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Towards an Intercultural Approach to Foreign Language Teaching

The Case of Second Year Master Students of English at Mohamed

Kheider University of Biskra

Thesis submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctorate 'es Sciences' in Langue and Civilization

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الملخص

Résumé

Dedications

I would like to dedicate the present work to my late parents Messaoud and Yamina with love and gratefulness.

I also offer this work to my dear sister Fatiha whose kindness and generosity have always overwhelmed the entire family.

To my children, I think they would probably understand that I prefer to provide them with my endless care and affection.

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List of Abbreviations

- 1. CBT: Content-Based Language Teaching
- 2. EFL: English as a Foreign Language
- 3. ELT: English Language Teaching
- 4. ESP: English for Specific Purposes
- 5. FL: Foreign Language
- 6. ICT: Information and Communication Technology
- 7. IQ: Intellectual Quotient
- 8. SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- 9. TBT: Task-Based Language Teaching
- 10. TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

The present research work analyses the role and the degree of influence of the intercultural dimension in the teaching of English as a foreign language. In fact, it is commonly agreed that the foreign language teacher should display a high level of competence not only in the linguistic components of the language but he must also be able to recognize how the sociocultural norms of the speech community are embedded in the different acts of communication. It is noticeable that the students of the second year Master of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra face a great number of difficulties in the mastery of the various and complex manifestations of the cultural constituents in the English language. Accordingly, we hypothesize that foreign language communicative competence is not only determined by a high level proficiency in the linguistic skills, but most importantly; it requires the mastery of target culture skills. Therefore, the major objective of this investigation is to study the impact and, eventually, the advantages that can be drawn from the effective development of the intercultural dimension as an essential requirement of teaching the English language at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The research methodology that has been adopted in this work is a quasi-quantitative research methodology which necessarily combines both a descriptive (questionnaire) and experimental design (workshops and the application of the statistical package for the social sciences) as the two major research tools of this investigation. The selected population is the second year Master students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, and the sample of the study is constituted of eighty-six students. At the conclusion of this work, we have observed that a number of positive outcomes have been realized in terms of the evident improvements which have occurred in the students' greater awareness and better command of the cultural components of the English language.

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The significant concepts of communicative competence and intercultural teaching activities have often constituted a key issue in the foreign language teaching/learning process. Indeed, the first element of the pair of concepts represents the theoretical foundation in the elaboration of practical pedagogical techniques. Therefore, communicative competence has been largely analysed and defined by an important number of scholars; as a matter of fact, it is believed that the use of language as a means of exchanging information, ideas or feelings requires not only the ability to build correct utterances (linguistic competence) but also the competence to produce socio-culturally appropriate messages.

In fact, the appropriateness of the act of communication depends on its effectiveness (to transmit the message) in different social situations; however, communicative competence equally and definitely implies the mastery of formal knowledge of language. In human communication, the speaker of a language should be able to use different discursive strategies along with the realization of various speech acts in multiple social contexts. Consequently, the process of foreign language learning should also imply not only the acquisition of the syntactic, phonological and semantic rules but, likewise; it should include the mastery of the socio-cultural conventions of the target speech community. For instance, these cultural components may take many aspects in terms of types or styles of speech in accordance with the social status or degree of kinship of the interlocutors. Moreover, the cultural behaviours depend to a great extent on the settings and situations (place, time, topic, etc.).

Besides, the teaching and learning of a foreign language within the perspective of linguistic and intercultural dimensions represent serious challenges to both the foreign language teacher and learners, especially with regard to the selection of the appropriate and effective intercultural teaching activities. In the case of the English language, Algerian university students want to learn this language, but they can do so only superficially and with nowhere near the competency they desire because they are unable to attain advanced foreign socio-cultural and discursive proficiency. Furthermore, many teachers at university level see the act of teaching as culturally prescribed within the limits of the source culture; and when it is held in that framework, it is of dubious value and relevancy for the local university students.

Indeed, in the act of communication (especially for foreign language speakers) the subject and content are as important as the way in which they are said. Indeed, it is what we are saying (subject and content) that we consider to have moral weight, but hardly the way in which we say it. Within this respect, whatever language is employed, it is necessary that one does not deal

simply with words and definitions and rules of grammar, but that a conceptual basis of words and language should be conveyed. In fact, linguistic variations should be sought in their cultural contexts; for it is here that the complex constructions of language are made to fit the numberless meaningful situations provided by the daily experiences of the members of a society.

Therefore, the success of teaching techniques is related to whether or not they take advantage of the students' cultural behaviour patterns. In fact, changes in the structuring of classroom learning situations in terms of the introduction of the intercultural dimension are needed. Ultimately, the nature of the changes (selection, analysis and teaching of the English cultural components) to be made should be determined by the educational goals at university level, especially in the case of advanced standards like second year Master students. There should be a conscious effort made at the Algerian university to teach the students the cultural modes for appropriate verbal and non-verbal foreign language communication. The reason is that if the lessons are not successful; it is due to cultural unfamiliarity with the material items (constructions or artefacts) and non-material items (political systems or religious rituals). However, we do believe that the students' culturally distinctive modes of communication should be maintained (positive acculturation not assimilation) and encouraged to flourish rather than be eliminated.

Besides, the conception of intercultural teaching activities should be based upon a theoretical framework that has been clearly defined by many linguists. Indeed, D. Hymes for example states that it is important to describe (analyse) the linguistic features which are proven necessary, but we should connect the structural items to each other in terms of relations of role, status, tasks and the like. He asserts that such a linguistics 'requires foundations in social theory and ethnographic practice as well as in practical phonetics and grammar' D. Hymes (1985:12). However, in order to inculcate the cross-cultural components; the foreign language teacher should follow a precise procedure, namely he should make culture more of a central role in the class. In addition, the presentation of foreign cultural behaviours should be in a continuum organization not just isolated facts.

As far as the foreign language students are concerned, the language teacher should be very careful about the learners' affective attitudes and states of mind (positive or negative predispositions and motivation). Moreover, the different types of classroom activities should continuously imply students as active participants. Indeed, it is always beneficial to have insights into students' attitudes and beliefs with regard to the target culture. As a matter of fact, foreign

language cross-cultural teaching puts into application a procedure to help students cope with culture's impact on language.

In summation, a pedagogical perspective should necessarily indicate the significance of emphasizing culture and awareness-raising activities in foreign language teaching along with intercultural communication background specifically situating various cultural behaviours. On the whole, the students' awareness of foreign cultural manifestations would lead to successful acts of communication; in contrast, the ignorance of differing cultural norms and values in the native and foreign speech communities would probably cause serious intercultural communication problems.

Statement of the Problem

It is commonly admitted that university students at advanced levels, especially those enrolled in the Second Year Master applied language studies, are expected to perform successful acts of communication in the foreign language without any particular difficulties. However, we have observed that even if students have reached a high degree of linguistic proficiency in English, they are often unable to express themselves or transmit their thoughts or feelings in the foreign language. As a matter of fact, we have also noticed that local university students display a great deal of ignorance in terms of socio-cultural and discursive aspects of the English language speech community. As a result, the students' acts of communication are generally 'correct' on the structural (linguistic) level; however, they are often 'inappropriate' on the socio-cultural/discursive level.

Indeed, the direct consequences of this problem are in particular the numerous misinterpretations and; sometimes, entire breakdowns of communication in the foreign language. We think that this serious problem in the English language proficiency is probably due to two major causes: the first reason is nearly the regular absence of the English cultural components that should characterize the different courses (whatever their nature i.e. oral expression, written expression or applied linguistics) in addition to the linguistic constituents. The second cause is originally related to the foreign language learners themselves; indeed, a great number of university students have developed negative attitudes and numerous stereotypes in relationship to the English cultural components and behaviours.

Besides, many students do not give importance to field activities, research investigation or intercultural connections with English speaking communities. This inability to hold a conversation in terms of the incorporation of socio-cultural and discursive parameters in the English language represents a significant factor in the creation of important problems to the Algerian university students (especially to the Master Two, English studies). Namely, we have observed various types of misunderstanding of the English cultural behaviours, rejection of positive acculturation and; finally, de-motivation and distrust in the teaching/learning process. On the whole, we can ascertain that these problems constitute a serious handicap in the acquisition and development of students' communicative competence in the English language.

Aims of the Study

Generally, the primary objective of a research investigation is to learn about it in the first place; moreover, the principal intentions of the researchers are to reveal areas that are ripe for development in relation to the issue and lastly, the suggestion of some meaningful and concrete solutions to the problem under study. As a matter of fact, the present research work aspires to realize a number of significant objectives that we can summarize in the following:

- 1. We intend to demonstrate the correlation that exists between the Master Two students' miscommunications and misunderstanding and the low level of students' cultural awareness of the English speech community.
- 2. We aspire to prove that the incorporation of the cultural dimension represents a necessary prerequisite in foreign language teaching/learning.
- 3. We will respectively select, analyse (test) and actually, introduce numerous and varied intercultural classroom activities in order to increase students' cultural awareness, and develop positive attitudes in relationship to English cultural behaviours. Evidently, the main objectives are to solve the problems of prejudices and stereotypes in foreign language learning in addition to higher students' proficiency in cross-cultural communication.

Significance of the Study

The importance of the present research work lies in the serious problem that the researchers aspire to solve. As a matter of fact, students' misunderstandings (or misinterpretations) of the English language constitute a serious handicap to learners' acts of communication in the foreign language. The main procedure that we propose in terms of the introduction of the cultural dimension in the foreign language teaching programmes; represents an effective solution to the

local university students in particular. Furthermore, in an attempt to consolidate and prove the importance of the suggested solutions we will carry out a number of workshops with the students of the sample study in order to assign more credibility and scientific objectivity to our analysis of the problem.

Research Questions

The research questions aim to orientate (or re-orientate) our thinking; precisely, the researchers should continuously question what they think they do know about a particular problem. Eventually, we should focus on new aspects of the issue under investigation in order to clearly discern the different problems that we intend to analyse. Certainly, the research questions should require careful definition of terms, unbiased collection of information, meticulous statistical treatment and lastly, summarize the difficulties that the researcher might face. In an attempt to satisfy the above features in scientific investigation; we propose the following research questions that are not only descriptive (what) but also analytical (why):

- 1. Why do Algerian foreign language university students find multiple and various types of difficulties in mastering the English cultural components and behaviours?
- 2. Why do local English language teachers find problems in the incorporation, on a larger scale, of the intercultural dimension in the teaching process?
- 3. What are the most effective intercultural teaching classroom activities that can improve on students' English language and cultural proficiency?

Research Hypotheses

It is generally agreed that all scientific work of an experimental or exploratory nature starts with some expectation about the outcome. In fact, in the process of research studies, this expectation takes the form of a hypothesis. Indeed, hypotheses provide the initiative and incentive for the investigation; moreover, they can to a great extent determine the research method. Evidently, after having been formulated, hypotheses should be tested in accordance with rigorous scientific requirements. Within this respect, we suggest the following hypotheses:

1.We advance that foreign language communicative competence is only determined by a high level proficiency in the linguistic skills but; most importantly, it requires the mastery of target culture skills.

2.We presuppose that the incorporation of teaching activities which are inter-culturally oriented in the foreign language teaching process would necessarily result with the increase of students' motivation and; ultimately, the attainment of advanced levels in English language proficiency.

Research Methodology

In the present study, we have decided to adopt a quantitative data collection which allows the selection and application of the instruments that are appropriate to the context and conditions of our research investigation. As a matter of fact, we believe that at the local level (university students) a quantitative data collection offers a number of advantages (which characterize the field work) that can be summarized as follows:

- The quantitative research method seeks the causes of a particular phenomenon;
- It allows a kind of controlled measurement;
- It is generally objective;
- It is verification-oriented and hypothetic-deductive (T. Oakley and S. Coulson, 1999).

Within this respect, the procedure that we intend to follow is the application of descriptive and quasi-experimental research methodologies. Indeed, these research methods require respectively the employment of two major instruments: the first is the questionnaire-survey and the second is the organization of a test (quasi-experiment).

The survey study of this investigation aims at describing the cultural characteristics, choices and preferences of the population (English language students enrolled at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra); however, the choice of a sample study (Second Year Master students) is obviously necessary. On the other hand, the application of the test solely implies a quasi-experimental design research investigation, because the sample study has been randomly chosen. Besides, in order to overcome the methodological limitations of the research design; we will use statistical analysis to approximate some of the operations that are built into an experimental design in addition to a simple panel and time-series designs.

Accordingly, the choice of the carrying out of a survey and quasi-experiment in our research work would probably result with a number of figures which would include the following:

- Direct measurements or real numbers;
- Categories that will be assigned a numerical value;
- Percentages or measures of proportion;

• Averages which will summarize a series of measurements (L. Blaxter, C. Hughes and M. Tight, 2006).

Population

The population of the research work is constituted of the students enrolled at the English Division, Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

Sample

The sample study is represented by the students of Master Two applied English language studies and; the entire number of the students is eighty-six (86). In fact, the Master Two students have been organized through the composition of two groups of forty-three (43) students; in other words, the control group and the experimental group. However, we think it is necessary to match the participants in the treatment (experimental) and control groups. Indeed, Z. Dornyei (2007) points out that the most common matching procedure involves equating the control and experimental groups on a case-by-case basis on one (the case of our study) variable. We are aware that in our case study, the sample analysis represented by Master Two students share a number of characteristics such as: average age, same educational background and; nearly, the same motives in relationship to the choice of the English language and precisely the option of applied language studies.

However, we have observed that a key feature is likely to have an impact on the target variable we will examine in the study (the dependent variable); it is obviously the degree of intelligence (Intellectual Quotient) of individual students. Therefore, we have identified and incorporated the same number of students with a high level IQ (very similar parameters) in the two comparison groups. Moreover, we should recognize that in a quasi-experiment study it is unlikely to be able to achieve perfect matching; but the resultant group compositions would be considerably more compatible than the initial one without matching (Z. Dornyei, 2007).

Research Tools

1. Questionnaire-survey.

As far as the first part (descriptive survey) of the research work is concerned, we will submit a questionnaire to the students who constitute the sample study: the experimental and control groups, each group is composed of 43 Master Two students and; thus, a total of 86 students. On the other hand, in the elaboration of the questionnaire, our prior concern will be to clarify the



objectives of the study; in addition, the items which will constitute the questionnaire-survey will be directly interconnected to one or more of the research aims. We have also determined beforehand the procedure how the data to be gathered will be analysed. Indeed, the main objective is the development of descriptive statistics for nominal data in terms of proportions, percentages and ratios.

In addition, we have assigned a special focus in the conception of the questionnaire on the ways in which we can facilitate the tasks of collating and interpreting the responses. Accordingly, we have decided not to require any justifications or extensive explanations with regard to the students' choices or preferences (i.e. types of foreign cultural themes and behaviours). As a matter of fact, we have incorporated solely the closed questions (structured questionnaire) because they require responses which can readily be quantified and analysed (D. Nunan, 1992).

2. The Procedure of the Quasi-experiment.

The second part of the study deals with a quasi-experiment investigation. In fact, it consists of the organization of four (4) workshops for the experimental group and four (4) ordinary sessions for the control group. The workshops and ordinary sessions are weekly organized on the same day and; the allocation of time is a two-hour period for each workshop and each normal session. The pedagogical and experimental arrangement of each workshop is as follows:

- In the first hour, we start with the constitution of small groups of students (3 to 4 students per group).
- The provision of a study text (cultural topic) which is followed by a number of intercultural classroom activities.
- The researcher then proceeds with an oral classroom discussion with each small group of students in order to know their opinions about the different intercultural activities.
- The second hour of each workshop (experimental group) and ordinary session (control group) is devoted to an evaluation written test that is carried out by the students of the experimental and control groups.

On the other hand, the usual required procedure is the application of the t-test which functions as a single-sample test of mean or two-sample test of means; moreover, the assumptions are random sampling intercultural data and normal distribution. However, it is possible to proceed with descriptive statistics in connection with the range of figures; that is to

say, the difference between the highest and lowest values. Indeed, we intend to put into application a panel study; in reality, the role of the panel study is the examination of the same sample at two or more intervals (4 workshops). Additionally, we will utilize a time-series design despite the existence of the control group. The reason is that the comparison with the experimental group will be certainly undertaken for assessing cause-and-effect relations.

In fact, in the time-series design the pre-test and post-test measures (of the control and experimental groups) are available before and after the introduction of the independent variable (C F. Nachmias and D. Nachmias, 2005). Consequently, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) are not necessary; because in the present research work there is only one (1) dependent variable and also one (1) independent variable. Indeed, the simple interrelationships characterize the work; therefore, we will apply a crosstabulation or correlation analysis between the two variables (independent and dependent variables). However, we will certainly use the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) through the application of the T-Test in order to consolidate and ensure more credibility to the statistics that we will analyse in the present research work.

