques does not improve students’ ICC , maybe because they are not familiar with it and never been taught using cultural assimilators technique.

Question Item 13.Using Real Indicents in Understanding the Foreign Culture

Do you agree about using real life incidents of native speakers is a fun way to understand the foreign culture?

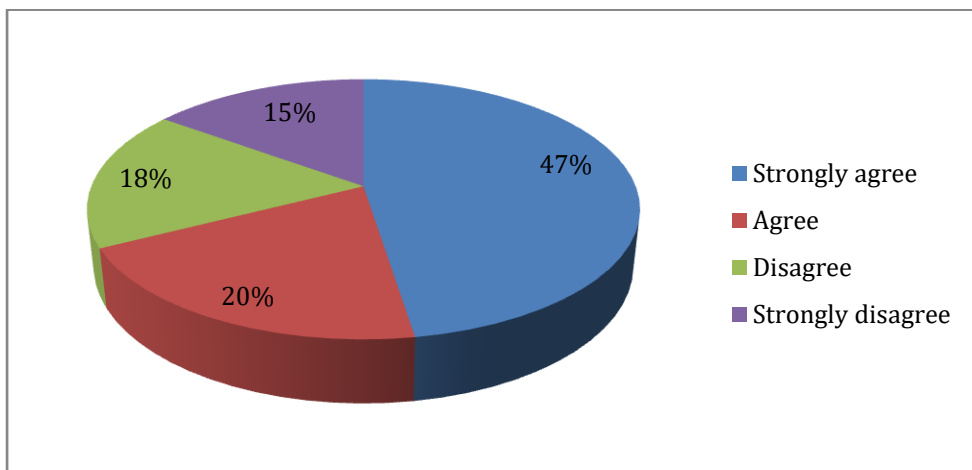
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

Table 13. The role of using real life incidents in understanding the foreign culture

Options	Numbers of students	Percentage %
Strongly agree	19	47.5%
Agree	08	20%
Disagree	07	17.5%
Strongly disagree	06	15%
Total	40	100%

Figure 13. The role of using real life incidents in understanding the foreign culture



the results of this question shows that the majority of respondents 47.5% strongly agree about using real life incidents of native speakers as a fun way to understand the target culture, in addition 20% of students' agree about the same idea however, 17.5% of students disagree about using real incidents of native speakers in teaching about culture and 15% strongly disagree, probably because they think it is not a fun way to learn the target culture.

Question item 14: Using Cultural Assimilators in EFL Classroom

Have you ever been taught by culture assimilators in English culture courses?

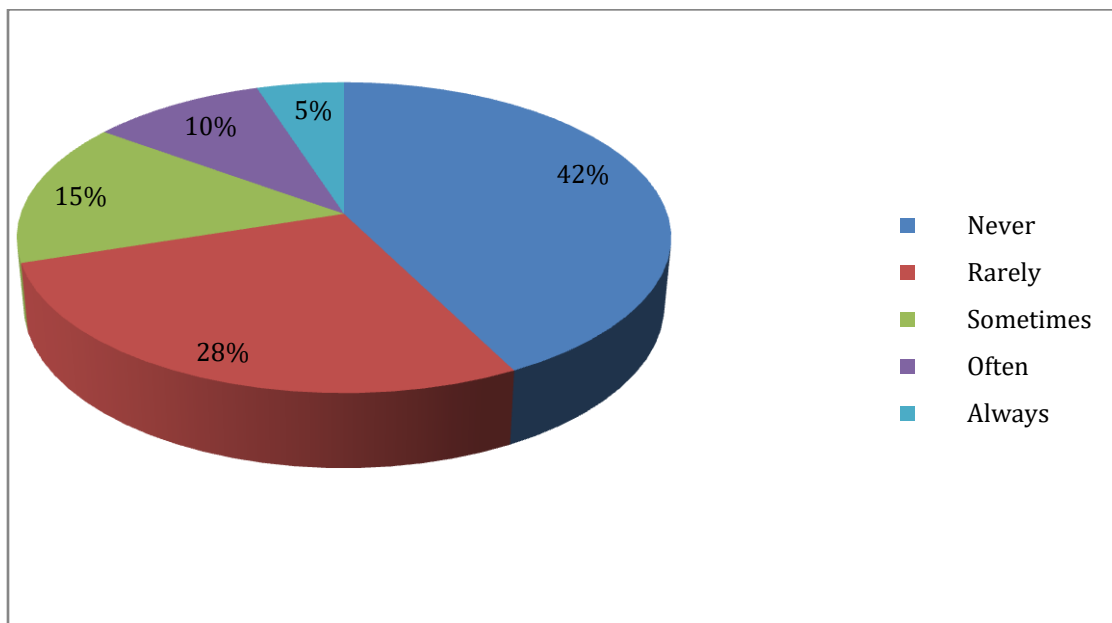
- Never

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

Table 14. Using cultural assimilators in EFL classroom

Options	Numbers of students	Percentage %
Never	17	42.5%
Rarely	11	27.5%
Sometimes	06	15%
Often	04	10%
Always	02	05%
Total	40	100%

Figure 14. Using cultural assimilators in EFL classroom.



Through the results displayed on the figure above, we observe that most learners (42.5%) claim that they "never" taught using cultural assimilators technique in classroom and 27.5% argue that "rarely" were taught with this technique in additionto , 15% of students said that cultural assimilators are "sometimes" used in culture courses , 10% said often wherese, the minority 05% argue that this technique is "always"

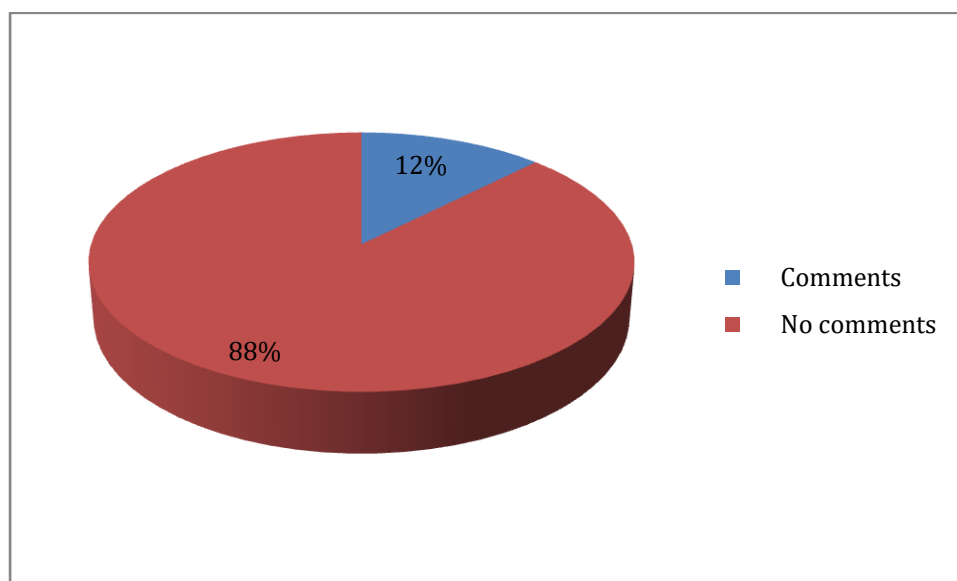
Question item 15: Learners’ Opinions Towards the Appropriate Way to Develop ICC.