In summary, the instruments that will be used in our research investigation; represent a classic mode of quantitative educational research; in other words, the combination of descriptive and quasi-experimental research methodologies. Besides, we will analyse the results of the control and experimental groups by comparing the means of item recall in the experimental group versus the means of item recall in the control group. The t-test will be utilized in order to find out whether there are significant differences between the mean in the two groups (experimental and control).

Literature Review

Communicative Competence and Foreign Language Teaching/Learning

The last century witnessed a tremendous amount of studies in relation to the interconnections that exist between the trilogy that characterizes any cross-cultural act of communication; namely language, culture and foreign language teaching/learning. Indeed, as early as the 1970's, D. Hymes (1972) extensively investigated the various components of human communication. He placed a particular focus on the close relationships that exist between the linguistic and communicative competence and their impact on foreign language instruction. He stated that an observer can be aware of the significance of covert aspects of communication, and can see and document their consequences in the language classroom.

In addition, one may seek the sources of the patterns of communication in the community outside the classroom; and thus bring something new in the way of knowledge of the classroom situation. The reason is that the foreign language teacher and learners may not have experience of the foreign cultural community. As a matter of fact, the primary difficulty is that any act of communication in the foreign language does not depend on language alone, but on language in social context. What is crucial is not so much a better understanding of how language is structured; but useful information about how language is used, not so much what language is, as what language is for.

Indeed, if we are to understand what foreign language learners from a community are saying, and how they hear what we say to them; the foreign language teacher must come to be able to recognize more than the language of what is said. In fact, he must recognize how the community norms of interpretation are embodied in speech. Within this respect, the understanding of how the intercultural classroom works is general and basic because the more teaching and learning is moved into the cultural complex of learners along with the implied cultural components of the foreign language; the more it would be successful.

This concept about the fundamental components of human communication is equally supported (nearly at the same period of time) by a large number of scholars like B. Bernstein, E. Sapir and B. L. Whorf (1968). They generally point out that culture, context, code and role give greater flexibility in the use of the native and foreign languages; hence, it is a broad matter of the interrelation of culture and linguistic behaviours. Generally, the importance of this theory is that it relates social structure, verbal planning, language and educability. In other words, J. B. Adams

(1964), for instance has particularly insisted on the question of cross-cultural breakdown of communication. He states that when communications are from or with persons of other cultures; they are likely to be misinterpreted entirely. Indeed, each culture defines its own presentational meanings, and a sound, colour or form that has a particular meaning in one culture may have a different or even contradictory meaning in another.

Intercultural Communicative Competence

The discrepancy that exists between the linguistic manifestations and their socio-cultural functions characterizes any human act of communication. The reason is that except in highly ritualised situations, there is likely to be almost no correlation between the linguistic distinctiveness of the relevant variables and the social information they carry. In reality, J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes (1964) assert that there is no way of specifying in advance the nature and delicacy of those variables, and no necessary consistency in their social meaning through successive phases of interaction.

For example, local foreign language students fail to participate verbally in classroom interaction because the social conditions for participation to which they have been accustomed in their native community are lacking. If the student fails to answer a question, it may not be because he does not understand the linguistic structure of the interrogative, but rather he does not share or master the English cultural assumptions in such contexts that use of this syntactic form by definition implies an automatic and immediate response from the person to whom they are addressed (S.U. Philips, 1972). Indeed, the foreign language teacher should not assume that because learners speak English or are taught it in the university, that they have also assimilated all the socio-linguistic rules underlying interaction. Moreover, evidence indicates that the most common structure of questions in the students' speech is different from that common in English.

In fact, students respond volubly to one another's questions (in their native language, namely spoken Arabic) because they are familiar not only with forms but they also master the socio-cultural norms of their speech community. In contrast, learners who volunteer answers might face numerous miscommunications even if they display high proficiency in handling the forms in English; the main reason is that they are unfamiliar with the socio-cultural implications (S. T. Boggs, 1972).

In reality, we think that we should concentrate on aspects of miscommunications, both as an estrangement device to enable the researcher (or foreign language teacher) to get free of some of his own expectations of language use; and also as a focus for studying the skill which speakers have for dealing with problematic aspects of speech events. Evidently, the monitoring of intercultural communication is a complex process which should take into consideration some essential factors; precisely they are:

- Language variation;
- Language function;
- Variety-shifting;
- Speaker roles;
- Descriptive rules (D. L. Bolinger, 1968).

On the other hand, at present time more recent studies have generally established the complex nature of cross-cultural learning/teaching; in fact, empirical investigations in linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology have demonstrated the difficulty of the operation. In addition, scholars from those different disciplines agree on a significant principle which is the central role of intercultural communication in foreign language teaching. Consequently, a large number of foreign language teaching programmes have been elaborated with a special focus on communicative methodologies. The evident and main objective of such programmes is the development of learners' intercultural communicative competence.

Generally, the majority of scholars like M. Canale and M. Swain (1981), L. F. Batchman (1990) and M. Celce-Murcia with E. Olshtain (2005) have established that the acquisition on the part of learners of intercultural competence; depends on the mastery of some essential elements especially different types of abilities, namely grammatical, socio-pragmatic, strategic, and discourse competence. Furthermore, the model proposed by E. Uso-Juan and A. Martinez-Flor (2006) is much more elaborated because it comprises five major constituents of intercultural communicative competence respectively discourse, linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and strategic competence. However, the ability to produce and interpret foreign spoken or written discourse is considered to be a pivotal element (in intercultural successful communication); consequently, the remaining components (linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and strategic) definitely contribute in the development of discourse competence.

At this level, we think it is useful to present in a brief and concise review the significance of each component. The linguistic competence obviously refers to the three principal types of

linguistic rules: syntactic, semantic and phonological. The pragmatic competence is concerned with the functions (speech acts) of utterances within various speech events in terms of the appropriateness of the contexts and the realization of the objectives of the act of communication. In addition, the intercultural competence places a special emphasis on the production and interpretation of foreign spoken and written records in accordance with the target socio-cultural contexts. Moreover, the strategic competence is closely related to the students' learning and communication strategies. Lastly, as we have indicated above, discourse competence is succinctly the ability to choose and sequence foreign spoken or written discourse that is characterized by essential features in successful intercultural communication; precisely, cohesion, coherence, precise communicative objectives and appropriate contextualization. In short, despite the particular importance of the discourse competence, the authors do recognize that all of the components are interconnected. Besides, the improvements of each individual constituent effectively participate in the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence.

On the other hand, in order to conclude the second part of the review of literature which deals with intercultural communicative competence, we believe that it would be fruitful to present a chronological overview of the different significant works which have been put forward during the last six decades.

The first meaningful work is presented by R. Lado (1957) in which the cultural patterns across speech societies are constituted as follows:

Form: R. Lado indicates that the forms of patterns of culture are identified functionally on inspection by the members of that culture; however, he indicates that it is possible for the same individuals not to be able accurately to define the very forms that they can identify.

Meaning: R. Lado states that meanings, like forms, are culturally determined or modified. He thinks that they represent an analysis of the universe as grasped in a culture. Indeed, he adds that patterned forms have a complex of meanings, some representing features of a unit or process or quality; moreover, they may be respectively grasped as primary, secondary or tertiary.

Distribution: The author points out that all these meaningful units of forms are distributed in patterned ways. Their distributions patterns are very important and should be perceived by the foreign language learner; because the complex patterns involve various time cycles, space locations and positions in relation to the other units. On the whole, we can observe that form, meaning and distribution probably do not exist independently from each other in a culture. The

writer demonstrates that forms are relevant when they have meaning; meaning presupposes a form in order to be of relevance and meaningful forms always occur in patterned distribution.

The second valuable work has been proposed by D. Hymes (1972); indeed, the writer poses four major criteria in connection with the issues of language and communication:

- 1. Whether something is formally possible. It is related to the correct linguistic constructions.
- 2. Whether something is feasible. It requires the availability of the means of implementation.
- 3. Whether something is appropriate. It implies the suitable contexts in which the act of communication is used and evaluated (it can be adequate, happy, successful or; in contrast, it can lead to misinterpretations if the contexts are inappropriate).
- 4. Whether something is in fact done. The act of communication involves the actual realization of the assigned objectives and the effects that it may have.

The third significant analysis is suggested by John J. Gumperz (1982):

The author believes that socio-cultural conventions affect all levels of speech production and interpretation. In fact, the process moves from the abstract cultural logic that underlies all interpretations to the division of speech into episodes. Additionally, the scholar asserts that the categorization of speech production occurs in terms of the semantically relevant activities and interpretive forms and; lastly, the production of syntactic strings and the selection among lexical and grammatical options. He also signals that the failure to recognize the whole process (i.e. the inability to understand or misinterpret the foreign language act of communication) is a consequence of the fact that linguistic analysis has been sentence-based and influenced by the culture of literacy alone.

The fourth interesting study which we think is close to the present research work is put forward by K. Osterloh (2008); and it can be briefly summarized as follows:

K. Osterloh (2008) states that between societies of greatly differing socioeconomic structures (like the case of our study i.e. local Algerian learners of English); intercultural differences play an important role when members of the one culture learn the language of the other. In addition, the author recognizes that students from preindustrial countries must acquire new ways of dealing with others socially and emotionally, if they want to communicate successfully in a European language. On the other hand, the writer suggests a significant example of cross-cultural behaviours especially with regard to foreign language learners. Indeed, an impressive intercultural difference can be observed in the disparate attitudes of readers to written texts.

For instance, in Islamic countries (as representative of developing societies) the Koran is in the back of the reader's mind when dealing with a text. Accordingly, the general attitude of this category of learners is that both content and form of texts are in principle solemn, holy, and incontestable, it follows that foreign language learning (English) becomes very complex particularly when it is a question of analyzing a text and testing its validity. Consequently, students have to learn beforehand the Western civilization cultural understanding of written texts. In other words, something written is something man-made, and that everything written is to be seen as an individual presentation or personal opinion which can be contested.

In contrast, in Third World cultures the function of a written text differs greatly from the function Westerners apply to it. Hence, the attitude of the Muslim learners of English is quite different; they believe that some texts are of biased nature, contain magic knowledge, and are of heavenly origin. Therefore, the only way to handle a text is to memorize and recite it; indeed, one can observe (at least in the present years) that the learner does exactly this in the foreign language class. Because of his cultural experience, the reader regards the text as a fixed unit in which everything is of equal importance.

In an effort to solve this kind of intercultural difficulties, K. Osterloh (2008) proposes some practical teaching activities such as underlining, note taking, choosing and gathering relevant information and summarizing texts. Their main goal is for later use of communicative processes in the foreign language. However, these techniques should be accompanied by other useful assignments like: interview people, hold polls, work on statistical and other material in texts of students' native tongue. As a matter of fact, the author believes that such out-of-class activities play a more important role in the Third World than in industrialized countries, since the students' environment has not yet been verbally analysed in the way Westerners are accustomed to.

In summary, in order to communicate successfully in the foreign language (English); students (especially at the local university level) have to satisfy communicative prerequisites considerably more difficult than learners in an industrialized environment. Therefore, the foreign language teacher should take into consideration that local Algerian students remain rooted in, and are not alienated from, their own cultural background.

The fifth and last major reference with regard to intercultural communicative competence is represented by the analysis of C. Kramsch (1998). The writer recognizes that there is actually no one-to-one relationship between the language of an individual and his cultural identity; however, she believes that language is the most sensitive indicator of the relationship between a person

and a given social group. The author also notices the paradox which exists between the fact that members of the same speech community should share the same linguistic and socio-cultural traits; nevertheless, the successful intercultural act of communication requires that the linguistic semiotic capital of human kind remains as 'rich and as diversified as possible'.

Intercultural Teaching Materials: A Framework of Cross-Cultural Classroom Activities

It is considered almost axiomatic that those who are acquiring a foreign language need to gain mastery over the sociolinguistic and pragmatic rules of the target language. Within this perspective, the first main resource is presented through an extensive study by Elliot L. Judd (2009) who point out that it is necessary to learn how to understand and create language that is appropriate to the situations in terms of employing the proper illocutionary patterns in accordance with the socio-cultural parameters of the specific context. The reason is that the failure of this kind of learning; would probably induce learners into missing key points that are being communicated in spoken or written foreign language; in addition, the students' messages might be misunderstood.

Within this respect, the author states that the improvement of pragmatic skill in connection with cognitive awareness techniques can be developed in receptive skills. As a matter of fact, the writer proposes two types of materials: teacher-generated material and natural data. In the former, the foreign language teacher can proceed as follows:

- The instructor first presents a discourse excerpt.
- In a deductive approach, the speech act is pointed out to the students.
- Likewise, students are asked to identify the speech act that is occurring.
- Attention is drawn to both the linguistic forms that are employed and the sociolinguistic
 variables of the speech event. In other words, focus should be put on significant factors such as:
 the physical environment, age, gender, social status of the participants and; the levels of
 formality.
- Extensive presentation and practice of similar speech act; the objective is to enable students to recognize the structural and sociolinguistic dimensions of the speech act being studied.

In the latter (natural data), the foreign language teacher can obtain more natural and reliable data as follows:

Employing audio or video compact disks or television.

- Various snippets can be compared to see whether or not certain forms are prominent and what are the similarities and differences.
- The availability of information and communication technologies and means provide natural language samples; because they were not originally designed for teaching purposes but for genuine communication. However, the manipulation of authentic materials in order to adapt them for pedagogical aims is certainly open to debate.

As far as the productive skills are concerned, Elliot L. Judd (2009) suggests some common techniques (the advantages and drawbacks of the different intercultural teaching activities are thoroughly discussed in an independent part of the present work) such as:

- Cloze-type activities: in this type of activities the speech acts in the conversations are deleted and students are asked to fill in the blanks (either orally or in writing) with the correct pragmatic forms. However, these activities are practised only after the exposure of students to the receptive and/or cognitive techniques.
- Simulation/Role Play activities: students are instructed to assume certain roles that would produce pragmatic features. Usually, background information on the situation and the participants is provided by the foreign language teacher; for instance, clarifying information, arguing and apologizing.

On the whole, the author suggests a model for teaching second/foreign language learners pragmatic competence which we can summarize in the following:

- Foreign language teacher's analysis of speech acts.
- Cognitive awareness skills.
- Receptive/integrative skills.
- Controlled productive skills.
- Free, integrated skills.

The second reference that we have employed is in the form of some useful teaching activities which were suggested by J. Corbett (2010). Our choice of the various intercultural teaching activities has been determined by two main factors:

1. We have analysed the most significant foreign speech acts that pose particular difficulties to local university students; in addition, we have taken into consideration the foreign language teachers' opinions and pieces of advice in order to ameliorate the teaching/learning process.

2. The second parameter which guided us in the selection of the teaching activities is the feedback of the students themselves. In fact, we have identified a number of their preferences and tendencies in terms of foreign cultural aspects and behaviours that they would enjoy learning and practising; the criteria are principally motivation and usefulness.

Furthermore, the target culture components that have been analysed by the author satisfy the local students' preferences. Hence, activities in relationship to topics such as sport, politics, religion and others have been extensively described, evaluated and; ultimately, practised in four workshops. Moreover, the author has also provided a CD with his book which has been particularly useful in the application of the different activities during the workshops with the experimental group of Master Two students.

On the other hand, the writer has set a number of areas that are especially significant in intercultural language teaching; in fact, he has organized them within two major components: intercultural learning and teaching, and intercultural communicative competence. J. Corbett has also focussed on the realization of the following principal objectives:

- Knowing the self and the other;
- Knowing how to relate and interpret meaning;
- Developing critical awareness;
- Knowing how to discover cultural information;
- Knowing how to question oneself and value the attitudes and beliefs of others;
- The Internet and intercultural language education.

Besides, it is evident that the kind of activities depends to a great extent on the cultural behaviour that is analysed; therefore, we would solely mention some of them as representative tasks which we have utilized during the organized workshops:

- Starting and developing an online discussion;
- Classroom intercultural interactions;
- Organization of interviews;
- Conflict mediation:
- Local and foreign sports;
- Food: national and international dishes:
- Politics: symbols and debates;
- Religion: religious associations and religious services or rituals.

The third source that we believe is quite useful in developing intercultural teaching activities is the work proposed by B. Tomalin and S. Stempleski (1993). Indeed, the authors have organized the intercultural teaching activities with respect to the three major components that they believe should constitute the culture of any speech community. The first are the products that can be in the form of literature, folklore, art, music and artefacts. The second are ideas that represent beliefs, values, and institutions. The third are behaviours which constitute the customs, habits, dress, food and leisure. In addition, the writers have assigned seven (7) principal goals of cultural instruction (modification of Seelye's work, 1988):

- 1. The understanding of culturally-conditioned behaviours.
- 2. The influence of social variables (such as age, sex, social class, etc.) on people's speech and behaviour.
- 3. The development of students' awareness of conventional behaviour in the target culture.
- 4. The grasping of cultural connotations of words in the foreign speech community.
- 5. The improvement of students' abilities to objectively evaluate the foreign cultural behaviours.
- 6. The students' instruction of the appropriate skills in order to investigate and organize information about the target culture.
- 7. The ultimate goal is to motivate students' intellectual interest in the target culture and; eventually, to encourage learners' empathy toward the foreign speech community.

In addition, we have noticed a characteristic in the authors' work which singles out the proposed activities; indeed, they have classified the target culture teaching activities into three levels, elementary, intermediate and advanced. In fact, the teaching activities are varied and arranged according to the different target culture components as follows:

- 1. The recognition of cultural symbols.
- 2. The manipulation of cultural products.
- 3. The examination of foreign cultural patterns.
- 4. The analysis of target culture behaviours.
- 5. The study of the patterns of communication in the foreign speech community.
- 6. The development of students' understanding of target culture values and attitudes.
- 7. The extension of learners' foreign cultural experiences.

Besides, the materials suggested by the authors are particularly useful to the foreign language teacher. As a matter of fact, the writers provide a precise description of the characteristics of each activity; and the possible procedure that might be followed in order to put it into

application. Therefore, the teaching activities are presented to the foreign language teacher with the provision of precious pedagogical requirements that are summarized in the following:

- The aims of the activity;
- The materials which should be utilized;
- The degree of difficulty;
- The time allotment;
- The necessary preparation (steps to be followed);
- The actual procedure in undertaking the teaching activity in the class.

The fourth major reference with regard to intercultural teaching activities is the work presented by R. Spack (2007); especially in the development of students' cross-cultural reading and writing. The major principles that have been adopted by the author in the elaboration, organization and presentation of the different intercultural teaching activities are summarized in the following points:

- 1. The human language is a means for understanding and constructing knowledge; therefore, it enables the acquisition of academic language and literacy. Indeed, students can develop their reading and writing skills if they are engaged with authentic, significant and challenging content.
- 2. The writing process should generate ideas; consequently, students should debate their thoughts and studies.
- 3. Writing develops foreign language acquisition; because it allows students to analyse and interpret their different readings.
- 4. Students should be encouraged to interconnect their prior knowledge with new information; as a result, learners improve on their reading and writing abilities.

Furthermore, some useful strategies have been adopted for reading critically; especially in relation to intercultural teaching of the foreign writing and reading skills. Indeed, the main objective of the different activities is not only to increase students' knowledge but also to develop their own views toward the culture subject matter. Additionally, students are continuously encouraged to question the author's opinions and present their personal arguments (in their written production) in support of their points of view.

In fact, the suggested activities are consolidated by meaningful guidelines in order to motivate students and incite them to undertake the various tasks. For instance, the author suggests effective guidelines for the enterprise of intercultural activities such as:

- Generating background knowledge;
- Making double-entry notes;
- Taking notes on reading;
- Writing a journal entry on reading;
- Making a list;
- Guidelines for free writing;
- Guidelines for looping (join two or more free writing passages and then reflect on the written product).

We have also noticed that students are encouraged to relate their reading to personal experience; in fact, the principal objective is to determine the truth, or validity of the author's ideas. Obviously, the topics of the different reading texts are intimately related to intercultural communication stumbling blocks. Indeed, learners are asked to write before and after the reading process in order to indicate the most important barriers to communication across cultures. For example, students are instructed to read and then report about the pace of life in six different countries (with regard to accuracy of bank clocks, walking speed and post office speed).

Besides, there are many interesting activities which consist of analysing an argumentative essay. In fact, the goal of composing such an essay is to represent the author's ideas objectively and precisely whatever the opinion (agree or disagree) of the foreign language learner. On the other hand, the foreign language teacher asks students to write a journal entry or summary after they read the text and; ultimately, they discuss their different writings in classroom interactions. However, students are requested- before they read- to work in a team or small group with a view to write brief notes identifying people, places and items of which they have some knowledge. Certainly, all the elements have been selected cross-culturally (e.g. Mussolini and Ho Chi Minh; Prague and Kabul; Dostoevski and Shakespeare; Ku Klux Klan and Amnesty International, etc.).

Within this context, a large number of useful guidelines are proposed to the students; we can briefly cite the following:

- Evaluating evidence;
- Identifying points of agreement and disagreement;
- Determining reasons for agreement or disagreement.

In addition, there are interesting activities which consist of analysing fiction. Indeed, writing an essay represents a challenge to students because they should infer the author's meaning; for the works of fiction are drawn from writers' imaginations and; actually they do not directly state the main ideas. Indeed, the guidelines that follow the reading are designed by the author in order to help the students in composing an essay analyzing fiction. The most important guidelines are the following:

- Examining elements of fiction;
- Discovering a theme;
- Selecting relevant evidence.

The writer has equally proposed other types of intercultural activities which deal with the process of Writing from Field Research. The tools that can be used in order to realize this kind of activities are interviews or surveys along with the students' own observations. In fact, the aim of field research is to enable students to formulate their personal generalizations or theory about a cultural issue. Concerning the guidelines which are related to this activity, they are suggested by the author in the following:

- Selecting a field research topic;
- Gathering background information;
- Observing;
- Interviewing;
- Conducting a survey;
- Describing methods;
- Presenting results;
- Writing the discussion section.

Structure of the Thesis

The present research work is organized in four chapters that have been devoted to different significant issues of our investigation. In the first chapter we discuss the following major elements:

- 1. The correlation between the culture interference and the pragmatic failure in the use of the foreign language due to various reasons namely, historical, religious and sociolinguistic factors.
- 2. The intercultural class in a TEFL situation implies a number of significant factors which are pedagogical, teachers' requirements and the selection and implementation of culture teaching/learning activities.

- 3. The analysis of intercultural techniques within an intercultural foreign language teaching procedure.
- 4. The major difficulties in the application of intercultural techniques.
- 5. The foreign language teacher's role in the intercultural dimension.

The second chapter deals with the following elements:

- 1. The discussion of the two main approaches in teaching the language skills within the intercultural perspective: the Content-Based Approach and the Task-Based Approach.
- 2. The study of the four language skills through the presentation of the theoretical background and the analysis and evaluation of some important classroom activities.
- 3. The detailed and encompassing analysis of the crucial interaction between culture, listening and speaking skills; in addition to the interconnection of culture, reading and writing skills.

The third chapter is entirely devoted to the study of the culture skill as follows:

- 1. The necessary multiple sources of information that is required in the intercultural English language class.
- 2. The numerous and diverse types of classroom activities.
- 3. The appropriate teaching techniques.
- 4. The modals of teaching the culture skill.
- 5. The development of the culture skill within the Algerian university English instructional context.

The fourth chapter is concerned with the field work and the experimental design:

- 1. The description, analysis and interpretation of the findings of the survey questionnaire.
- 2. The presentation and the study of the outcomes of the procedure that has been adopted in the organization of the Pre-Test, the four workshops and the Post-Test.

In summation, the four principal references with respect to the practice of intercultural teaching activities share some significant features which consist of the presentation and analysis of the source and target cultural components and behaviours. Moreover, the classroom activities obviously motivate the students since they require their active participation in classroom interactions; but they are equally encouraged to undertake field research. Besides, we have observed that the majority of such intercultural activities result with the realization of the assigned goals; especially, the development of students' awareness of target culture behaviours and the adoption of meaningful positive attitudes toward the foreign language speech community.

1. Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching

Introduction

It is generally admitted that the past fifty years have witnessed numerous changes in foreign language teaching; indeed, new methods and techniques have been adopted by the language teacher which have resulted in many positive outcomes. This was mainly due to the influential developments that occurred within the context of linguistic theories and language teaching approaches. Nowadays, one can notice that foreign language teaching is largely characterized by what is generally referred to as the communicative approach; therefore, the domains of language teaching actually abound with many so-called communicative syllabuses that are intended to be used in the foreign language class. However, we think that it is necessary in the first place to clarify what is precisely meant by communicative language teaching.

The overall and simple view in relation to the communicative syllabus indicates that this approach is seemingly and in many aspects different from the traditional procedures of language teaching which emphasize the forms of the language rather than any thing else. On the other hand, the communicative approach takes into consideration the functions of language which should be taught in its socio-cultural context. This conceptual framework suggests that the learners' needs should be given importance; in fact, these needs have to be selected in accordance with the social functions that they satisfy and, consequently, we should enable learners to acquire a high proficiency in foreign language communicative competence.

Obviously, the task is not easy; indeed, it faces numerous problems namely the difficulty in selecting learners' needs, the problem of adopting the appropriate methodologies in teaching language social functions; especially the precise types of social functions that are required for the different kinds of needs. Lastly, there are also practical difficulties in categorizing foreign language learners in order to exactly define their needs. These issues are evidently important and require special attention; nevertheless, we would particularly focus on the consequences of the practical applications of the communicative approach and their impact on foreign language teaching.

1.1. Perspectives of Communicative Language Teaching

One would claim that the success of communicative syllabuses is relative; because a great number of communicative language teaching programmes are apparently unable to achieve their most significant objective which is simply to make learner communicate effectively in the target language. Indeed, the most noticeable distortion of such programmes is that they restrict the learner to a limited communicative competence. In other words, foreign language learners would be only able to use the social function which they have been taught and can not manipulate other functions of the foreign language in different situations.

However, this problem can be treated from two separate perspectives. First, the needs analysis operation should not depend on a specific theory about language learning. In fact, the various methodologies in communicative language teaching syllabuses should ensure that learners go beyond the sentence level even if this would require the teaching of grammatical structures. In other words, it is constantly recommended that linguistic competence should be part of communicative competence. As a matter of fact, one should recognize that the proponents of the communicative approach are aware of the problem. For example, H.G Widdowson (1979: 252.) suggests that "the specification of learner needs should not, then (or it seems to me), determine methodology." Indeed, he even advises the foreign language teacher not to follow what he refers to as 'the direct route'.

In other words, the foreign language teacher should not limit students to a specific type of functions but rather prepare them for learning other social functions outside the classroom. He suggests that students could probably be more effectively prepared through a syllabus which would develop a greater number of general communicative strategies. As a matter of fact, a wide range of language uses should concentrate not so much on direct teaching as on setting up the kind of conditions which eventually would create a favourable set towards later learning.

On the other hand, H. G. Widdowson (1979) goes even further beyond this and criticizes D. A. Wilkins attempts in elaborating a notional syllabus. He believes that those notions should not be taught in isolation because they do not represent a 'real communication'; they are rather artificial. Additionally, he puts forward another significant argument with regard to the sort of inventory which does not and can not of its nature take into account a key factor in the language teaching operation. Indeed, this significant element is that communication does not take place through the linguistic exponents of concepts and functions as self-contained units of meaning. In reality, communication occurs as discourse, whereby meanings are negotiated through interaction.

Therefore, as we have indicated above, learners should not be 'programmed'; in other words, we simply mean that it is unfruitful and probably negative to make foreign language learners acquire a limited number of 'functions' and; they are expected to use them in whatever situations

when it is necessary. The reason is that learners' performances should exceed the sentence level; as a matter of fact, they should be able to create a whole discourse. This point is particularly emphasized by L. Newmark in a quite interesting contribution in C. J Brumfit and K. Johnson, (eds.), (p.p 160-166, 1979). The author suggests that the main objective of the language teaching process is to enable the learner to use the language he is taught; in addition, he should be prepared to extend his abilities to new cases, to create new utterances that are appropriate to his needs as a language user

Moreover, this analysis drives us to the point how 'performance' is viewed by the supporters of the communicative approach in foreign language teaching. Indeed, D. Hymes proposes as early as the eighties that performance should not be restricted to the Chomskyan sense which is the actual use of language, affected by grammatically irrelevant conditions and; identified within the criterion of acceptability. On the contrary, performance should include linguistic competence; in fact, he asserts that Chomsky's notion of performance seems confused between actual performance and underlying rules of performance (for example stylistic rules of reordering).

Consequently, performance in the communicative sense is explicitly discussed by D. Hymes quoted by J. Munby (1978: 16): "Here the performance of a person is not identical with a behavioural record, or with the imperfect or partial realization of individual competence." In fact, performance should imply the interaction between competence (knowledge or ability for use), the competence of others, and the cybernetic and emergent properties of events themselves.

In addition, the second observation is that in the different works presented above; one can notice that many proponents of the communicative approach especially H. G. Widdowson and L. Newmark often emphasize the notion of creativity. Indeed, they particularly insist on the foreign language learner's significant and idiosyncratic manipulation of the target language. Therefore, the principle of individual creativity is always present in the foreign language learning process. In fact, a large number of the supporters of the communicative approach believe that a communicative syllabus would not produce learners who would be restricted to the utterances they have learned in the classroom. The main reason is that learners themselves are able to create their own functions outside the classroom and; consequently, they would necessarily widen their communicative competence.

On the other hand, the concept of creativity in language learning as it has been originally introduced by Chomsky has been developed to the extent that at present it also includes the process of foreign language learning. In fact, there is a general consensus that second/foreign language children are guided by universal cognitive mechanisms in acquiring the target language; these mechanisms are usually referred to as 'the creative construction process'. Within this context, the foreign language learner is viewed as 'actively cracking' the code of the target language. That is to say, he is continuously testing a series of hypotheses about the target language (H. C. Dulay and M. K. Burt, 1976).

Consequently, the advocators of the communicative approach would claim that the principal function of the approach is to provide a limited number of functions. This set of functions necessarily represents a kind of framework which would eventually help learners in creating their own social functions. On the whole, this hypothesis is given more strength through the significant suggestions that have been proposed by scholars like Nemser (1971), Selinker (1986) or Corder (1986). Principally, they believe that the second/foreign language learner during the acquisition process tends to create a series of 'Approximative Systems' or 'Interlanguages' which are totally independent i.e., they are neither governed by the rules of the native language nor the second/foreign language. This cognitive activity continues during the complete process of foreign language learning until the learner relatively attains the mastery of the second/foreign language.

In summation, one would observe that the main question which challenges the effective application of the communicative syllabus is essentially the 'production' of a generation of language learners whose performance in the foreign language would be restricted to the utterances to which they have been 'exposed' in the classroom. However, we do think that the efficiency of the communicative syllabus depends to a great extent on the intelligent and systematic incorporation of the cultural dimension within the teaching programmes.

1.2. The Communicative Syllabus and the Cultural Dimension

It is commonly approved that the cultural parameters can be used to develop effective teaching materials, for increasing foreign language cultural awareness and sensitivity in learners. Indeed, a cultural projection into the syllabus is useful to intercultural communication training and instruction because it provides an approach whereby students can actually analyse events and situations that describe people in intercultural encounters, especially the situations that involve misunderstanding or difficulties.

In addition, the process of working through a contextualized cultural parameter implies the identification of the main factors that provoke the failure of the acts of communication. Besides, R. Brisling (2002) asserts that students can also be introduced to 'research-based concepts' that assist in understanding many other intercultural interactions they are likely to have in the future. As a matter of fact, the process is suggested not only for more typical ELT (English language teaching) situations but also in more specific course offerings; where ELT teachers are often required to coordinate and develop their teaching of the English language as part of much larger domains like 'Intercultural Communication' or 'Comparative Culture'.

However, the main problem that faces the applied linguist (in syllabus design) concerns the items which should be incorporated in the syllabus. It is difficult to single out the criteria that should be adopted in order to decide what the learner actually needs. The needs analysis operation is particularly ineffective in the elaboration of a 'general kind of course' because the syllabus designer would be confronted with an infinite list of needs. In fact, the most important difficulties can be summarized as follows:

- 1. The types of foreign language learners: the academic learners like university students or the category of professionals such as ESP (English for specific purposes) learners.
- 2. The lack of precision and clarity with respect to the requirements of students and the objectives that should be assigned to the course.
- 3. The syllabus designer may be faced with an exhaustive list of functions which necessitate the use of different kinds of language.
- 4. There is equally the problem of the syllabus organization; in other words, the nature of criteria which should be used to decide what linguistic and socio-cultural elements that may be included or excluded under each part of the programme. For instance, a short piece of language may express many functions and imply numerous interpretations.
- 5. There cannot be one to one relationship between form and function; the applied linguist should cope with the question of overlapping, different forms in various places in the syllabus but the function should be kept apart.
- 6. A communicative syllabus would be less complicated if it is conceived within certain precise limits. The reason is that a general programme would be far more difficult even if the syllabus is elaborated in the context of ESP or ELT; in fact, it is hard to decide which functions should be included and defined.