In your opinion what is the appropriate way to enhance learners intercultural communicative competence in EFL classrooms ?

Table 15. learners opinions’ about the appropriate way to develop learners ICC.

Options	Number of students	Percentage %
Comments	05	12.5%
No comments	35	87.5%
Total	40	100%

Figure 15. Learners’ opinions’ about the appropriate way to develop learners’ ICC.



Even though the majority of students, 87.5 % did not answer the question maybe because they are not interested in developing this competency or they are not familiar with the effective ways to develop ICC the rest of students 12.5% answer the question they claimed it can be developed by using cultural assimilators technique. Reading books about foreign cultures, watching movies , communicating with native speakers and by traveling and living abroad.

1-3. Interpretation of the Results

The main aim of the questionnaire is to examine students' attitudes towards using cultural assimilators to improve learners' ICC. The results of (Q1) reveal that the majority of learners' are females (85%) and only (15%) are males their ages are between 22 years old and more (Q2), the results of (Q3.a) and (Q3.b) show that 75 of the whole respondents are motivated because they want to communicate with native speakers and (25%) are not motivated maybe they have negative attitudes towards studying English.

(Q4)Concerning the student's level in the English culture, there was an equivalent percentage between good (4%) and average (40%) and the rest of students consider themselves "poor" regarding English culture probably due to the lack of using English outside the classroom, also lack of interaction or direct contact with the English language and the English culture since students, most of the times learn or use English only in the classroom.

Moreover,(80%)of students answer that they are motivated to learn Culture and (20%) are not motivated (Q5). (Q6) results reveal that (87.5%)of students' agree on the importance of communication however, the other (12.5%) feel the opposite. (Q7-Q8) confess (20%) of students' are weak probably due to the lack of communicative skills and fluency in the English language in addition to the differences between their culture and others culture and (38%) are beginners when handling a conversation with native speakers.

(Q19) was asked in order to find out whether developing learners' ICC is important or not, (65%) said it is very important,(25%) claim it is important and (10%)said it is not important .In

(Q10) students are asked if teaching target culture helps in enhancing students' knowledge while learning the foreign language most of the students (95%) said yes only (5%) said no .

Using culture assimilators influence on enhancing the learners' intercultural communicative competence in (Q11) we asked students' to define the cultural assimilator technique we noticed that majority of students' (95%) did not give any definition while (5%) only gave general definition and argue that it cross-cultural training technique , this is in fact not good master one students and they are not familiar with this important teaching technique . Besides, in (Q12) students' were requested to accept or refuse that culture assimilators influence on enhancing the learners' intercultural communicative competence , more than the half (60%) said yes while (40%) said no because they are not knowledgeable about this technique . Concerning using critical incidents in understanding the foreign culture (47.5%)of students who answer (Q13) strongly agree on this idea whereas (20%) only agree,(17.5%)disagree and (15%) strongly disagree.(Q14) is about if students Have ever been taught by culture assimilators in English culture courses,(42.5 %)said never, and only (5%) who said always.

At last, (Q15) is reveal students'opinion about the appropriate way to enhance learners intercultural communicative competence in EFL classrooms, most of students (87.5%) did not comment or answer while (12.5%)argue that ICC can be developed using cultural assimilators technique. reading books about foreign cultures, watching movies , communicating with native speakers and by travelling and living abroad.

Section Two

2. Teachers' Questionnaire

2-1. The sample

The interview is administrated to five (5) teachers in the Department of English, University of Abbas Lagherour Khenchela. The selection of such sample was based on the

consideration that the teachers of general culture courses will benefit us more than other teachers since they teach students how to develop the language and culture, which are our concerns.

2.2 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire consists of 13 questions, which were divided into three main section. The questions are either closed questions, requiring from the teachers to choose “yes” or “no” answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices, or open questions where teachers are requested to give explanation or suggest other alternatives. The teachers' questionnaire items are divided into three section

Section one: background information (Q1-Q3)

It includes general information which contains three items to gain background information about teachers; their educational degree, Employment status, and working experience

Section Two: Teaching the English language and culture (Q4-Q9)

This section contains six items, it aims to provide tends teachers' attitudes towards teaching English language and Culture. The items in this section are about the definition of culture, the importance of teaching culture, The obstacles that teachers face in their teaching session and learners needs when learning the target culture.

Section three: The importance of using cultural assimilators technique in culture teaching to improve learners' ICC (Q10-Q13)

The last section attempts to know the teachers strategies they follow. The items of this section aim analyzing the teacher's opinion about the importance of using cultural assimilators technique in culture teaching to improve the students' ICC.

2.3 Analysis of the Results

Section one: Background Information

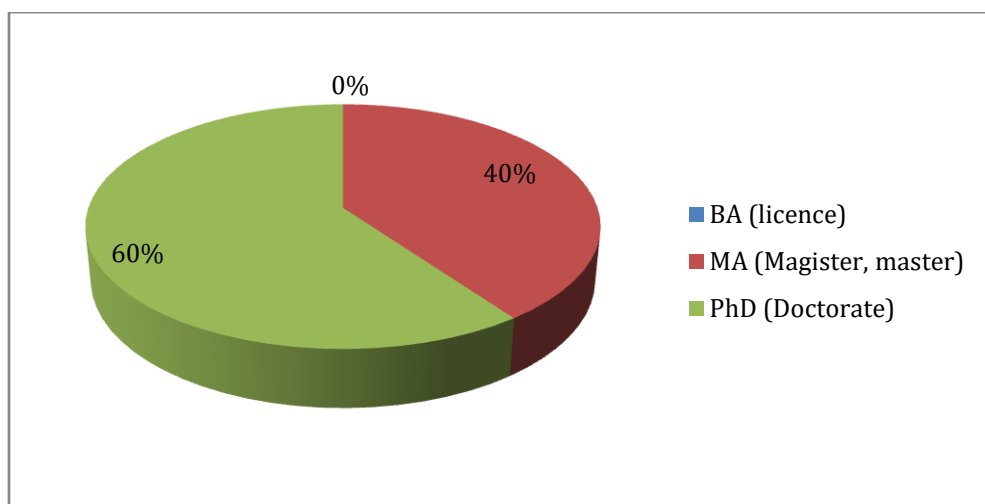
Question Item 1: Educational Degree.

- a- BA (Licence)
- b- MA (Magister, master)
- c- PhD (Doctorate)

Table 16. Teachers' educational degree.

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
BA (licence)	00	00%
MA (Magister, master)	02	40%
PhD (Doctorate)	03	60%
Total	05	100%

Figure 16. Teachers' educational degree.



As far as teachers answers are concerned that 60% of the teachers have PhD (Doctorate) , while 40% have the degree of MA(magister, master) and no one of them 00%have BA(Licence) degree , most of the teachers who answered the questionnaire have PhD and MAdegree because this are the required degrees to teach English in Algerian Universities.