- 7. There are problems in defining functions and notions in a completely explicit manner; especially in general education. The more restrictive the area is defined, the easier it would be; however, its effectiveness is reduced.
- 8. By placing the emphasis of the functions and notions of the foreign language within the cultural perspective and assigning less importance to the linguistic forms; we might end up with learners who produce utterances but cannot understand the linguistic system.

On the whole, it is evident that modern syllabuses of foreign language teaching give great importance to the socio-cultural components of the target language. Therefore, foreign language learners would be probably able to produce their own culturally appropriate functions; because with this kind of syllabus, learners start immediately 'doing things' with the target language through different activities. Most importantly, the main concern of the syllabus designer (in elaborating a communicative syllabus within the cultural dimension) is to divorce needs analysis from a particular theory with regard to language learning. Lastly, a concise and clear prerequisite before the conception of a communicative syllabus would be to ensure that learners go beyond the sentence level to the contextualized socio-cultural situations of the foreign language.

1.3. Cultural Interference and Pragmatic Failure

It is evident that human acts of communication are characterized by the cultural traits of the speech community. Indeed, socio-cultural conventions determine to a great extent the individual and collective exchanges of linguistic and non-linguistic messages. In fact, each member of the speech society unconsciously reflects and displays his cultural behaviours through his speech. However, within the context of foreign language learning, cultural interference may occur when the first and foreign languages belong to two different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, a student may reach a high level of linguistic proficiency in the foreign language; nevertheless, his message is often misinterpreted or completely not understood by his interlocutors, especially if they are native speakers of English. The reason is that the linguistic manifestations in the foreign language can convey the wrong cultural behaviours that originate from the native socio-cultural conventions.

As far as the Algerian university students are concerned, we have observed that cultural interference often leads to cross-cultural pragmatic failure. Indeed, the Algerian cultural components, for example in terms of religious or political factors have a significant impact on the student's manipulation of the English language. Generally, cultural interference and the problems that it induces are due to the student's unawareness or even rejection of the target

cultural behaviours and; consequently, the development of negative attitudes toward the foreign speech community. However, in the case of the young Algerian university students, the existence of such attitudes do not originate from past regretful experiences or actual events or behaviours; in fact, they are simply the result of subjective stereotypes and prejudices.

Besides, these apparent target and source cultural contradictions are founded on inaccurate knowledge of the socio-cultural conventions of the foreign speech community. Indeed, many students may feel challenged or even threatened by the so-called alien cultural behaviours; therefore, students face various psychological problems like uneasiness, shyness or insecurity. In addition, we can advance that the student's preconceived and exaggerated ideas about the target cultural behaviours; obviously lead to the elaboration of bias and subjective assumptions about the native speakers of English and their cultural components.

Consequently, the local foreign language students often unconsciously resort to impregnate their English acts of communication with their own native social and cultural conventions. These pre-judgements are often due to wrong assumptions or total ignorance of the target culture which result with serious wrong judgements. As a result, the student's use of the English language seems awkward and ambiguous and; finally, the logical effects are numerous misinterpretations and misunderstanding.

On the other hand, the origins of such negative attitudes are usually caused by exogenous elements like historical and religious factors, and endogenous reasons such as the sociolinguistic features of the native and target languages.

1.3.1. Historical Factors

It is generally established that the Arab culture- like the different cultures of other nations and civilizations- is governed by central and marginal determinants. These two essential positions are connotatively related in an alternative process of power and domination through the multiple periods and eras. The Arab culture has overwhelmingly dominated other cultures of the world during a long time in man's history. As a matter of fact, the Muslim civilization namely its cultural components were widely spread all over the world. Unfortunately, the ruthless (this is how it is perceived at least in many Arab countries) Western colonialism has extensively refrained its nodal and empire establishment and; consequently, all Arab cultural manifestations were abruptly held for a long period of time.

On the other hand, the Western civilization because of its colonial dominance has founded the premises of successful industrial, social and cultural revolutions. The facets have thoroughly changed; the Western societies have become the leaders of the world while the Arabs remained on the edge of the world's civilizations. Hence, the Arab nations can solely witness the outburst of the other nations' development; nowadays, they are reduced and resort to recall the vestiges of ancient times. The essential outcome of these historical events is the creation of what can be qualified as the central and marginal cultures. Based upon this controversial dichotomy, the foreign language student's attitude has seemingly developed a kind of apprehension with regard to the English (Western world in general) cultural components.

However, we witness the birth of new endeavours that restlessly aims to ripe up the Arab culture from exclusion to the world's consideration. Evidently, the struggle will be long and difficult but the Arab culture will succeed in changing its actual status from a marginal to a central universal position. Therefore, the Arab learners of English would certainly feel psychologically more comfortable (a feeling of justice and pride) and; accordingly, would develop more comprehensible attitudes toward the target culture. Unfortunately, at present time one can observe that in many Arab countries, young students of English because of this 'historical legacy'; reject the Western values, politics and influences. Moreover, this negative perception and distrust of the Western world are consolidated by certain political events and decisions with respect to the Arab nations which have been adopted in many European countries and the United States of America.

1.3.2. Religious Factors

A great number of studies have proved that the linguistic patterns along with the sociocultural values are transmitted from one generation to the other in human speech communities. Consequently, the Algerian children (as all children throughout the world) in the process of interactions with adult interlocutors (especially kinship relations); are exposed to various stylistic communication strategies which reflect a variety of cultural beliefs, traditions and attitudes. In fact, communicative competence in the native language is unconsciously acquired by children, especially with regard to some important cultural constituents such as social order of the community, historical heritage and religious rituals. As a matter of fact, in the case of the Algerian students, the Arab culture and Islam are deeply inherent in their psychological attitudes and social behaviours. Therefore, the Algerian learner of English naturally displays these sociocultural traits not only through his speech in the native languages (Arabic and Amazigh) but also when he uses the English language.

In reality, the importance of religion as a significant component of human culture lies in the crucial phenomena which it deals with; especially the questions of creation, life and death, the human interrelationships. In fact, L. Wei (2009) believes that the religious beliefs and practices satisfy the spiritual and psychological needs of human beings and; also characterize the sociolinguistic exchanges of the members of the speech community. Indeed, Algerian EFL (English as a foreign language) learners are usually competent on the linguistic level (particularly university students at advanced proficiency); however, they are often influenced by their original religious cultural background that they willingly display in the English language. The problem is recurrent and it indicates the students' nearly total ignorance of the religious cultural conventions of the foreign speech community.

In addition, we believe that the native cultural components are voluntarily (not unconsciously because of some stereotypes and negative attitudes) employed by the students of English; however, the learners' spoken and written discourse become incomprehensible and often lead to breakdowns of communication. The reason is that the Algerian English student feels that he is subjected to a complete new culture that would probably change or distort his values and perception of the world.

On the other hand, we have observed that university students often confuse positive acculturation (i.e. knowledge of the target culture behaviours) with assimilation which usually bears a negative connotation. Therefore, those students confront various psychological difficulties in accepting certain Western norms in relationship to social interactions, impact of religion on individuals and even the conception of socio-economic organization. Accordingly, the role of the foreign language teacher is crucial in such situations because he would probably face many problems in developing students' cultural awareness, positive attitudes and rejection of bias or wrong judgements, stereotypes and intolerance.

1.3.3. Sociolinguistic Factors

We have observed that EFL learners especially at university level (Second Year Master students with regard to their advanced level) find various problems of comprehension and expression in the English language. In fact, as we have indicated above, the difficulties do not occur at the linguistic level but rather when students deal with questions which are related to

English social conventions or cultural behaviours. These problems are due to the students' low proficiency in the target culture and the influence of their own cultural background. Indeed, the student's message in English can be distorted because of the wrong contextual factors, the different cultural assumptions of the student and the native speaker of English and; also the cognitive aspects of the act of communication.

On the other hand, not all language is verbal; in fact some of our communication occurs without words. We often use our entire bodies for communication; indeed, we may raise our eyebrows to indicate surprise or; perhaps we nod our heads emphatically to show that we firmly agree with something. There are hundreds of nonverbal signals that can be used to communicate; in reality, these signals are part of language and they are governed by rules in the same way our spoken language is. For this reason, people who speak different languages often use different nonverbal signals as well.

In addition to verbal communication and the type of nonverbal communication discussed above, there are other message systems that we use to communicate. When we speak to some people, we may stand very close to them, while we may stand far away from other people. Use of space, then, is a way we can communicate the relationship we feel with another person. Moreover, the way we dress can communicate for us. The person who wears messy jeans and a T-shirt communicates a different attitude from a person who wears neat pants and an attractive shirt. We can even use time to communicate. The person who is on time for an appointment shows a different attitude than the person who is an hour late does.

As a matter of fact, there are many sociolinguistic phenomena which can illustrate this category of cross-cultural communication problems. We will briefly discuss two major cases namely Proverbs and/or Idiomatic Expressions and Discourse Markers.

1.3.3.1. Proverbs and Idiomatic Expressions

Proverbs are common sayings which people use to express cultural philosophies. They can be used to show a great deal about the culture of a people, for they indicate shared attitudes and values. For example, in a culture where time is very important, one can expect to find many proverbs about time. Similarly, a culture that values a strong family unit may have many proverbs that praise the gift of a family's love. Each culture has its own proverbs; nevertheless, many cultures express similar ideas in their proverbs. After all, even though we have different cultures, we are all human beings!

Hence, we think it is useful to analyse some samples of English and Arabic proverbs; however, for practical reasons we prefer to concentrate on those which may cause cross-cultural comprehension failure. Indeed, the focus is put on the proverbs in the two languages (Arabic and English) that are structurally and culturally different; because we would logically expect that proverbs which are linguistically and socio-culturally similar would probably not pose problems to EFL Master Two students. In fact, certain words are quite interesting because they are found in many proverbs and idiomatic expressions; nevertheless, they do not have their equivalents in

Case One: Chip.

Arabic when they are used pejoratively.

The connotation that the word *chip* bears in the minds of local university students is usually related to fast food and the European cultural behaviours. However, the word conveys various meanings when it is incorporated in a proverb or idiomatic expression:

A carpenter is known by his chips. i.e. Appreciation of good work.

* He is the chip of the old block. i.e. A son who is like his father.

* He has a chip on his shoulder. i.e. To have a defiant air.

Case Two: Straw.

In Arabic, students usually associate the word straw to negative implications, like cowardice or guilt. In contrast, the term in English can be used in very different ways.

* A man of straw is worth a woman of gold. i.e. Easily overcome but whatever the value of a man, he would be preferred to a woman.

* Make bricks without straw. i.e. To make something without the necessary materials.

* Clutch at straws. i.e. To try any expedient, however useless.

Case Three: Purse.

In general, the word *purse* in Arabic is implied connotatively in situations that are related to money and expenditure; nevertheless, in the English language the term carries out various other topics and situations.

* His purse is his best friend. i.e. A stingy and greedy man.

* He pursed up his lips. i.e. Do not reveal a secret, or, show disapproval.

* Hold the purse strings. i.e. Have control of expenditure.

On the other hand, in Arabic there are multiple proverbs and many of them would probably be in contradiction with the English social organization or solid common sense. Therefore, if the student attempts to translate them into English or at least tries to transmit the philosophy which they convey; the result would be quite ambiguous or even meaningless. In fact, the problem does not really exist at the linguistic level (syntactically or semantically) but it is a question of completely different views of the world that characterize the two speech communities. We think that the following possible translations of some proverbs in Arabic would actually exemplify this problem:

- * Spend what is there in your pocket, (God) shall send you (money) from the unknown! اصرف ما في الجيب ياتيك ما في الغيب
- * Man thinks (about his troubles); God takes care (of them)!

* We put up with him (literally, were silent at him) but he had his donkey (also) coming with him! سكتنا له دخل بحماره.

We can notice that all these proverbs (or sayings) in Arabic reflect certain valuable cultural behaviours (religious, social reasoning or logic) like money expenditure, fatality or tolerance for the native speaker of Arabic; however, they might be in contradiction with the English values and beliefs in terms of God, money or relations with the others.

On the other hand, the situation becomes much more complex when the student tries to use some idiomatic expressions that are inherent in the Algerian socio-cultural heritage. Indeed, these idiomatic sayings are expressed in the Algerian spoken Arabic (a mixture of Arabic, French, Amazigh and even few words in Turkish) which makes any kind of literary or contextual translation very difficult despite their actual philosophical or educational values. In fact, we can just mention three cases that have become famous because they have been used by his excellence the President Bouteflika in his different speeches:

Case One: the sense of the saying refers to ambition (or projects) and the means that are not always available. الرقصات بزاف في الراس و الرجلين ما قدروها.

Case Two: the President is referring to the political and security problems that have faced Algeria in the near past and; fortunately, they have been overcome because of the politics adopted by the President.

Case Three: in this saying the President is describing the Algerian most important traits of character namely pride and courage.

Besides, there are certain English idiomatic expressions that would probably represent a very difficult 'puzzle' in terms of reference and meaning. Indeed, the problem is usually due to the non-mastery of the English socio-cultural components (history, geography, traditions, etc.). The following simple cases would illustrate this kind of difficulties:

Case One: Do not carry coal to Newcastle. (The student should beforehand know that Newcastle is a place where there is a lot of coal and, consequently, he would be able to understand the real sense of the idiomatic expression: geographical reference).

Case Two: He has taken French leave and disappeared. (The student should know the English connotations about the behaviours of the French people: historical reference).

Case Three: He is a bad penny. (The openly expressed sense is seemingly related to money but the implied meaning is the description of a useless and bad person: traditional reference).

On the whole, we can notice that comprehension difficulties take place when the idiomatic expression refers to particular historical events or typical English socio-cultural behaviours. Furthermore, the Algerian local student may find problems not only in the comprehension of such expressions; but he can even face difficulties (a feeling of frustration) in the production of the foreign language. The reason is that he is unable to transmit (in English) the various connotations, references and allusions which exist in his native language

1.3.3.2. Discourse Markers: The significance of discourse markers in teaching English as a foreign language

It is obviously impossible to achieve a global and detailed study of 'Discourse Markers' within the limited scope of this part. Nevertheless, we will try, as objectively as possible, to give an explicit and clear explanation of this term through a careful examination of some points of view which are put forward by linguists when dealing with this point. Then, we will attempt to show the influence of 'Discourse Markers' on foreign language teaching, and how they can be used in language learning. Lastly, we intend to demonstrate the significance of 'Discourse Markers' in teaching the four language skills.

• Definitions and Types of Discourse Markers

At the beginning, we think that it is necessary to present an appropriate definition of 'Discourse Markers'. Usually, what is meant by the term 'Discourse Markers' is a thread of expressions (lexical, grammatical and also 'intonational'); which help in creating a cohesive text. As C. James (1980:103) suggests, there are some devices which make a text well-ordered and explicit: "A text is not just a random sequence of content-related sentences: the sentences appear in a fixed order and, over and above this, there are formal devices which signal the exact nature of the relationship holding between successive sentences". Those devices may be grammatical, lexical, or in speech 'intonational'. Therefore, it is clear that 'Discourse Markers' or 'formal devices' have an important influence on one's speech and writing, and we think, that is why linguists have been trying for many years to investigate and categorize 'Discourse Markers' in order to find out how they work and also the mechanisms which govern them.

For instance, C. James (1980) divides 'Discourse Markers' into two broad categories: lexical devices and grammatical devices. He suggests that among lexical devices there are the relations of synonymy and hyponymy into which lexical items in the various sentences enter. In other words, within the same text, one can find several words which are near-synonyms (for example: paediatrician, children's specialist, doctor for children) on the one hand, and on the other there is a super-ordinate term (or 'hyperonym') which is linked to its hyponyms (for instance: doctor, physician, specialist, paediatrician).

The second category is grammatical devices. This type of devices usually comprises four components which are reference, ellipsis, comparison and parallel structure.

First, reference means the possibility to refer by language, to another piece of language within a given text; this sort of reference is called 'endophoric' reference. There are other types of reference, but we prefer not to deal with them at length because they require a detailed discussion which is not actually the prior objective of this part. In order to have a clear idea about reference, we propose to study the following example: 'Keith read this book. He did not find it interesting.' Here, the pronouns 'he' and 'it' refer respectively to 'Keith' and 'book', and we can note that these pronouns are used in order to avoid repetition; furthermore, they are entirely related to the nouns they replace.