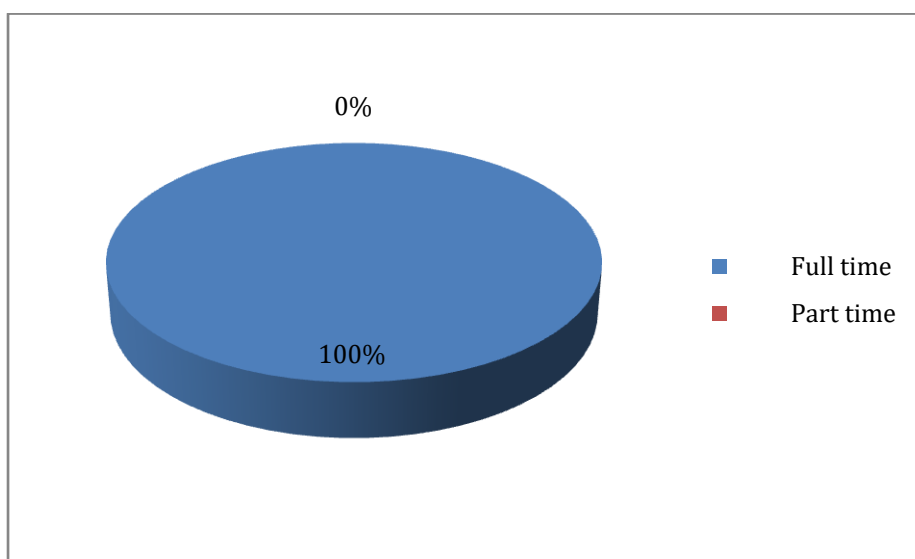
Question Item 2:Employment Status:

- a- Full time
- b- Part time

Table 17. Teachers' employment status.

Employment status	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
Full time	05	100%
Part time	00	00%
Total	05	100%

Figure 17. Teachers' employment statu.



As illustrated in table 02 above (100%) of teachers are full time teachers but this is only a small sample of teachers there are others who teach only for part time.

Question Item 3: Working Experience

How many years have you been teaching English ?

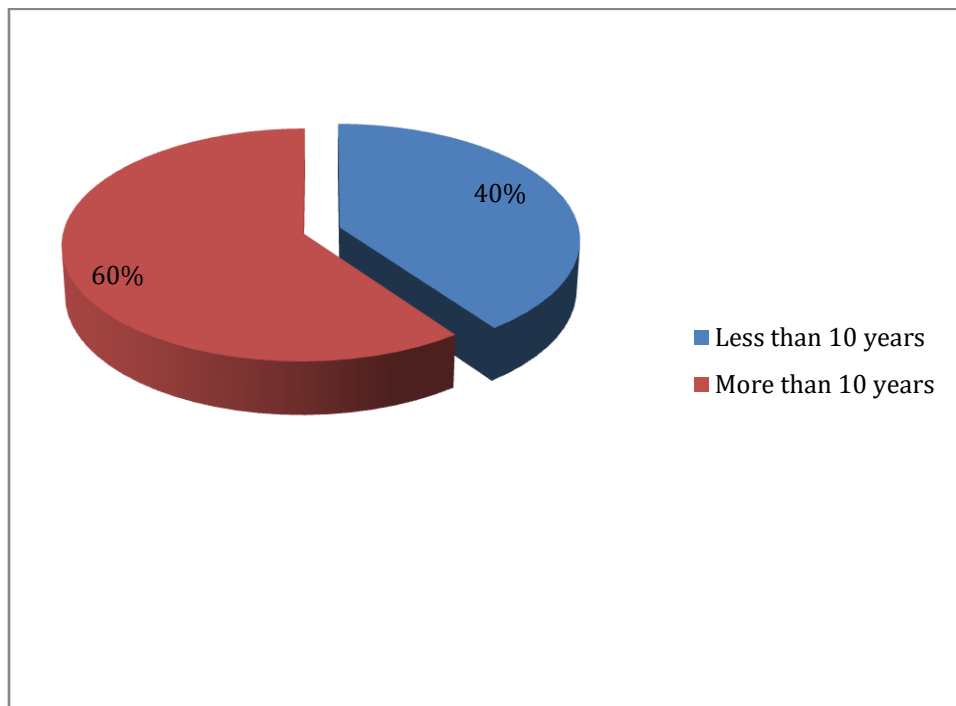
- a- Less than 10 years
- b- More than 10 years

Table 18. Teachers' working experience.

Working experience	Number of teachers	Percentage%
Less than 10 years	02	40%
More than 10 years	03	60%

Total	05	100%
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Figure 18. Teachers' working experience.



The results in table 03 show that the majority 60% of teachers have long experience in teaching English(more than 10 years) while 40% of teachers have less than 10 years experience in teaching English because it is difficult for new graduates to teach at the university.

Section Two: Teaching the English language and culture.

Question Item 4:Years of Experience in Teaching the General Culture Courses

Module

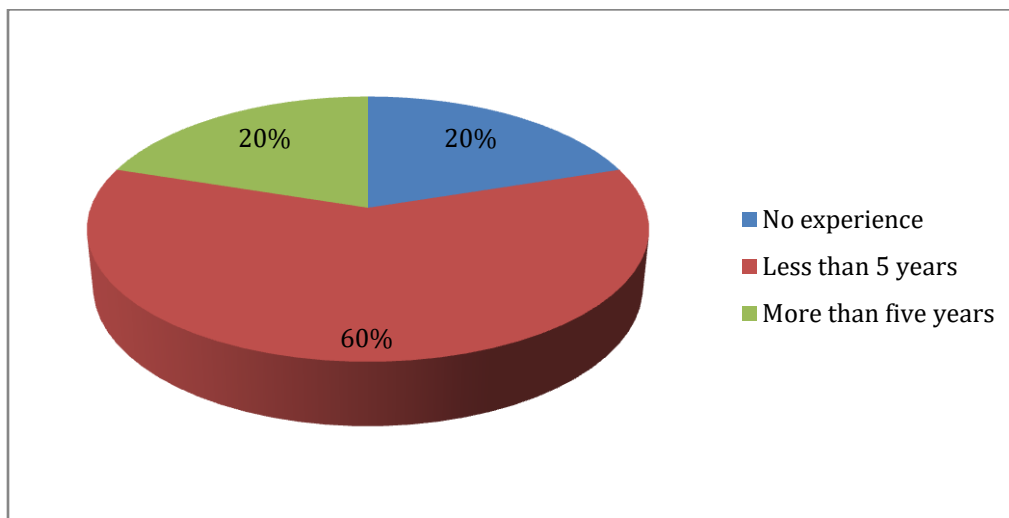
How many years have you been teaching the module of General Culture at the Department of English?

- a- No experience
- b- Less than 05 years
- c- More than 10 years

Table 19. Teachers' experience in teaching general culture courses module.

Options	Numbers of teachers	Percentage %
No experience	01	20%
Less than 5 years	03	60%
More than five years	01	20%
Total	05	100%

Figure 19. Teachers' experience in teaching general culture courses module.



We can notice from the results shown above in the table that (20%) of teachers have no experience in teaching general culture module and other 20% of teachers have long experience (more than five years) in teaching the general culture courses module however, 60% of them have short experience (less than five years) in teaching culture.

Question Item 5: Definition of Culture.

How would you define culture?

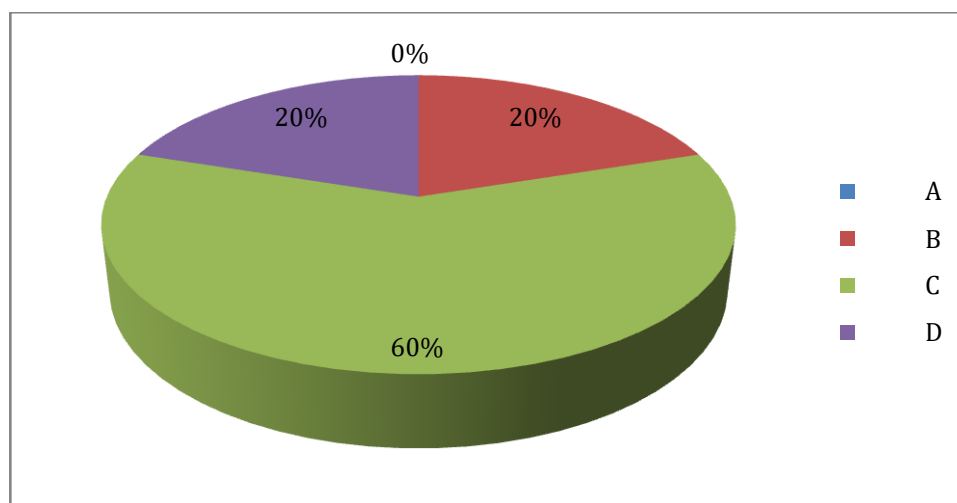
- a- The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group
- b- The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization
- c- Culture is both a and b.

d. Other (please specify)

Table 20. Teachers' definition of culture.

Options	Teachers number	Percentage %
A	00	00%
B	01	20%
C	03	60%
D	01	20%
Total	05	100%

Figure 20. Teachers' definition of culture.



60% opted for the choice (c) which incorporates the both definitions of culture. 20% of the respondents choose b and claim that culture is “the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization.while 20 % of teachers gave their own definitions:

“Culture is the shared, learned symbolic system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shape and influence perception and behaviour.”

Question Item 6: The Importance of Teaching Culture

Is it important to teach the target languages' culture ?

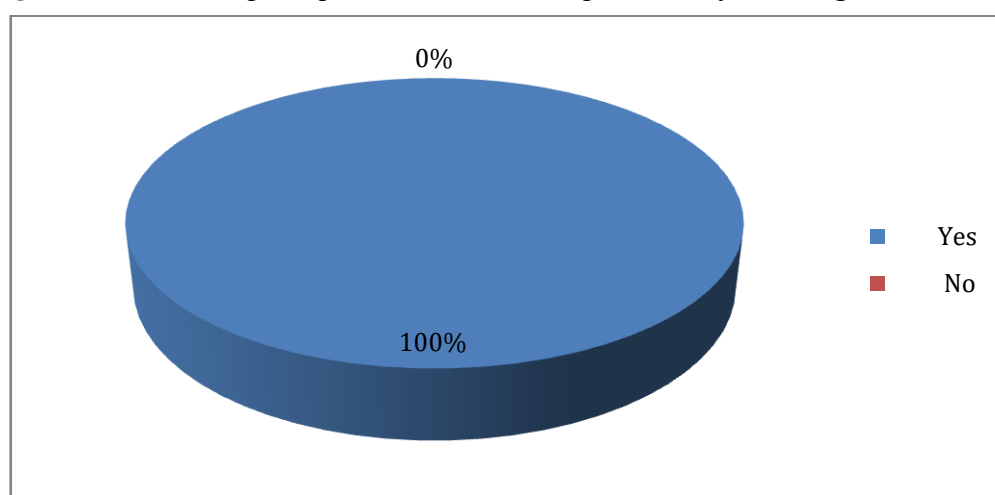
a- Yes

b- No

Table 21. Teachers' perception towards the importance of teaching culture.

Options	Teachers number	Percentage %
Yes	05	100%
No	00	00%
Total	05	100%

Figure 21. teachers' perception towards the importance of teaching culture.



This question was asked to explore teachers' attitudes towards culture as a teaching-learning strategy, the all teachers 100% agree on the importance of teaching the target languages' culture, because it makes language learning becomes easy and it exposes learners to natural language.

Question Item 7: the Foccus of Cultural Teaching.

Your cultural teaching is more focused on:

- a- The way of life, family structure, and customs and traditions of the target country.
- b- Literary writings and other works of art.
- c- a+b
- d- Other (please specify)

Table 22. Teachers’ cultural teaching focus.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage%
A	02	40%
B	00	00%
C	03	60%
D	00	00%
Total	05	100%

Figure 22. Teachers’ cultural teaching focus.

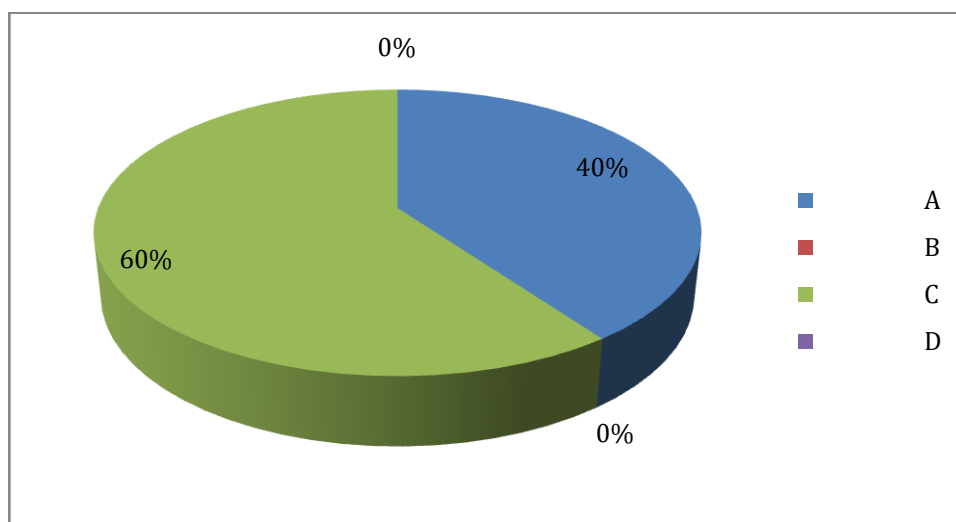


Table 05 shows that the most teachers 60% said there is a balance between the two aspects “way of life and the social customs of the target country and the literary writings and other works of art”. While 40% argue that in teaching culture the focus on the social aspects like the way of life, family structure, and customs and traditions of the target country.