Moreover, R. Quirk (1968) goes further beyond this and suggests that reference should comprise the principles of assumption, abbreviation and abstraction. He supports his argument

by the following example: 'When I asked if John would play a tune for me, he did.' In the last two words, the pronoun 'he' replaces 'John' while 'did' is an abbreviation not of a clause that has already occurred but of the one we can assume at this point 'played a tune for me'. Now if we replace 'a tune' by 'the tune', we illustrate the assumptive process in language, since the use of 'the' indicates the speaker's assumption that his hearer knows the tune to which he is referring. Finally, the principle of abstraction is equally obvious in the example, because 'John' is an abstraction of: human being, male, plays an instrument, etc.

Second, the notion of ellipsis can be defined as pro-forms which are used to represent fuller forms occurring elsewhere; a degree of reduction is achieved by their use. Ellipsis brings about the total elimination of a segment of text. In other words, we tend to omit certain words, usually in our speech but also in writing, which we do not regard as necessary, and consequently their omission cannot alter our message. We can illustrate the concept of ellipsis by this example: 'Have you been to Moscow?' A possible answer could be: '(I have) Never (been to Moscow).' It appears that 'I have' and 'been to Moscow' do not add any information, and therefore, they can be eliminated.

Third, we may possibly consider comparison as a grammatical device which can not only be manifested at the surface structure of the utterance or sentence, but may also be achieved across sentence-boundaries. In addition, we suggest the analysis of these two examples: 'Mary is more beautiful than Jane.' Here, comparison is located in one sentence and manifested through the use of comparative morphemes 'more' and 'than'. Whereas in 'My father is over 70. My mother is only 60.' there is no statement of comparison, no use of a comparative morpheme and yet the comparison is implied; the reader or listener has to 'analyse' in order to relate the two sentences together.

Fourth, this component is called parallel structure because sometimes the experienced writer reverses the maxim of variety (i.e. not to use similar structures) and strings together two or three sentences with parallel structures. The effect of this construction is to tie the sentences together conceptually so that they are read as one cohesive entity of text. The following sentences give an interesting representation of parallel structures: 'My paintings the visitors admired. My sculptures they disliked.' It is noticeable that in these sentences the writer deliberately uses a parallel structure. As a matter of fact, we can point out that the writer did not use the usual English word order (i.e. subject-verb-object) but employed another pattern (i.e. object-subject-

verb), in order to make the reader or listener understand the two sentences as contrastive without the presence of a contrastive conjunction such as 'but' or 'however'.

There is another point of view provided by M. A. K. Halliday and R. Hasan (1976). As a matter of fact, they categorize 'Discourse Markers' or elements of cohesion into three types: reference, substitution or ellipsis and conjunction. They differ from Carl James' (1980) classification in that they introduce a new element (i.e. conjunction), and they use the terms substitution or ellipsis in a different sense.

Firstly, M. A. K. Halliday and R. Hasan (1976) make a distinction between substitution and reference. They point out that with substitution there is no implication of specificity. The substitution relation has no connection with specifying a particular referent; it is quite neutral in this regard. In reference there is typically identity of referent. Substitution is used where there is no such identity. It is possible to make this point explicit through these examples of Substitution: 'Are they selling the contents? Yes, they are (selling). No, they are not (selling). Does she paint for profit? No, she does it for pleasure.'

Secondly, the authors suggest that conjunction is based on the assumption that there are in the linguistic system forms of systematic relationships between sentences. The logical relations are embodied in linguistic structure, in the form of coordination, apposition, modification, etc. For example 'and, yet, subsequently, after' and many others represent semantic links between the elements that are constitutive of text. In fact, we think it is worth pointing out that these connections depend on the meanings which sentences express. These meanings are essentially of two types: experiential that represents the linguistic interpretation and; interpersonal which indicates the participation in the speech situation.

The idea that these 'links' are rather semantic and not grammatical is also supported by Teun A. van Djik (1977). He starts from the point that 'Discourse Markers' not only create connection in a text but they are largely related to its meaning as well. In order to illustrate the notion of connection, we propose the study of the following cases: 'John is a bachelor, so he is not married.' Despite the fact that the second part of the sentence can be easily omitted ('ellipsis' is used by Carl James whereas 'substitution' is preferred for M. A. K. Halliday and R. Hasan), because 'bachelor' implies 'not married', yet the example represents the semantic characteristic of 'Discourse Markers' in this case. The reason is that the following sentence can be grammatically perfect, but from a semantic perspective it is not meaningful: 'John is a bachelor, so Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands.' van Djik (1977) argues that in the first place it

should be observed that these constraints are indeed semantic and not syntactic. Therefore, if we produce a sentence like this:' Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands, I hereby declare this meeting opened.' Obviously, as we have indicated above, this type of sentences is grammatically well-formed but it is ambiguous because it does not convey a meaning.

On the whole, it is evident that the discussion of 'Discourse Markers' in accordance with different linguistics and opinions requires a much more complete and technical analysis. However, we have tried to present an overall and simplified explanation with the prior objective of making the notion of 'Discourse Markers' much more accessible to students newly enrolled in learning English as a foreign language within an intercultural perspective at university level.

• Discourse Markers and Learners' Proficiency in the Four Language Skills

In the second part of the present analysis, we will try to indicate the significance of 'Discourse Markers in foreign language teaching. Nowadays, it has become quite axiomatic that teaching any particular aspect of a foreign language necessitates its connection to the context in which the discourse occurs. It is commonly recognized that the ultimate aim of foreign language learning is the mastery of both the linguistic and communicative competence. Indeed, H.G. Widdowson (1978) stresses this particular point. He puts forward the apparently simple fact that learning a foreign language involves acquiring the ability to compose correct sentences! That is one aspect of the matter. But it also involves acquiring an understanding of which sentences, or parts of sentences, are appropriate in a particular context.

Consequently, in view of the importance of 'Discourse Markers' in language, it is unwise to teach them in isolated sentences, because the foreign language students will be more concentrated on the construction of 'grammatical sentences' without probably noticing the significant role of 'Discourse Markers in the consolidation of the cohesion, appropriateness and the general comprehension of the discourse. In fact, H. G. Widdowson (1978) suggests that teaching 'Discourse Markers' has to be in a way that utterances would be such as to ensure that each proposition fitted in with the others. That is what was meant by sentences which were contextually appropriate. For further clarification, we prefer to use the example suggested by the author and try to discuss it thoroughly:

C: Well, did you talk to her?

B: Yes, I did (talk to her).

C: When did she say the parcel would be returned?

B: (she said that the parcel would be returned) Tomorrow.

C: Good, I'll meet her at the shop.

Here C's questions take a form which indicates what he needs to know and B's replies organize the information he has to impart in such a way as to satisfy C's needs. Thus the propositions expressed by C are linked up with those expressed by B to form a continuous propositional development. We can say that the forms of utterances of B and C are contextually appropriate and to ensure that their exchange is cohesive. Therefore, it is very important to present the language learner with a cohesive text or speech, because not only his understanding of a speech or text in the target language will be easier, but he will probably be able to detect the role of 'Discourse Markers' in creating cohesion within a text or speech as well. Here the term cohesion is used in accordance with Widdowson's definition. The notion of cohesion then, refers to the way sentences and parts of sentences combine so as to ensure that there is propositional development.

Consequently, we can observe that 'Discourse Markers' are extremely important in improving the four skills (i.e. speaking, listening, writing and reading) in teaching English as a foreign language. As a matter of fact, we suggest that in order to improve the skill of writing by using 'Discourse Markers', it might be fruitful to give the student a series of disconnected sentences and ask him to produce a cohesive text, as in the sample proposed by H. G. Widdowson as follows:

- 1. Rocks are composed of a number of different substances.
- 2. The different substances of which rocks are composed are called minerals.
- 3. It is according to their chemical composition that minerals are classified.
- 4. Some minerals are oxides.
- 5. Some minerals are sulphides.
- 6. Some minerals are silicates.
- 7. Ores are minerals from which we extract metals.
- 8. What gold is, it is an ore.

A cohesive text for example will be:

Rocks are composed of a number of different substances. Some are oxides, some are sulphides and some are silicates. These substances are called minerals. Minerals are also classified according to their chemical composition. Those from which we extract metals are called ores. Gold, for example, is an ore. (H. G. Widdowson: 1978)

As far as the skill of reading is concerned, it is interesting to observe that a cohesive text should be presented by means of a procedure which is called gradual approximation (the expression is used in Widdowson's interpretation). This involves the development of a series of simple accounts of increasing complexity by reference to two sources: a linguistic source in the form of a set of sentences, and a non-linguistic source in the form of a diagrammatic representation of information.

A study of 'Discourse Markers' can also be used in improving the skill of speaking in order to enable the learner in a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) situation to produce cohesive speech; eventually, his ability to listen and understand will be to a large extend facilitated by 'Discourse Markers'. However, the most important remark that we make is that 'Discourse Markers' should be absolutely taught within an intercultural perspective which requires the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) authentic materials and contextual acts of communication in the English language.

In summary, the simple conclusion we can draw from this discussion is that 'Discourse Markers' not only play a significant role in creating cohesive speech and text, but they are also of a great importance in teaching and leaning English as a foreign language. Therefore, the language teacher must be aware of their crucial function, formal or socio-cultural, in the elaboration of a cohesive English language discourse. This awareness on the part of the foreign language teacher would undoubtedly contribute in the achievement of his complex task which is to teach the target language within an intercultural framework.

1.4. The Intercultural Dimension in English Language Teaching

It is commonly admitted that one of the most important ways in which culture expresses itself is through language. The cultural manifestations are permanently embedded in covert or overt manners in the linguistic exchanges of any speech community. The language of any society plays a mediatory role in the expression, interpretation and memorization of the material (or artefacts) cultural representations of the social group in addition to the attitudes and beliefs common to all

members of the same community along with the accepted activities of any human society. Therefore, language plays a crucial role in the construction of culture and; eventually, the various culture changes.

The close connection of language and culture definitely interprets the foreign language teacher simply because it would be quite unrealistic and ineffective to teach the target language (linguistic level) without due interest in the various cultural components that are obviously manifested through language. As a matter of fact, teaching a linguistic code to people without taking into account the cultural context would necessarily result with misunderstandings or even breakdowns of communication. Consequently, one would easily recognize that foreign language teaching is characterized by two main aspects: teaching members of one community how to 'talk' and also how to 'behave' in the context of another discourse community. Indeed, the pedagogical separation of culture (for instance anthropology) and language (linguistics) has caused foreign language teaching to neglect as it is referred to by C. Kramsh (1993) 'the mediating function' of language in the social construction of culture.

The teaching of culture as a constituent of foreign language teaching has always risen a number of questions, particularly the difficulty in emphasizing the differences or similarities that exist between the native and the target cultures. The second main problem concerns the extent or really degree that should be reached by the foreign language learners in the mastery of the cultural and social conventions of the target language. The issue that faces the language teacher is to determine the 'norms', parameters and requirements which are necessary and constitute the objectives that should be assigned to the foreign language teaching process. Moreover, the term 'intercultural' itself is differently appreciated by numerous actors, that intercultural teaching in the educational context should fulfil the acquisition of information about the customs, institutions and history of the foreign speech community.

Most importantly, the intercultural approach goes beyond the classical knowledge of culture facts. The significant endeavour of the language teacher is to explain the close connections which exist between the culture notions and various artefacts in relationship to their linguistic manifestations. The process should be gradually built through an intense collaboration between the teacher and learners until they reach an acceptable level of culture awareness in the target language. In fact, the main challenge of the intercultural approach is the interrelation of the cultural patterns to the appropriate and correct linguistic constructions. The principal difficulty

obviously lays in teaching through demonstration and practice the abstract link which ties the foreign language linguistic structures and their socio-cultural counterparts.

Unfortunately, the multiple advances made by researchers in the domain of intercultural language teaching, still in general, present limited views of both language and culture. In practice, as it has been cleverly put by C. Kramsh (1993: 88): "teachers teach language and culture, or culture in language, but not language as culture." We are convinced that the origin of the problem goes far beyond the foreign language teacher or the classroom situation. It is rather directly related to the disparate views that different speech communities have about the conceptions of culture itself.

In fact, culture can be considered to be that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a particular society. Even the question of geographical, ethnic or linguistic proximity does not necessarily signify a better understanding of dissimilar cultures. Thus, anthropologists frequently make the point that people sharing substantially the same culture speak languages that belong to disparate and diverse language families and; contrariwise, that people whose languages are related may have very different cultures.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the cultural changes in turn represent an additional problem to the intercultural teaching mechanisms. Indeed, causes of linguistic change must be sought in the cultural contexts; for it is here that the complex structures of language are constituted to fit the numberless meaningful situations provided by the daily experiences of the members of a society. In brief, an increase in the rapidity of linguistic change by virtue of cultural changes that are stimulated by outside contacts may be far more rapid than the foreign language pace of progression in the language mastery. In other words, both the language teacher and learners would be confronted with the problem of delimiting and determining the appropriate and useful linguistic and cultural components which should be incorporated in the syllabus.

1.5. The Intercultural Class in Teaching English as a Foreign Language Context

At the beginning of the analysis of this particular point; we think it is necessary to clarify the different concepts that are usually used in relationship to the varied terminology that is employed to describe the intercultural class in a TEFL situation. Generally, there are three principal concepts that are dealt with in this context, namely the cross-cultural, intercultural and multicultural types of class.

The terms 'cross-cultural' and 'intercultural' are usually referred to interchangeably in the same sense. In fact, the connotation they both bring about is closely related to the idea of a connection or relationship that may exist between two cultures and languages with a special focus on the international and political dimensions (C. Kramsh: 1998). The considerations which are assigned to the two concepts regard the question in terms of individual and distinct nation, culture and language. In other words, the singularity that characterizes this belief implies necessarily a kind of a linguistic and culture shock that may occur when learners of a particular speech community decide to acquire and eventually use the language of another society.

Within the context of foreign language teaching, the whole process of cross-cultural or intercultural teaching is considered to be an effective means for better understanding of largely different cultures and languages. One may observe that the term 'intercultural' in particular implies in addition a kind of communication that takes place within the context of the same national language. However, the users (or speakers) may belong or originate from completely different ethnic groups, social classes or even separate cultures. In other words, such communication necessitates a dialogue within societies of actually disparate and disproportionate cultures (i.e. minority and dominant) and bilingual population.

The third term that is often open to debate in issues that concern culture language teaching is the notion of 'multicultural'. This concept is considered from two separate positions. The first view attributes a wide conception to multicultural communication which is; in fact, a societal dimension that describes communication inside the same speech community but it occurs between people from varied social backgrounds and ethnicities. The second view focuses on the individual dimension of the multicultural communication; its scope is narrow because it is only interested in the individual speaker.

This kind of communication involves a multicultural speaker with various linguistic resources and who masters numerous social strategies of communication and; above all, who can perfectly adopt multiple cultures within the same speech society. Such communicant may self-assign different social roles or situations in different contexts which he vehicles through the same language that he shares with the other members of the speech community.

1.5.1. Pedagogical Implications

There are usually three major parameters that characterize the intercultural perspective, in teaching English as a foreign language. The first element represents the general background upon which the course is founded; and it should certainly reflect an intercultural view of the instructional materials. The second factor is intimately related to the nature of the courses and activities which should be incorporated in the syllabus; however, it is evident that the contents should emphasize the culture-related themes. The third component is the most significant one because it is connected to the language teacher's attitudes towards the students' backgrounds and the materials which are used.

On the other hand, the major requirements which the important participants like teachers and administrators should definitely possess; are a thorough awareness and deep understanding of the intrinsic relationship between language and culture. This type of attitude would certainly enhance the planning, elaboration and realization of the intercultural materials. The general principles which characterize all languages and cultures can be summarized as follows:

- * All languages comprise a large number of idiomatic expressions that far exceed the meaning of individual words.
- * The spoken record of any language is extensively influenced by a great spectrum of intonation patterns. The degree of the tone voice (loudness/softness) can single out the language and culture of any speech community.
- * The kinetic feature (like gestures and body movements) is found in every human language. Its major function is to convey certain meanings which are not necessarily expressed linguistically. Obviously, those gestures and body movements differ from one language to another as they may also be shared by some languages.
- * The description of the external world or the immediate surrounding necessitates different grammatical units in the human languages.
- * In all human speech communities there are taboos (for instance they can be traditional or religious etc...) and the full mastery of the native or foreign languages requires at least knowledge of the time, participants and situation of any act of communication.
- * The rules of address and social relationship differ considerably from one society to another; consequently, the linguistic expressions are equally very varied in accordance to the social norms and conventions of communities.

Evidently, it is not an easy task to conceive this kind of pedagogical materials. However, the basic elements that constitute the source of the syllabus are the major constituents of any culture namely: population, pop culture, religion, family, customs, character, cities, business and attitudes towards other cultures and languages. One cannot deny that instructional materials would certainly tend to reflect one-dimensional view which characterizes the foreign language. This aspect can be easily comprehended because- as it is recognized by the majority of sociologists- it is very difficult to escape from one's own culture. Therefore, such materials would convey culture-bound ideas and attitudes in all lessons and activities which constitute socio-linguistic representations of solely the foreign language.

As a matter of fact, it becomes necessary to adapt a treatment of these materials which should feature at least two contrasting cultural perspectives (the native and the foreign languages). Teacher's role is quite important in this case, one of his primordial tasks is to modify these materials in such a way that they would express a binary or even multi-dimensional perspective. For instance, a particular emphasis should be put on some important social components like habits and customs; because they are believed to be quite disparate from one community to another. One may cite a number of traits that typically single out some societies like individualism, egalitarianism, competition, experience, impatience, and many other elements that constitute the overall characteristics of human societies.

We should be undoubtedly aware of the various difficulties which we may encounter in the implementation process of an intercultural approach of teaching English as a foreign language. The first question concerns the amount of the core curriculum that should be devoted to the teaching of the cultural issues. The successful integration of the cultural aspects in the materials and methodology depends to a large extent on teachers' attitudes. As we have indicated above, teachers should be fully convinced that the teaching of the foreign language culture does not interfere or hamper the basics of English language teaching.

The second problem is related to the scale of importance which is assigned to the components of the syllabus. It is generally believed that intercultural activities should be given a secondary (less important) position; consequently, the negative impact of such attitude would be to lessen students' motivation in learning and practising the culture tasks. Therefore, it is crucial to give the same importance in the curriculum to the linguistic and cultural components. Teachers should demonstrate and make it clear to students that the mastery of the foreign language (English) would be surely incomplete if one constituent is neglected.

The third issue is the significant endeavour which consists of the elaboration of a syllabus that attempts to create a kind of balance between the three major components. Equal importance and harmony should exist between the topics that are intimately related to culture, the appropriate activities to be developed and the necessary linguistic (grammatical, semantic and phonological) elements that have to be taught. This type of harmony in the syllabus requires the development of the effective teaching strategies that take into consideration the culture factor.

The fourth question is directly connected to the English language teacher. We believe that English language teachers should be enrolled in a kind of in-service training programme. Despite the fact that many English language teachers are aware of the issues related to intercultural communication, a great number of those teachers do not really receive any professional training and display very limited abilities in teaching English as a foreign language within the cultural dimension. In the local present situation, University teachers have different backgrounds, the first main type of English language teachers have little or no formal training at all. The other category of English language teachers has started their teaching careers at the secondary level and they have probably received extensive teaching training. However, the intercultural perspective in the past has always been a secondary or event absent issue in the majority of the training programmes. Therefore, we think it has become really necessary in the present days to develop those in-service training programmes with a special attention to the cultural approach in teaching English at University level.

The fifth factor concerns the nature, elaboration and implementation of the appropriate teaching programmes. One should take into account numerous elements which directly contribute in the constitution of the programmes: the theoretical background to foreign language teaching, practical courses in applied linguistics, in-class training and; most importantly, the extensive training in intercultural teaching pedagogy. As a matter of fact, a competent foreign language teacher should possess an extended background in contrastive analysis, an awareness of cultural anthropology of the English language and Arabic (students' native language) in addition to the mastery of effective teaching strategies that develop learners' linguistic performance in various intercultural situations.

The sixth element assigns a particular focus on EFL students. In an ideal situation, students should be able to preserve and value their cultural identities while they learn and probably appreciate the cultural manifestations that exist in the English language. Learners- with the assistance of the foreign language teacher- should be given opportunities (in or out of the

classroom) to discover the universality of many cultural constituents which are common to the native and target cultures. This situation would undoubtedly higher students' motivation and; probably, would facilitate the learning process.

Lastly, it is clear that courses in intercultural communication or comparative cultures in TEFL programmes can be encouraged through the organization of workshops or; eventually, the participation in some training sessions which might be proposed in other Universities. We do believe that a close and fruitful collaboration is absolutely necessary between the different Universities from a regional, national or even international perspective.

On the whole, the strengthening of the intercultural dimension in EFL training programmes should necessarily seek to realize the following necessary requirements:

- * The Algerian University English language teachers should definitely master (part of their post-graduation studies) topics and be able to discuss issues in intercultural communications.
- * The extensive and durable collaboration with the English speaking foreign countries particularly Great Britain and the Unites States of America. Workshops, in-service training programmes, short sojourns in those countries would certainly enable the foreign language teacher of English to become more aware of the various cultural phenomena and; therefore, he would be able to better teach English with all its cultural diversity.
- * If the collaboration with the English or American Universities is not possible for whatever reasons (for example financial costs or absence of conventions etc...) we think that the creation and development of local in-service training programmes in intercultural teaching is quite feasible. Indeed, the procedures that would help in the conception of such in-service training programmes can be easily (many eminent and competent professionals do exist and exert in the Algerian Universities) achieved on the local, regional or national levels.
- * The incorporation of both linguistic and cultural parameters in all the lessons that constitute the English language teaching syllabuses. EFL programmes should inevitably comprise issues that encourage and improve on the comparative process of the Algerian and British cultures. Hence, intercultural education would become a prior component of any English language instruction and the materials that would be used in the teaching operation would necessarily reflect and encourage the different intercultural aspects.

- * The implementation and probably the successful application of such programmes (cultures relationships) require particular strategies for teaching English within the intercultural dimension.
- * The adequate conditions should be provided (whenever possible) to select a number of major students and organize short-run sojourns in English speaking foreign countries. No one would deny the great pedagogical and even social benefits which can be driven from such programmes in relationship to the questions of effective foreign language mastery and students' high motivation.
- * On the practical level, it is obviously not possible to create new TEFL syllabi in the short run; however, we think it is quite feasible to make an efficient use of the already existing programmes. The procedure is generally simple and it mainly consists of identifying and selecting materials namely textbooks (a large variety of these texts does exist) which clearly and inherently embody the various culture aspects. However, foreign language teachers should ensure that the different activities, exercises, grammar structures and vocabulary are precisely placed within a cultural context. Foreign language teachers would certainly agree that all the various and available audio-visual aids and generally ICT; nowadays play a significant part in the intercultural teaching programmes.

1.6. Textbooks and Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching

It is obvious that a thorough discussion of the numerous questions that are arisen, in relationship to the necessary cultural constituents which should characterize textbooks in the intercultural perspective is very difficult within the limited scope of this section. However, we think it is important to analyse some primordial issues which play a significant role in the process of textbooks elaboration especially in connection with intercultural foreign language teaching.

One of the main questions concerns the distinction that should be made between cultural content and cultural media. In fact, the inclusion of the cultural components in textbooks is far more complex than a mere checklist of various intercultural elements. The foreign language teaching process require two major principles: the first point is related to the nature and function of the medium itself which is used to teach the target culture. The second problem is the

difficulty that one may face in the selection of the most appropriate and useful cultural constituents; in other words, it is extremely complex to decide what cultural units should be incorporated or dismissed from the textbook.

The main risk as it were that may be encountered by textbooks designers is the absence of correlation between the cultural phenomena represented in textbooks and the cultures of learning and teaching used respectively by students and teachers. Indeed, the appropriate information and the framework of the teaching process may be inadequate or useless with regard to the principal objectives of the target culture teaching operation.

Nowadays, it is largely accepted that communication in real life situations is always contextualized; moreover, it is also recognized that culture is a major constituent of the linguistic and social contexts. Therefore, we can find it evident that culture is one of the most important prerequisite of any kind of successful acts of communication. As a result, the contents of any textbook should aim at developing students' communicative competence in different situations. In addition, those insights into the target culture should necessarily and ultimately lead to the creation and continuous increase of learners' positive attitudes towards the native speakers of the foreign language.

Textbooks should clearly include various and significant elements of the target culture; in fact, the issue has been discussed at length by scholars like M. Moerman (1998) and M. Byram B. Gribkova, and H. Starkey (2002). They generally stipulate that the cultural contents should reflect not only the cultural products (arts, literature etc...) and the cultural background of the community (history, geography etc...) but also that textbooks should comprise aspects and samples of native speakers' behaviours, attitudes and the social knowledge that they use to interpret the linguistic code or message. It is actually important that foreign language learners should be able to positively differentiate between their own cultural framework and the one they would probably encounter in the foreign language. If learners fail to master this crucial aspect of target culture learning, they will resort to interpreting the foreign language messages using their own cultural background and; consequently, misunderstandings and even breakdowns of communication may take place.

The roles of textbooks within the intercultural foreign language teaching perspective may take many aspects. Within this context, we think it is interesting to discuss some major roles that have been proposed by M. Cortazzi. and LixianJin (1999). However, in the process of analysing and evaluating these roles; we would eventually introduce a number of other functions which we

consider to be quite necessary in order to obtain a nearly global view of the different roles incorporated in foreign language teaching textbooks:

- A teaching tool: it instructs students about English language cultures.
- A mapping tool: it represents a global view of foreign linguistic and cultural elements.
- A source tool: it proposes materials and exercises which can be used by the learner.
- A training tool: it provides novice teachers of foreign languages with explanations and guidelines.
- A referential tool: it is regarded as a credible reference that teachers and learners can rely on.
- A skill-formation tool: it offers opportunities to the foreign language teacher and also students to constitute a creative, critical and interpretive ability in dealing with the target culture.
- An ideological tool: it reflects a globalized idea about the positive attitudes that one may have with respect to other cultures and languages.

Generally, textbooks should focus on a large spectrum of cultural components that are necessarily embedded and conveyed in any act of human communication. The first element is the social identity that is related to questions such as social stratification and ethnical groups. The second element represents the multiple social interactions which are determined by the disparate levels of formality and informality. The third factor deals with the different beliefs that may exist in the target culture and the various behaviours which are adopted by native speakers; for example the religious, moral and cult phenomena.

The fourth parameter should suggest some insights and ultimately in-depth analyses of the social and political organizations of the foreign speech community. For instance, governmental institutions, justice, social security systems and health care mechanisms; these elements do represent the 'pillars' upon which any modern society is founded.

The fifth factor constitutes the social life determinants of the foreign language community. The family structure, the educational system and employment organization can greatly contribute in indicating the life style or cycle which is adopted by the foreign society. The sixth determining feature is the historical development of the target speech community; it is known that past events largely influence present day situation. Information about the history of the foreign language society would certainly ease and provide better criteria of judgement that can be issued by the foreign language learners.

The seventh element is related to geographical factors which characterize and have an impact on the social and cultural life of the target language community. It is easy to imagine that a comparative analysis of the target and native language geographies would surely provide information about the similar and different culture features that exist between the two communities; therefore, a better understanding of each other's cultures would be possible. The eighth and final factor is the sum of the varied stereotypes and identities that may typically exist in the target society. Knowing these elements would certainly increase the foreign language learners' awareness of the significant and most valuable symbols and representatives (persons, things and animals) that play a major part in the identification of the target language culture.

1.6.1. Types of EFL Textbooks and the Cultural Components

A careful study of the numerous textbooks that incorporate the intercultural perspective in foreign language teaching (TEFL in particular) indicates that they can be classified into three principal categories (J. M. Valdes, 1986, C. Kramsh, 1993, E. Hinkel, 1999):

The first type is based upon an approach which assigns primacy to the source or local cultures instead of the target cultures. These textbooks are usually produced at the national level and their general objectives are to present and value the students' own cultures; the foreign language is only used as a vehicle which should reflect the local cultures. The most important implication is that students should be able to talk about their own cultures using the target language; they are not really expected to have insights into the target culture.

In this situation, communication that occurs between the learner and the native speaker of English seems to be segmented into two main separate parts: the level of the learners' own cultural backgrounds and the foreigners' cultural identities. In other words, there is no commonground of cultural elements that are shared by both the learners and the native speakers of English. One would certainly agree that the major drawback of this kind of textbooks is that it would probably lead to miscommunication and; eventually, end up with misunderstanding.

A second 'flaw' that is apparent in these textbooks is related to the situations and places in which the different dialogues take place: the setting is often the students' own countries; unfortunately there is no reference to the English locations or places. We believe that the final objective of the designers of this kind of textbooks is to make students aware of their own cultural entities as it is the case with other textbooks elaborated for the teaching of disciplines

like history, sociology etc,. The only difference is that the materials are presented in the English language.

The general argument which is usually put forward is that younger learners of English should in the first place become aware and appreciate the homeland cultures before being 'exposed' to cultures of English speaking societies. Obviously, this argumentation is based upon the principle that advocates the feasibility of separating language and culture. We do not think that it is possible to teach English as a foreign language without due reference to the English culture dimension; nowadays it is widely approved that linguistic competence is only a component of communicative competence.

The inclusion of foreign culture components can by no means represent a threat to the learners' ethnic identities. The Algerian situation is quite significant, young pupils at primary and intermediary levels do learn foreign languages (French and English); however, this situation to our knowledge has never resulted with an alienation of the pupils' own cultures. Consequently, many Algerian citizens are bilingual (a large number of people are natural bilinguals) or even multilingual (they can easily speak Arabic, Amazigh, French and English). In addition, they are undoubtedly aware and understand other cultures; and this situation doe not pose any kind of psychological or sociological problems.

Another argument that one can advance is that the local cultural identities (in the case of TEFL situation) are not necessarily factors that help in the mastery of intercultural competence. In fact, intercultural communication competence- as it has been defined by M. J. Collier and M. Thomas (1988) and S. Ting-Toomey (1993) - represents a negotiation process in various situations (native language, occupation, age, gender etc...) in addition to the ability to discuss shared meanings, rules and results. One main and serious consequence of this type of textbooks is that not only rare occasions are offered to learners to discuss and evaluate intercultural components, but even their linguistic competence in the foreign language is not of a high level of proficiency.

The second type of textbooks within the intercultural perspective is the one that is founded on the target culture. In the present days, very sophisticated textbooks are elaborated and they largely incorporate materials that are intended to rise the foreign language learners' awareness of universal issues (that naturally exist in almost all human cultures) like the environment, race, social welfare etc., Those textbooks do apply a modern approach that highlights the social

cultural universality. They intelligently discuss in an agreeable presentation issues connected to social, moral or economic questions.

A great number of these textbooks can be qualified as eclectic in the choice of topics and principally the organization and presentation of the contents; their designers generally view the foreign language and culture as definitely complementary. They also encourage foreign language learners to acquire the target culture in accordance with one's own cultural norms. This absence of any conflicting culture clashes does indeed increase students' awareness and acceptance of the foreign cultural constituents.

In other words, learners are involved in activities that enhance learners' interpretations, elaborations and responses to intercultural issues that equally exist in their native cultures. The students' emotional involvement is never dismissed; on the contrary, materials in these textbooks not only advocate a cognitive analysis of the culture questions but also encourage the expression of affective attitudes. For instance, issues such as racial segregation in the United States or immigrants in the United Kingdom can be dealt with in some units. In reality, learners are encouraged to discuss such problems and truly give their opinions about these complex questions through a careful comparison with their own national situation.

In general, these textbooks do not try to elude taboo questions; as a matter of fact, they often present complex and deep issues of the target culture without the implication of any prejudice on the part of the foreign language teacher or learners. In addition, one may notice another positive feature that characterizes the second type of textbooks. It mainly consists of the special emphasis which is given to various English speaking communities and not just the limited boundaries of England or the United States. These textbooks show a large and diverse variety of cultural coverage in many countries such as Scotland, India or Nigeria where questions related to history, politics, society, technology and religion are extensively debated and analysed with the encouragement of learners' effective contributions.

Additionally, materials that are integrated in the programmes originate from a very large spectrum of works produced by eminent and diverse authors, journalists or intellectuals who constitute a wide scope of the influential foreign language communities. The foreign language teacher incidentally increases students' confidence in discussing those writings and analysing the different opinions. Moreover, these textbooks are edited with very attractive illustrations and graphs and images that typically uncover the numerous cultural manifestations that exist in the foreign culture.

On the whole, this kind of textbooks is based on the assumption that they should reflect the target culture. However, students are given opportunities to understand and evaluate the foreign culture questions in relationship to their counterparts which exist in their own cultures.