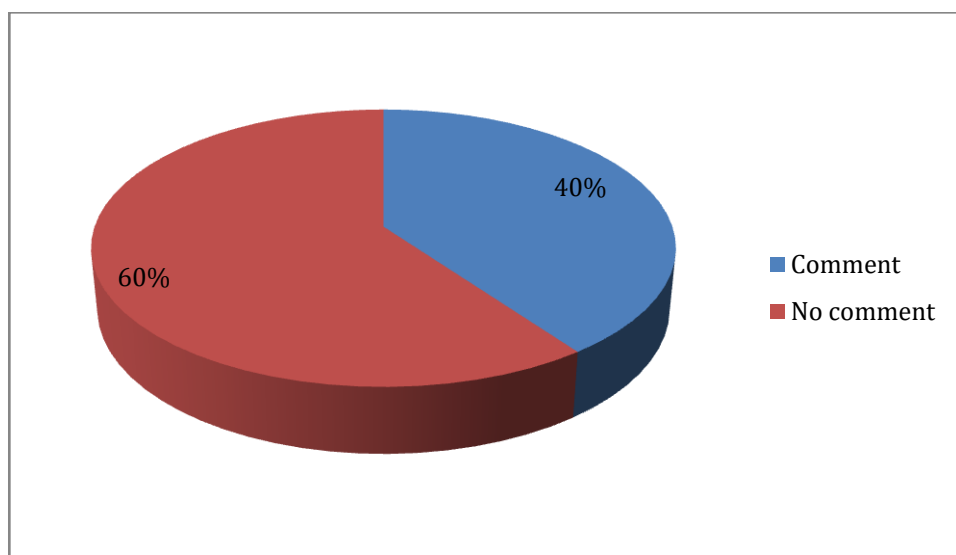
Question item 8: The obstacles that teachers face in their teaching session.

What are the most frequent obstacles you face during your teaching sessions?

Table 23. *Teacher's frequent obstacles in teaching culture*

Options	Teachers number	Percentage %
Comment	02	40%
No comment	03	60%
Total	05	100%

Figure 23. *Teachers' frequent obstacles in teaching culture*



(40%) of teachers that answered the questions argues that their most common obstacles in teaching culture are . first, the student's negative attitude and ignorance toward the target culture. Two, learner' lack of motivation and the fact that they found culture sessions boring. Third, the lack of selection of lessons. Conversely, the other (60%) of teachers did not give their comments.

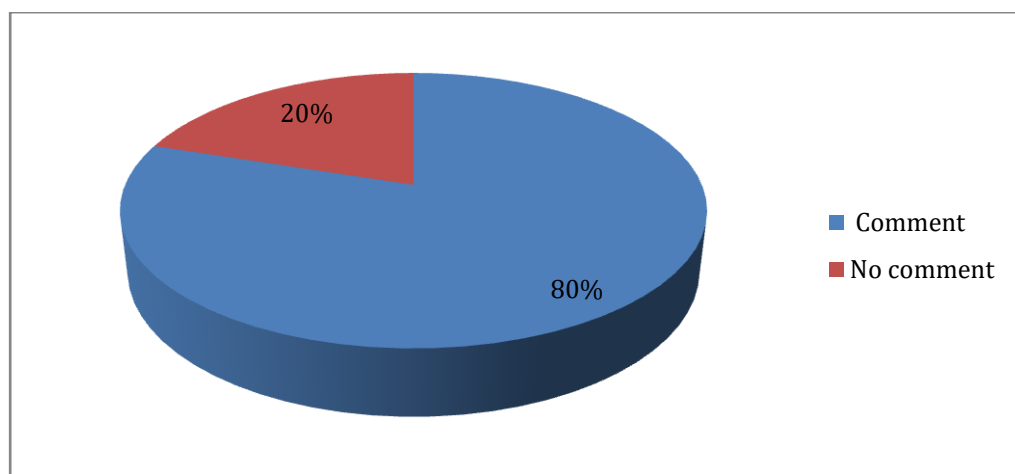
Question item 9:learners needs when learning the target culture.

what are the general needs of your students while learning the target culture?

Table 24. Teachers' opinion towards learners needs.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Comment	04	80%
No comment	01	20%
Total	05	100%

Figure 24. Teachers' opinion towards learners' needs



80% of teachers who answered this question claim that their learners' needs from learning the target culture is to develop their intercultural communication in order be able to communicate with native speakers and ,they also confirm the idea of culture and language are interrelated they cannot learn language without learning its culture.

Section three: The importance of using cultural assimilators technique in culture teaching .

Question item 10: the techniques used by teachers in teaching culture

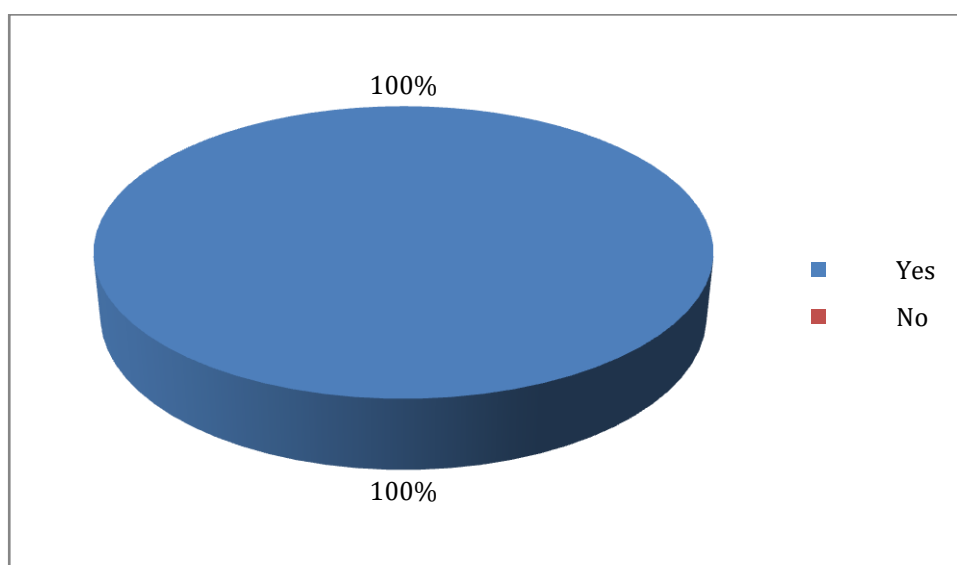
Do you use any technique in teaching culture?

- a- Yes
- b- No

Table 25. Teachers' use of culture teaching techniques.

Options	Number of students	Percentage%
Yes	40	100%
No	00	00%
Total	40	100%

Figure 25. Teachers' use of culture teaching technique.



The results of this question show that 100% of teachers argue that they use techniques in teaching culture.