The third kind of textbooks is not particularly based upon the source culture or the target culture. It rather incorporates a wide range of cultures that originate primarily from English-speaking nations; nevertheless, these textbooks also propose materials from countries where English is used as an international language. In fact, the approach which is adopted in this category of textbooks regards English as a means of communication which is used on a universal scale. It is believed that the usual users of English are certainly the native speakers but; surprisingly, a tremendous number of acts of communication actually occur with communicants from different nationalities. The cultural backgrounds of such textbooks are universal; hence, the focus is not particularly put on the English speaking societies.

However, a common cultural thread is used in the form of themes which are shared by a number of countries but they do not necessarily practise the same cultural rituals. The question of fragmentation of topics is eluded because a common theme (for instance marriage or employment) may be tackled in an intercultural dimension. Evidently, the successful application of such textbooks depends on the well-known pedagogical trilogy which is realized through the effective interaction between the language teacher, the materials and the foreign language learners. The type of textbooks is not logically a guarantee of its success and effectiveness; hence, appropriate and also novel methods of teaching that are especially adapted to intercultural teaching of foreign languages represent a major component of the entire process.

The role of the foreign language teacher goes beyond the usual tasks; his part in the intercultural class is really important even if the nature of the syllabus itself is not teacher-centred. The language teacher's tasks as a mediator take a new dimension in various aspects. The language teacher should manage but not dismiss students' views about how foreign culture is laid out in the textbook; in fact, his role is labelled as a representative of the culture components. This representative function on the part of the teacher necessitates a number of requirements which would probably determine the success of the text.

The most significant element is the previous knowledge or information that the language teacher should possess about the cultural phenomenon which is referred to in the text under study. If the knowledge of the target culture is limited or insufficient, the language teacher's contribution can be in the form of the provision of cultural resources. These resources usually

originate from the teacher's or learners' own cultures and they are utilized in a representative ethnographic scheme.

It is important to remind that in such situation the EFL class in the foreign language culture learning; the syllabus should be at the same time content-based and medium-based. In this kind of programmes, students obviously learn the target culture; however, the learning strategies they develop originate from their personal cultural backgrounds. Likewise, language teachers certainly teach the foreign language culture but their teaching strategies are not only founded on their idiosyncratic experience as professionals but also on their individual cultural traits.

The types of culture in the learning process are a primordial constituent of the entire teaching/learning operation. Teachers and learners alike bring about a framework which conveys a total cultural spectrum of values, beliefs, and attitudes that would surely play a determinant role in the success or failure of the teaching/learning process. The cultural interpretations of teachers and students largely depend on the accumulation of previous structures of socialization throughout the developmental process of former teaching and learning experiences. The problem which may face the foreign language learner is the absence of inter-completion or just harmony that may exist between different or even conflicting interpretations with regard to the target culture.

The prism which can be used to filter the culture contents on the part of the language teacher and learners probably leads to the understanding and interpretation of the foreign cultural phenomena within the framework of the source cultures. The serious consequence is that there is a high risk that distortions and misinterpretations of the foreign cultural elements may occur; in this case the source cultures play a negative role because they produce bias views of the foreign culture contents. Therefore, it is crucial to put into application in the teaching/learning process a 'target culture methodology' which definitely consists of mutual understanding of the language teacher's and learners' cultures of learning. This would certainly narrow the gap between the interpretations of the teacher and learners and would offer a much more fertile ground for a real and objective comprehension of the target culture.

The issues that have been discussed in connection with the three main types of textbooks may be classified into three major categories. The first question concerns the type of definition which one can assign to the cultural contents of texts. We have tried to demonstrate the necessity to broaden this definition to an extent that it would be possible to include a great number of pedagogically valuable culture elements. The second question puts emphasis on the attitudes of

foreign language teachers and learners in the interpretations and evaluations of the culture contents in textbooks.

One may recognize that- to a certain extent- we have been able to prove that a positive stance and a non-distorted (because of the source cultures) view of the cultural conventions and beliefs would clearly ease the process of target culture learning. As far as the third point is concerned, we think that a positive development may occur in textbooks under the conditions that the available materials include explicit (not unnecessarily implicit or distorted) cultural components. The language teacher should give priority to the highest attainments in terms of students' intercultural competence.

The fourth factor is related to the nature of the approach which should be adopted in classroom interaction by the foreign language teacher. We have attempted to indicate the multiple advantages that can be drawn from the application of the cooperative approach. We do believe that this approach is particularly appropriate in intercultural teaching where the language teacher himself is actually a co-learner; especially in the Algerian university instructional environment where the foreign language teachers are generally not native speakers of the English language. The development of foreign cultural awareness would probably increase if language teachers and learners gradually build an interpretative procedure which would enable them to better 'master' the different connotations that are usually conveyed in the target culture.

The principal factors which should be integrated in textbooks- if they are used appropriately-would surely increase foreign language cultural awareness. These factors are directly connected to the people of other cultural groups in terms of their behaviours, values, expectations and perspectives. The improvement of learners' understanding of these elements would provide useful skills that enable students to accept the natives' conventions and beliefs and; lastly, learners would reach an acceptable level of cross-cultural communication. As a matter of fact, ethnography in foreign language teaching; particularly in EFL situation greatly and positively affects students through the development of the understanding of their own and foreign language cultures.

It is obvious that the language teacher's role in cultural explicit teaching is undeniably crucial with regard to the encouragements and guidance which he provides to students in order to increase their abilities in multicultural contexts. The teacher's constructive attempts to explain intercultural behaviours-for instance attitudes towards age, wage, thanking and praising- offer opportunities for an easy access to textbooks. The question is not simply to teach foreign cultural

norms but also to develop students' interpretative capabilities of these social conventions. Textbooks which emphasize cross-cultural communication should present situations with a principal objective to be attained in foreign language teaching that is the learners' positive cultural assimilations.

In summation, we can discern a general observation that textbooks in intercultural communication should continuously incorporate the threefold parameter which is the source culture, the target culture and also, other international cultures. Another factor which should not be neglected or overlooked in EFL teaching concerns the nature of the methods that should be applied in classroom situation. Language teacher's knowledge and positive utilization of the various culture teaching approaches and methods; represent additional elements that contribute in the success of foreign language intercultural teaching.

It is evident that the medium (textbooks in this case) used in intercultural teaching and the different cross-cultural methods of teaching cannot be separated; they are culturally interdependent. In addition, there is another useful element in intercultural teaching which is the opportunity it offers to students themselves to discover self-identities and to value the source culture trends.

Lastly, this overall examination of the different kinds of textbooks in intercultural teaching is by no means exhaustive because of the intrinsic difficulties in the understanding and interpretations of intercultural competence. However, we have generally tried to highlight and hopefully present an objective and interesting evaluation of the available types of textbooks which are actually used in cross-cultural teaching.

1.7. Teacher's Pre-requisites in Intercultural English Language Instruction

One may believe that it is ineluctable that the foreign language teacher, within the intercultural perspective of English language teaching should adopt new strategies and methods; the aim is to assure the success of the whole language teaching operation. The present situation requires a renewed view completely different from the traditional acquisition of the language skills presented in a simplistic framework of the foreign country. In fact, intercultural competence is not a mere presentation of some facts that concern another nation. The main objective of the language teacher is to create and develop learners' abilities to communicate meaningfully and sensibly with persons from sometimes totally different cultural backgrounds.

The classroom situation in the intercultural context is quite about intrinsic priorities in the foreign language teaching process and; consequently, new procedures in language teaching/learning become necessary and should be urgently applied. The need for these innovations in intercultural language teaching originates from novel and unusual contexts in which the language teacher is a learner and teacher at the same time. The principal problem which actually faces the language teacher is the priorities that should be given to the teaching process.

It is essential to take into account the new perspectives which do not consider language teaching to be solely a process of accumulation of information and facts about a foreign country. The dominant issue as it has been clearly indicated in many studies is to develop and consolidate new attitudes, skills and awareness in the foreign language and culture.

1.7.1. Teacher's Requirements

The first requirement on the part of the language teacher is to develop specific classroom activities that enhance group work, in order to increase positive and effective group communication. In this kind of activities, learners are principally active participants; they should not be contented with the acquisition of information and the practice of certain skills. On the contrary, a large number of students' contributions and sensitive criticisms are continuously requested and encouraged. What is really interesting about these activities is that they often result with a noticeable increase in learners' motivation in intercultural foreign language learning.

Certainly, these tasks necessitate completely new types of teaching materials. Hence, the global feature that should characterize these materials is the opportunity they offer to language learners in order to undertake research and objectively analyse the cross-cultural manifestations instead of just 'learning' them. Obviously, the ICT and the effective usage of Internet would greatly contribute in making authentic materials available to language learners.

In addition, the language teachers' in-service training at the national or even international levels would probably enable the language teacher to make a maximum and efficient use of the materials at hand. The teacher should constantly exchange and evaluate other's views and experiences; this simple procedure should constitute an essential task in the language teaching operation. The question in this context is not the extent of the teacher's knowledge of the foreign cultural components but; instead to develop in language learners' abilities and skills to interpret

and make use of the facts they find out in the target culture. As we have indicated above, team work in the classroom and research work outside the classroom are the main activities; nevertheless, these tasks should involve a whole process of intercultural learning rather than the mere gathering of cultural aspects about the foreign language speech community.

The foreign language teacher's requirement is related to the kind of relationship with learners that should be created by the teacher. In fact, intercultural teaching assigns an important role to classroom interaction; learners are often asked to discuss matters of self-awareness and other's awareness as well. Indeed, insights into psychological and psycho-pedagogical issues can be of a great help to the language teacher especially when he is confronted with learners' emotions, beliefs and attitudes in the acquisitive process of intercultural competence.

The procedure does not necessarily imply that the language teacher should be highly qualified in psychology; however, he should be able to manage students' emotions in a very subtle manner that would encourage them to take risks. One should also point out that the situation requires this essential task on the part of the language teacher in addition to the usual training that teachers normally practise in cognitive psychology in order to develop learners' language and culture skills. Therefore, as it has been stated earlier, discussions with experienced language teachers in this particular domain along with group work organized in the traditional 'pedagogical committees' can be very useful.

The third teacher's requirement deals with the international cooperation that should be developed with foreign Universities or specialized organizations. The main objective is the elaboration of programmes and workshops that hopefully would promote the different aspects of intercultural foreign language teaching. The benefits that the language teacher can grasp from such collaboration are generally the useful comparisons of the teacher's own experience with what has been achieved in other institutions. The evaluation of the various strategies and methods that have been effectively undertaken (field work) in different places and in completely dissimilar contexts would certainly contribute in the amelioration of teachers' performances.

In our country, the collaboration with a governmental institution such as the British Council which proposes to local English language teachers a variety of activities and workshops is not very effectively 'exploited'. Indeed, these workshops actually encourage discussions and evaluations of intercultural teaching within a kind of a professional network composed of various national and international eminent and experienced English language teachers. The organized

activities would certainly enlarge the scope of the foreign language teacher experience and would improve his professional achievements.

The fourth factor which we consider to be a significant element of the foreign language teacher's qualifications is his own beliefs and attitudes with respect to the target culture. In other words, the teacher's long experience in foreign language teaching may unfortunately bear some negative stereotypes and even misconceptions about the English language and culture. It is generally agreed that the language teacher's positions or prejudices in relation to the foreign language may have a great impact on learners.

Indeed, the language teacher's convictions about some cultural aspects in the foreign speech community even if they convey positive connotations they may; nevertheless, influence learners in such a manner that would prevent them from conceiving their own opinions and attitudes. We think it is useful to remind that the primary aim of intercultural teaching is to enhance students' participation, risk-taking and independent points of view.

The question is actually open to debate; one may distinguish two principal positions: the first view is influenced by the national foreign language education traditions. It usually advocates the adoption of a 'neutral' position on the part of the language teacher; teacher's role is conceived as only an objective guide with the non-implication of any personal beliefs. The second opinion; on the contrary, believes that it is part of teacher's duties to shape and develop learners' openmindedness and positive curiosity.

Whatever the position that is taken by the language teacher; he would always face the problem of students' prejudices and beliefs. It is also highly probable that a great deal of these stereotypes would be in total opposition with the teacher's own conceptions of the target culture. The real challenge that defies the language teacher is the nature of the stereotypes themselves. Despite the fact that they provide learners with rapidity and ease in the constitution of their opinions; unfortunately, experience has shown that they often end up by being deceptive.

Consequently, the knowledge that is presented by the language teacher should be definitely differentiated and precise in order to higher students' awareness of some particularly important issues; principally, the multiple and rich variations of people, languages and cultures. As a matter of fact, learners through intercultural foreign language teaching should develop dispositions to accept these variations and eventually appreciate them.

We believe it is worth pointing out that students' attitudes in relationship to the foreign language and culture represent a key issue in the entire process of the acquisition of culture competence and; therefore, they would be able to acquire a high level proficiency in the target language. The dilemma which really confronts the foreign language teacher is whether to take a neutral position with regard to learners' attitudes and leave them without any interference or; on the contrary, he would clearly show his preferences or disapprovals of foreign cultural behaviours.

We are convinced that the foreign language teacher is able to adopt an intelligent procedure which consists of determining exactly the criteria upon which students should base their judgements. Primacy should be assigned to this first important step because it explicitly shows that learners' stereotypes and judgements are deemed to derive from their own cultures. The second step, which in reality represents a much more difficult task, is concerned with the continuous teacher's attempts to convince some of his students that their national or ethnic cultures are not necessarily 'superior or better' than the target culture.

The ultimate goal would be to increase learners' intercultural awareness and the development of a sense of acceptance of the differences in other cultures. These cross-cultural differences are not obligatory negative (at least in view of the native speakers); besides they may serve to enrich and higher learners' motivation in target culture acquisition.

Finally, we believe that the significant points that we have discussed, and the clarifications we have tried to put forward inevitably drive us to the logical general conclusion that the foreign language teacher can not (or at least it would be very difficult) take a neutral position. Culture questions undoubtedly necessitate that the language teacher reacts to and evaluates the target culture not only as a teacher but also as a human being. The language teacher's judgements naturally depend on the socio-cultural constituents of his own community in addition to the specific traits of his personality.

Therefore, the language teacher should firstly proceed with a deep analysis and evaluation of his personal prejudices and stereotypes (if any) of the foreign language culture and; secondly, he should try to foresee the impact which his own attitude would have on learners. Most importantly, the foreign language teacher should not attempt to convince or subjectively guide students in one way or the other. He should rather offer opportunities and create the adequate environment that would surely enable learners to constitute their own opinions and develop their proper attitudes.

1.8. Elaboration of Culture Learning Activities

Nowadays it is widely recognized that in EFL teaching the cultural dimension cannot be isolated from the mere linguistic aspects. Throughout the materials which are presented to learners, the cultural knowledge is always conveyed in terms of the implication of various aspects of culture like thanking, greeting, rules of address and many other cultural components. In addition, the non-linguistic elements such as facial expressions, gestures, kinesics which actually accompany and are effectively present in the majority of target culture teaching.

Students' motivation is usually increased because they are given occasions to discover other means of expression of feelings and desires in addition to the study of foreign language literature. In fact, the cultural system of any community involves the interaction of cultural patterns in the foreign language itself (English). Furthermore, there are the various connections that may occur between the students' own cultural components and those which exist in the foreign language.

Communication in the foreign language at the individual level implies knowledge of the cultural influences in the target language. Moreover, it is necessary to understand the impact that the learners' own cultural constructions may have on their thoughts, behaviours and ways of expressing themselves both in the native and foreign languages. Obviously, successful crosscultural communication requires the teaching of the target culture. The realization of this major objective necessitates the conception and preparation of an extensive inventory that includes not only the linguistic aspects but also the multiple non-linguistic manifestations of the target culture.

Hence, the learning of any language always takes place within the shared life of a speech community; the social context is a crucial element in the whole process of language acquisition. The reason is that the distinctive linguistic functions and meanings are assimilated within the cultural framework of the society. The mastery of the foreign language which can be near the natives' command of their language depends entirely on the involvement of the cultural elements.

It is evident that any human language is an inherent component of the culture of the society. As language is a means of expressing human linguistic or otherwise behaviours; the acquisition of a foreign language necessarily implies a change of attitudes or even behaviours in connection with the new values and beliefs that exist in the target culture in the process of foreign language

acts of communication. Effectively, communicative behaviours and cultural patterns are interrelated; in fact, linguistic constructions are always influenced by the social conventions, values and beliefs present in the culture of the speech community.

Consequently, the elaboration of cultural activities should definitely take into account this major parameter which is the intimate interconnection between language and culture. Students' cultural awareness and cultural sensitiveness can only be developed through the practice of activities that reflect this dichotomy. Foreign language learners should be prepared to cognitively and socially assimilate the cultural components which are embodied in such activities. The foreign language teacher's role in the optimal achievement of these goals is primordial.