Question item 11: the used technique

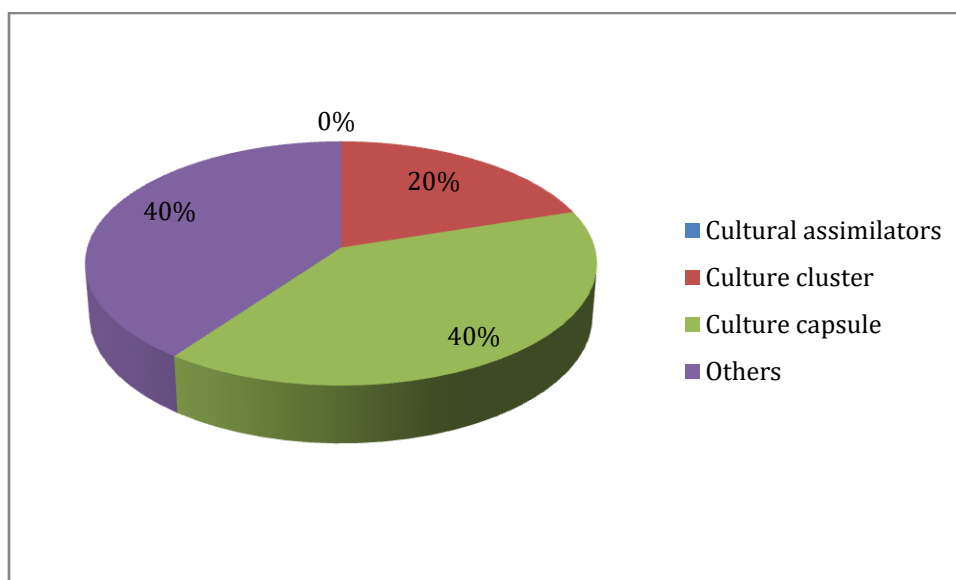
If you answered yes, what technique or strategy do you use in teaching culture?

- a- Cultural assimilators
- b- Culture cluster
- c- Culture capsule
- d- Others

Table 26. Teachers' use of culture teaching techniques

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Cultural assimilators	00	00%
Culture cluster	01	20%
Culture capsule	02	40%
Others	02	40%
Total	05	100%

Figure 26. Teachers' use of culture teaching technique



01 out of 05 Teachers equals (20%) of teachers asserted that they use culture cluster technique in teaching culture and (40%) assume that they use culture capsule and other 40% of teachers said they use other techniques .however, 00% of teachers said that they use cultural assimilators technique maybe because they are not aware about this technique and its importance.

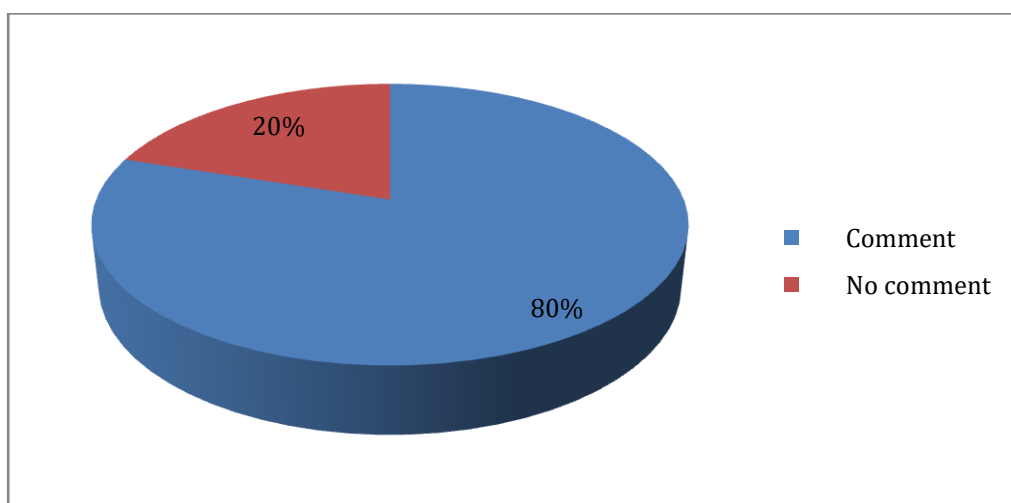
Question Item 12: Definition of Cultural Assimilator Technique.

What is your defition of cultural assimilator teaching technique?

Table 27. Teachers' definition of cultural assimilator technique

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Comment	04	80%
No comment	01	20%
Total	05	100%

Figure 27. Teachers' definition of cultural assimilator technique.



This question was asked to find out if teachers familiar with the cultural assimilator teaching technique, 80% of teachers answer the question and they assume that the definition of cultural assimilator technique is : a technique used in cross-cultural training based on description of critical incidents , aims to clarify cultural aspects that are misinterpreted by learners'. While 20% of teachers did not define this technique.

Question Item 13: Developing ICC.

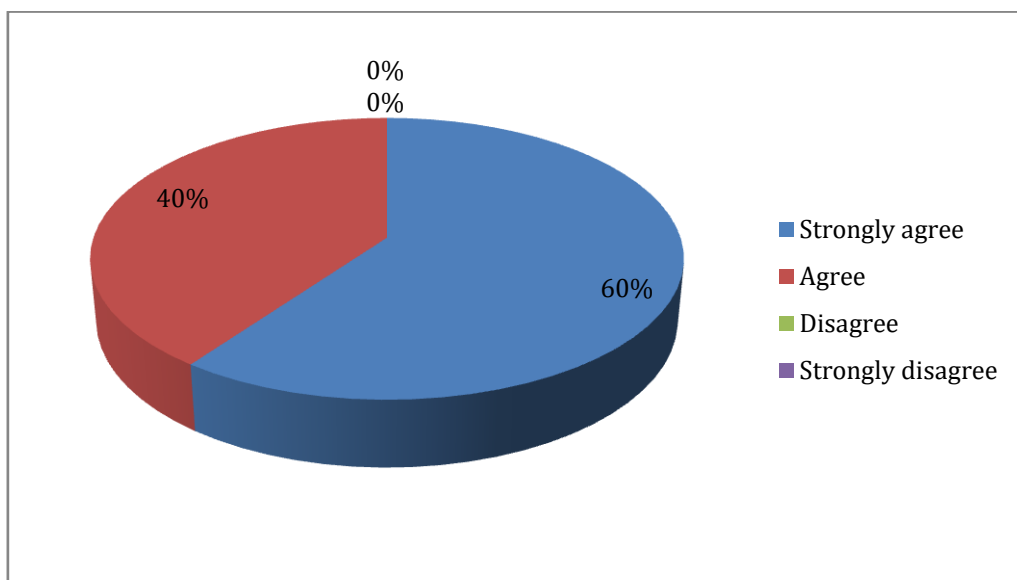
Do you agree that cultural assimilator technique is a good technique to develop learner' ICC?

- a- Strongly agree
- b- Agree
- c- Disagree
- d- Strongly disagree

Table 28. Teachers' agreement on using cultural assimilators to develop ICC

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage%
Strongly agree	03	60%
Agree	02	40%
Disagree	00	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00%
Total	05	100%

Figure 28. Teachers' agreement on using cultural assimilators to develop ICC



Consistent with the above table we deduce that 60% of teachers strongly agree with using cultural assimilator techniques to develop learners' ICC and 40% of teachers agree on the same idea, whereas no one disagrees with teaching culture using cultural assimilators techniques helps in developing learners' ICC.

2.4. Interpretation of the Results

In personnel information, (Q1) the teacher's responses reveal that they have an MA (Master/ Magister) or PhD (Doctorate), this mainly means that the module of general culture has

great importance . The results of (Q2) show that the entire chosen sample (100%) work as full-time teachers. In teaching culture (Q3), teachers who have Experience Less than 10 years are (40%).In addition, the total percentage of teachers who have Experienced more than 10 years are (60%) and that is what exactly what needed for teaching culture .

In section two “teaching the English language and culture, in Q (4) 60% of teachers’ have less than five years experience in teaching culture courses, more than five years there are only (20%)and teachers’ with no experience concerning teaching culture courses are also (20%).In (Q5) the majority of teachers(60%) agree on the definition of culture and assume that culture is both: The customar beliefs , social forms, and material traits of a racial religious or social groups and set of shared attitudes , value goals and practices that characterizes an institution or social group. .(Q6) was asked to reveal whether teachers’ found teaching the target languages’ culture important or not important , all teachers said yes which means they know the importance of teaching culture because they cannot teach a foreign language without culture .In (Q7) the results show that more than half of the teachers’(60%) focus on The way of life, family structure, and customs and traditions of the target country as well as literary writings and other works of art in cultural teaching .

The Q8 was asked to highlight the obstacles that teachers face in their teaching session (60%) of teachers’ did not answer while (40%) of teachers emphasized that the frequent obstacles were; First the student’s negative attitude and ignorance of the target culture. Third, too much information and the lack of selection of lessons , lack of course design , which may influence negatively on the teacher performance and the learners’ feedback.

The third section is about the importance of using cultural assimilators technique in culture teaching all teachers 100% agreed that they use techniques in teaching culture that means they are organized and they design their courses before teaching their students’ and in (Q11), (40%) of teachers’ claim that they use culture capsules and (20%) use culture cluster technique

while (40%) use other techniques and 00% of them use culture assimilator technique. In fact, students have only one session in a week to study culture, and teachers' are not interested in using fun techniques.(Q12)teachers' are supposed to define cultural assimilator technique (80%) define it as a technique used in cross-cultural training based on the description of critical incidents , aims to clarify cultural aspects that are misinterpreted by learners'. While (20%) of teachers did not define this technique.

In the last question (Q13) we asked them while they agree on the idea that cultural assimilator technique is a good technique to develop learner' ICC, (60%) strongly agree and 40% agree and no one disagree with this idea.

3. Findings and Discussion

According to the students' answers, the majority of them face difficulties in communicating. Also, they claimed that handling conversation with native speakers is difficult because they were not prepared and teachers' did not develop their communicative competence in cultural courses. And lastly, we gave the students chance to express their opinions and thoughts in which they insisted and agreed on the importance of new teaching techniques like cultural assimilators to help them improve their communicative skills and raise their cultural awareness and understanding of the target culture .

Teachers' questionnaire reveal that all the respondent teachers found the questionnaire very interesting and relevant to the students' daily use of language , they report that culture assimilators could be the best way to promote foreign culture learning effectively as well as they can be an additional strategy which can help students to improve their ICC, further, teachers use of this strategy could give students opportunity to develop and improve their proficiency inside the classroom and outside the classroom and increase their level of awareness about the others' culture in order to promote English language acquisition.

From the previous answers, we conclude that all the teachers are experienced in teaching the culture module. Therefore, the majority of teachers believe that what matters is teaching only not the quality of what they teach ignoring the needs of their learners' in this stage and the fact that they are already familiar with the general aspects of culture and now as master students they want to improve their intercultural communicative competence. In addition, We have notice from the teachers' answers that some learners' are not motivated in cultural courses because they find it boring and since teachers' also agree on the importance of communication in facilitating the learning process of any foreign language ,So we suggested the cultural assimilator technique as a solution for teachers to motivate students to learn the culture module because it is a fun technique based on critical incidents also it helps in fostering their ICC. Therefore, the results reported that using the appropriate techniques in teaching culture and precisely the cultural assimilator technique will enhance the students communicative competencies and cultural awareness these perceived results actually can confirm the research question and the research hypothesis.

Conclusion

To sum up, the result obtained from the analysis of students'' questionnaire and the teachers questionnaire revealed the necessary overviews about the research. The students' questionnaire affirmed that the majority of first year master degree LMD students of English at Abbes Laghrour University actually do their best to improve their intercultural communicative competence and concerning the use of culture assimilator technique in teaching culture, we deduce that students become aware about the importance of this technique especially in improving their ICC Moreover, the teachers'' interview demonstrated that the participants have a good experience in teaching and the majority of teachers agree with the fact that culture assimilator technique is an effective strategy in enhancing the learners' communicative skills .

To conclude, we can say that the obtained results go in the same direction of the research question in sense that culture assimilator is an effective strategy in developing the learners' intercultural communicative competence.

General Conclusion And Recommendations

General Conclusion

The primary goal of this study is to investigate EFL learners' attitudes towards using culture assimilators in raising students' intercultural communicative competence and enhancing the target language teaching at the department of foreign languages at the University of ABBAS LAGHEROUR Khenchela, the aim of this study is to investigate the impact and using culture assimilators to foster learners' intercultural communicative competence, this study aims also to increase educators' and learners' awareness about the importance of incorporating new strategy of culture teaching. Additionally to answer the following questions:

- ✓ Does culture assimilator develops learners' ICC?
- ✓ What are the attitudes of Abbas Laghrour University teachers towards using cultural assimilators in raising learners' ICC?
- ✓ How important is using the appropriate teaching technique for cultural knowledge mastery?

To start with the present dissertation is divided into two main chapters: Chapter one is devoted to the review of literature, whereas the second one is devoted to field work. In the first chapter, the researcher provides some definitions of culture, communication in general intercultural communication, and intercultural communicative competence in addition to the components of ICC. Furthermore, this chapter introduces a history of teaching culture as well as to culture in Foreign Language Teaching culture in foreign language learning. The importance of teaching culture and models of teaching culture. Moreover, it includes the core of this research which is culture assimilator technique; its definition, theoretical backgrounds and some other elements related to this technique such as developing cultural assimilator episodes. At the end of this chapter, the researcher presents the advantages of teaching culture using culture assimilator technique.

In the second chapter which contains the fieldwork, we started by describing the students' questionnaire that was designed and distributed to 40 first-year master students concerning their

attitudes towards using culture assimilator to improve their ICC . By asking them closed and open ended questions after that the researcher analyzed and interpreted the results . the same steps were repeated with teachers' questionnaire that was administered to 5 teachers at the department of English at Abbas Laghrour University.

After analyzing the results of the questionnaires of both teachers and students, the overall findings of this research confirm that students are not satisfied with the culture teaching methods used in culture courses and also teachers did not take their needs into consideration when teaching culture and they prefer to have more opportunities to be involved in the teaching process. The results also confirm that developing intercultural communicative competence is very important for students. Hence, my research questions and hypothesis are confirmed that culture assimilator technique is one of the effective techniques that will help in developing learners' ICC.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The results that have been obtained lead us to suggest a few notes which are primarily addressed to both teachers and students as well as some recommended remarks that can be beneficial particularly to further research, whether replications or .So, the following points are suggested to be taken into consideration:

1. Teachers should effectively use new techniques in teaching culture, especially culture assimilates.
2. The teaching process should be more enjoyable and fun to motivate students' to learn the target culture.
3. Learners should be aware of the usefulness of developing intercultural communicative competence.
4. Teachers should engage students in real-life discussions about cultural similarities and differences between native and target culture and let them do projects and discover cultural elements by their own.

5. Teachers should not design their lectures focusing only on theoretical aspects of culture ,the lectures should contain some practical activities through the use of culture assimilator episodes.

- For further research, it would be suggested to replicate the study, just as we recommend an investigation of the topic from a different methodological perspective such as experimental research.

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Appendix A

a) Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

You are kindly to fill in this questionnaire to express your attitudes towards using culture assimilator in culture courses to fostering learner's intercultural communicative competence. The research aims at finding how culture assimilators can enhance the teaching of culture and raise students' intercultural communicative competence at the Foreign Languages Department. I would appreciate if you could help and give your opinions on teaching culture. Your answers are very important for reliability of the research we are conducting. As such, we hope you will give us your full attention and interest.

Please, tick (√) the appropriate answer or give full statements when necessary.

Section One: Background information/

1.Genre:

Male

Female

2.Age :

a- 22 years old

b-23 years old

c-24 years old and more

3- a.Are you motivated to study/ learn English language?

A-Yes

B- No

3.b-if yes for what purpose are you studying it? (You can chose more than one answer.)

a- You like it.

b- To communicate with native speakers.

c- For future job.

d- You want to know about native speakers' culture.

e- Others.

Section two:Students' perception towards Culture and Intercultural communicative competence:4

4- How do you consider your level concerning English culture ?

- a- Very good
- b- Good
- c- Average
- d- Poor

5. Does learning culture motivate students?

- A – yes ,
- B – No

6. Interacting with English native speakers makes communication with them an easy task?

- A -yes ;
- B - no.

7. How do you consider yourself towards handling conversation with native speakers?

- a- Weak
- b- Beginner
- c- Intermediate
- d- Advanced
- e- Expert

8. If you consider yourself “weak” try to explain why?

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

9. How important is developing learners’ intercultural communicative competence?

- Very important
- Important
- Not important

Section three : learners’ attitudes towards teaching culture using Cultural Assimilators technique :

10. Does teaching target culture help in enhancing students’ knowledge while learning the foreign language?

• Yes

b- No

11-In your opinion, how can culture assimilator define?

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

12-Does culture assimilators influence on enhancing the learners' intercultural communicative competence ?

a-Yes

b-No

13-Do you agree about using real life incidents of native speakers is a fun way to understand the foreign culture ?

a- Strongly agree

b-Agree

c- Disagree

d- Strongly disagree

14-Have you ever been taught by culture assimilators in English culture courses?

a- Never

b- Rarely

c- Sometimes

d- Often

e- Always

15-In your opinion what is the appropriate way to enhance learners intercultural communicative competence in EFL classrooms ?

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

appendix B

b)-Teacher's interview

Dear teachers,

This interview is a part of our research work, your participation will be a great help for us in order to gather information which serve our research concerning the role of cultural assimilator technique in improving students' intercultural communicative competence. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us I our research for the master's degree in language and cultures.

Candidate: Aggoun Chahinez

Section one: Background information

1-Educational degree:

- BA (Licence)
- MA (Magister, master)
- PhD (Doctorate)

2-Employment Status:

- Full time
- Part time

3-How many years have you been teaching English?

- less than 10 years
- More than 10 years

Section Two: Teaching the English language and culture.

4-How many years have you been teaching the module of General Culture at the Department of English?

a-No experience

b-Less than 05 years

c-More than 10 years

5-How would you define culture?

a- the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group

b. the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization

c.Culture is both a and b.

d.Other (please specify)

6-Is it important to teach the target languages' culture ?

- Yes
- No

7-Your cultural teaching is more focused on:

- The way of life, family structure, and customs and traditions of the target country.
- Literary writings and other works of art.
- a+b
- Other (please specify).

8-What are the most frequent obstacles you face during your teaching sessions?

.....

.....

.....

9-what are the general needs of your students while learning the target culture?

.....

.....

.....

Section three: The importance of using cultural assimilators technique in culture teaching.

10-Do you use any technique in teaching culture?

- Yes
- No

11-If you answered yes, what technique or strategy do you use in teaching culture?

- Cultural assimilators
- Culture cluster
- Culture capsule
- Others

12-What is your definition of cultural assimilator teaching technique?

.....

.....

.....

13-Do you agree that cultural assimilator technique is a good technique to develop learner'

ICC?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree



Ncha Hi ▶ **Abbas Lagherour 1 st year English Master Students**



À l'instant •

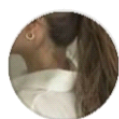
Dear students, would you please answer this questionnaire concerning using cultural assimilator in improving intercultural communicative competence. Thank you.

The screenshot shows a survey questionnaire form with a purple header. The title is "Survey questionnaire" and there is an information icon with the text "À propos de ce site web". The main text reads: "Dear student, You are kindly to fill in this questionnaire to express your attitudes towards using culture assimilator in culture courses to fostering learner's intercultural communicative competence. The research aims at finding how culture assimilators can enhance the teaching of culture and raise students' intercultural communicative competence at the Foreign Languages Department. I would appreciate if you could help and give your opinions on teaching culture. Your answers are very important for reliability of the research we are conducting. As such, we hope you will give us your full attention and interest." Below the text are two sections: "Gender" with radio buttons for "male" and "female", and "Age" with a text input field.

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Survey questionnaire

Dear student, You are kindly to fill in this questionnaire t...



Ncha Hi ▶ **Abbas Lagherour 1 st year English Master Students**



À l'instant •

Are there any teachers in this group?
Would you please tag your teachers in the comment section below to answer this teachers' questionnaire concerning using cultural assimilator technique in improving learner's intercultural communicative competence. Thank you.

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Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers, This interview is a part of our research work, your participation will be a great help for us in order to gather information which serve our research concerning the role of c...

الملخص

يهدف العمل الحالي من خلال مواقف متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الى التحقيق حول استخدام الثقافة المندمجة في أجريت هذه .تحسين كفاءة التواصل بين الثقافات لدى المتعلمين في البرنامج الجزائري لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعة ، ومنه يُفترض في هذه الدراسة أن استخدام المندوبين الثقافيين سيطور كفاءات (2019/2020)الدراسة خلال السنة الدراسية الطلاب التواصلية بين الثقافات وسيكون للمتعلمين موقف إيجابي تجاه ثقافة اللغة المستهدفة وتجاه تدريس الثقافة ، وإنجاز العمل تم اتباع منهج بحث وصفي و من اجل لتحقيق أهداف البحث واختبار صحة الفرضية ، تم توزيع استبيانين واحدة للمتعلمين و واحد للاستاذة وعليه فإن نتائج الدراسة تكشف أن تعلم الثقافة من خلال تقنية الاستيعاب الثقافي تعمل على تحسين يوضح كلا الاستبيانين أن المتعلمين والمعلمين على .الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات لطلاب السنة الأولى بدرجة الماجستير دراية بالترابط بين الثقافة واللغة ، بالإضافة إلى أن غالبية المعلمين لا يعرفون جوانب الثقافة التي يجب تدريسها ويتجاهلون أهم التقنيات في تدريس الثقافة كما يكشف استبيان المتعلمين أن المتعلمين مهتمون ومتحمسون وفضوليون للتعرف على الثقافات الأخرى ليتمكنوا من التواصل مع المتحدثين الأصليين .