Indeed, one of the teacher's crucial tasks in the usage of cultural activities is to increase students' awareness of foreign cultural patterns and; possibly, to avoid any kind of value judgements or subjective comparisons with the source culture. The conception of cultural activities is a quite complex process because students learning English as a foreign language within the intercultural dimension have to grasp numerous socio-linguistic categories and codifications. The attainment of a native like proficiency in the foreign language depends to a great extent on the mastery of these cultural constituents.

Cultural universality along with individual differences in the learners' native languages represent a principal factor in easing the process of cultural awareness, in fact, all human languages in reality establish and express these cultural discrepancies. Additionally, efficient cultural activities should be able to ensure that learners discern those cultural distinctions extensively and regularly.

Therefore, the most important factors that can lead to the achievement of this primordial objective should be very carefully analysed. As a matter of fact, many scholars have been interested in this aspect of foreign language culture learning; and we think that the model suggested by I. Cakir (2006) does constitute a concise procedure that can be summarized in the following:

- * To evolve students' communicative skills;
- * To be able to consciously comprehend the linguistic and cultural patterns both of native and target cultures;
- * To increase students' intercultural and international understanding;
- * To perceive their own reality from a larger perspective;

* To higher students motivation through the practice of such pleasant activities in order to develop their comprehension, interpretation and evaluation of foreign cultural patterns.

After having set up the principal objectives that should be assigned to the cultural activities; the following step is normally to look for the most appropriate sources that would positively contribute in the process. It has been already demonstrated that language is profoundly embedded in culture; therefore, certain essential cultural manifestations are very useful in target culture acquisition. These elements can be exemplified through spoken authentic materials like native speakers' utterances, reading of original writings, and also analysis of pictures or videos showing natives' involvement in social activities.

In addition, cultural activities should provide opportunities to use different words and expressions in the foreign language with greater skill and authenticity. The most significant aims are the possibility to grasp the various levels of language in their appropriate social contexts, the development of natural behaviours with people who belong to different cultures and the acceptance of other's natural and cultural reactions. Lastly, it is essential to offer learners occasions to 'expose' their own cultures in a positive and comprehensive state of mind to native speakers of the target culture.

The application of cultural activities should be duly accompanied by a number of effective techniques. Within this context, we think that it is interesting to mention and discuss those which have been suggested by K. Chastain (1988). These techniques are evidently not exhaustive but they can to a certain extent represent the various existing materials. For instance, the promotion of cross-cultural dialogues can be achieved through the use of role-play in EFL classrooms in order to avoid cultural lassitude and to encourage oral communication. Moreover, there are numerous other techniques that would be discussed individually in relationship to the four language skills such as simulation, games, culture assimilators, culture capsules and culture-grams.

The principal and significant outcomes that should be attained by the foreign language teacher after the utilization of cultural activities have been clearly summed up by H.H Seelye as early as 1988 and developed afterwards by Wilga M. Rivers during the same decade. Generally, the two scholars agree that at the end of the teaching programme; students should be able to display a high degree of understanding of the target culture, to develop abilities in cross-cultural communication and to demonstrate positive attitudes. These three major degrees of proficiency in intercultural foreign language learning can be interpreted within the following points:

- 1. The behaviours of people in the foreign speech community are always justified by the necessity to satisfy basic physical and psychological needs.
- 2. The manners in which people speak and behave are greatly influenced by the social conventions in terms of age, sex, social class and profession.
- 3. The speakers of the target language and culture would probably react in harmony with their social norms both in ordinary situations and in critical periods.
- 4. The foreign language individual words or combined expressions despite their linguistic structures they are permanently affected by the culturally shaped images.
- 5. Learners should be able to evaluate the degree of importance of the linguistic and non-linguistic behaviours in the target culture in terms of the evidence sustaining the acts and not through the bias attitudes founded on their source cultures.
- 6. Learners should possess skilful procedures to situate and order materials of the target culture which are usually available in libraries, all types of mass media, personal experience and interaction with other people from different cultures.
- 7. Foreign language teachers should enable learners to develop a sense of acute intellectual curiosity with regard to the target culture, appreciate the foreign cultural manifestations and; eventually, display empathy towards the foreign people.

1.9. Teaching Foreign Language Skills within the Intercultural Dimension

It is generally established that foreign language teaching skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, have been traditionally taught separated from the foreign cultural background. However, at present days, the teaching of the foreign culture is often perceived and practised in close relationship with all the language skills. For instance, the teaching of vocabulary is given priority with respect to syntax; because communication in a TEFL situation often breaks down not due to the wrong manipulation of the linguistic structures but the actual cause is usually the awkward choice of words.

Indeed, the problem does not actually originate from the inability to manipulate the semantic patterns but it is rather connected to the cultural conventions of the foreign community. In fact, foreign language learners do not master the infinite number of subtleties in relationship to the target culture rules of address, the appropriate and contextual choice of words and even the paralinguistic expressions that accompany them in the foreign speech community.

Therefore, the successful act of communication in the foreign language in terms of reception and transmission of the right message largely depends on the contextualization of the vocabulary. Indeed, it is known that the meanings that are assigned to a word vary in accordance with the context in which this word is used. Hence, as far as vocabulary is concerned, it should be definitely taught within its cultural context. It is clear that the integration of the cultural component together with the appropriate terminology allow the realization of the main objective which is to teach the foreign culture and vocabulary simultaneously.

As far as grammar is concerned, the grammatical rules are usually taught inductively. In other words, students are involved in activities which permit them to practise the grammatical structures without a direct reference to the linguistic mechanisms. At the end of the activities, learners are able to implicitly discover the grammatical rule and at the same time they have realized an indirect manipulation of the structure. Again, as it has been indicated in the case of vocabulary; the context in which the grammatical rule is presented plays a significant part in grasping the mechanisms that determine the function of the rule. On the other hand, there is a wide range of foreign culture texts which are available to the foreign language teacher that can be adapted and totally integrated in the teaching of grammar.

It is also possible to develop the listening skill within an intercultural context. Listening activities are positively arranged in such a manner that cultural elements are conveyed through the process. In this case, listening comprehension projected in a cultural perspective would naturally lead to animated discussions. As a matter of fact, cultural issues consolidate the speaking sessions as well; because they constitute a motivating factor that encourages students to give their opinions and to argument in support of their ideas.

In addition, learners are involved in classroom group dynamics especially role-play activities which indirectly convey cultural information. The situations that are created and practised in the classroom are much alike those they can encounter in real life situations inside the foreign language speech community. It can be observed that total latitude is given to students to fully express themselves and; accordingly, they are largely engaged in those activities.

On the other hand, communicative activities which are particularly designed for the speaking skill achieve numerous objectives. The most salient are the natural incorporation of the cultural elements, the effective participation of learners and certainly the increase of their motivation. A great number of activities in relationship to the speaking skill have been conceived in an attempt

to integrate the intercultural perspective and at the same time enhance students' proficiency in the oral skill.

For instance, face-to-face tandem learning and its variations consist of forming pairs of students and arrange time and place for the debate of cultural issues. The main feature of this type of activities is that it takes place outside the classroom; this situation is regarded as a motivating factor in students' participation in the conversations. The reason is that it offers a casual context in which the interaction occurs. The feedback that results and should be submitted to the foreign language teacher takes the form of a report of the recorded conversations.

Moreover, the pair of students should present an oral report of the cultural issue that has been analysed to the rest of the class. The goal of this oral report is to provoke a general debate that should involve the whole class. The use of modern technology and developed means of communication especially through Internet helps in the elaboration of an additional activity. The principle is quite simple; in fact, the idea is to invite a native speaker of English (particular arrangements should be made beforehand by the language teacher) in order to debate with foreign language students a cultural question in an online conference (learners can ask specific questions).

Teacher's role, as it has been largely analysed by E. Uso- Juan and A. Martinez-Flor. (2006), is very important in this particular activity. The cause is that he should lead and organize the follow-up general discussion that occurs after the interview of the native speaker of English. Furthermore, students' interpretations and discussions should normally and logically reflect their attitudes and degrees of understanding of the target culture. Additionally, there is another advantage because the opportunity is directly given to the native speaker of English to make the necessary adjustments and to provide further clarifications if required.

The reading skill (further analysis would be provided in an independent part of the present work) is primarily used to display various cultural elements through the contents of the reading texts. The reading activities allow the acquisition of the cultural components which have been carefully selected in advance by the language teacher. The promotion of students' culture competence is the principal aim that should be realized through the reading skill. It is worth pointing out that what is really beneficial to learners is in the form of a critical reading which encourages students to make judgements and; consequently, this process offers occasions to widen the scope of their intercultural competence.

The writing skill can be regarded as an excellent opportunity offered to learners that enables them to integrate a process of culture and language learning. The manipulation and organization of the materials to be used along with the refinements which are suggested by the language teacher take place at different numerous levels. In other words, the teacher's task is particularly significant because his role is actually to intervene in order to make the necessary corrections on two levels. The first is the cultural level whenever there are some misconceptions to be corrected; the second is the linguistic level in the case that students' writings require a number of ameliorations. Indeed, students' attention should be attracted to the principal characteristic of integrated writing assignments which is the language teacher's dual evaluation of cultural as well as linguistic contents.

On the whole, we believe it is necessary to point out that we have deliberately limited the discussion to the simple presentation of the general background which should surround the elaboration of intercultural activities specifically designed for each language skill. In fact, an independent part would be devoted to the presentation, analysis and application of the various cross-cultural activities in connection with the four language skills. We believe it is highly important to apply this procedure because of the interrelationship which exists between the four language skills and the development of cultural contents. Indeed, the salient objective of the analysis is to demonstrate that the learners' foreign language interpretations, productions and comprehension are continuously enhanced by the extensive use of intercultural written and spoken discourse.

1.9.1. Language Skills and the Cultural Factors

Generally, the conception of the various activities in relation to the four language skills should not be undertaken without due concern that should be put on the principal cultural factors. These important parameters again cannot be dissociated from the language classroom interaction. A primary task of the language teacher is to manage the probable conflicting views that exist between his personal conceptions of the target culture and the students' attitudes with regard to the teacher himself and also their classmates. One may point out that, it is not possible to present an exhaustive analysis of the entire cultural factors; however, we think it is useful to mention and discuss the elements that have been suggested by Stephen Hall (2003). In addition, we would propose some other factors which we believe should also be incorporated.

- 1. Shared values (source and target cultures) represent major contributions in the development of cultural awareness. The idea of cross-cultural comparison and the search of cultural similarities do not imply that all cultures should be uniform or that differences should be avoided. The objective is to encourage students' open-mindedness and a greater acceptance of the target culture.
- 2. Sensitivity towards the foreign language culture on the part of students can possibly be improved under the condition that appropriate strategies and planned activities are used. It is clear that learners already possess their own material culture and behavioural culture; consequently, it is not an easy task to make them not only discover but also understand, appreciate and; eventually, adopt the foreign cultural manifestations. Sensitivity towards the other cultures is not always a simple human natural process; the language teacher has to undertake a laborious work to gradually build students' sensitivity in connection with the foreign cultural elements. It is established for example that taboos or the socially authorized or forbidden cultural behaviours change from one culture to another. Indeed, what can be regarded as a positive cultural aspect in one community becomes entirely negative in another.
- 3. The psychological factors are equally influential especially in the determination of the behaviours that reflect the cultural values. It is accepted that different communities are characterized by their own 'mentifacts' or perspectives which govern the behavioural culture of human societies. Analysing the processes of reasoning which directs the multiple behaviours can enrich and simplify students' learning and probably understanding of foreign people's actions. A careful observation and analysis of the functions and purposes that are assigned to foreign language items would augment students' awareness and develop their skills in intercultural communication.
- 4. The contradictions and sometimes conflicts that usually exist in the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the foreign language and culture should be positively perceived by the language teacher. The existence of differences and challenges in the language class can be an enhancing factor in the process of language and culture learning. The main reason is that in modern foreign language teaching, the class is not seen as a place where information is gathered but rather the students' interactions, opinions and proposals are permanently sought.

- 5. As far as the spoken skill is concerned, it is known that international mass media communication or direct interaction with native speakers often occurs through the spoken medium. Therefore, the holding of a conversation in the foreign language becomes a vital requirement in foreign language learning. However, spoken transactions or turn-taking and different rules of address are deeply influenced by the social conventions and the cultural parameters. For instance, the various types of greetings, exchange or seeking information that specify any conversation can be perceived as linguistically correct and socially appropriate only if they do respect the social norms and conventions. Therefore, the teaching of the speaking skill within the intercultural perspective would not be successful if a careful comparative analysis of the following elements is not undertaken by both teacher and learners: the common greetings, the topics that can be overtly discussed, the various linguistic and non-linguistic types of salutation, the usual questions that could be asked and the different cultural and linguistic 'signals' that conclude a conversation.
- 6. Another significant element that largely determines the success or failure of an intercultural conversation is politeness. It is commonly recognized that rules of politeness have a great impact on the continuity or breakdown of communication. Turn-taking assignments, tone of voice, attitudes, positive or negative perceptions of the interlocutors are continuously put in the 'conventional scale' that measures the degree of politeness of speakers and hearers. In an official (for example professional) or even casual conversation, each turn performs specific functions that are delivered at different levels of politeness in the exchanges. It has often been observed that the foreign language speaker's performance on the linguistic level can be perfectly correct. However, the level of formality or informality is inappropriate because the speaker does not master the cultural and conventional criteria which condition the degree of formality or informality with different participants. The direct transactions in a conversation do often lead to misunderstanding or miscommunication because the interlocutors do not share or are not aware of the rules of politeness in spoken interaction. In addition, we take it for granted that the foreign language teacher is aware of the cultural significance of the social status in determining the degree of politeness that should be manifested in the foreign language community. Consequently, the teacher's major task in the spoken skill particularly is to arrange and suggest classroom activities which consist of role-play and simulations. These activities can greatly contribute in the development of students' awareness of forms of politeness in the foreign language. These objectives can be achieved through useful contrasting and comparing of the different ways of for instance; greetings, questionings and suggestions in the learners' native

language and the foreign language. Simulations of intercultural conversations with the foreign language teacher and under his supervision can serve as indicators of the probable 'conventional errors' in the rules of politeness which are usually made by many students. Ultimately, the appropriate readjustments and corrections would be introduced in the learners' behaviours. Lastly, we are convinced that the handling and analysis of the following elements would certainly help the foreign language teacher refine and improve on the proposed activities: the ways of seeking information in a more polite way, the ability to be direct and polite at the same time, the different possible manners to convey the same message and the various forms of restating what is needed to be said and yet remain positively perceived.

7. The following factor is closely linked to the intercultural varied perceptions of the notions of time and the 'right' timing. Diverse cultural approaches govern the cross-cultural attitudes and conceptions through which people perceive time. One conflicting aspect with relationship to time is the degree of flexibility that we assign to the division of time. Within this respect, the duty of the foreign language teacher is primarily to indicate the cross-cultural different perceptions of this flexibility; for instance in Great Britain and in Algeria. The language teacher should be very careful to make students aware of these possible contradictory conceptions of time; moreover, he should be cautious not to allow any value judgements to occur in the classroom about what is the 'right' perception. The activities that can be elaborated and practised should give insights and guidelines about the acceptable amount of time to make a point in a conversation, the time that should be allotted to the listening of other's turns and; above all the appropriate timing of interruptions. It is evident that these parameters are culturally conditioned in the foreign speech community; consequently, an efficient mastery of such aspects can certainly develop students' listening skills. Finally, the language activities that have been discussed in relation to this point constantly aim at making foreign language learners fully aware of the precise amount of time that should be allocated to the interlocutor to express himself. In addition, the ability to choose the most appropriate time to make interruptions without being perceived as impolite (the linguistic and non-linguistic signals that allow interruptions) and; the mastery of the right sociocultural conventions to re-take the floor and continue the development of the topic that is discussed.

8. The final element which we propose is concerned with the non-verbal communication; this is technically called the phenomena of kinesics (body movements) and 'oculesics' (eye contact). One can notice that the foreign language teaching operation often assigns a secondary role to the

teaching of foreign non-verbal communication. This is due to language teachers' attitudes; they generally underestimate the impact of non-verbal communication even if it is a determining factor in the success or breakdown of communication in the foreign language. The reason is that this type of communication is totally governed by socio-cultural conventions. No one denies the primacy which one should give to the sociolinguistic record yet the role of non-verbal instruction should not be in any way neglected. Therefore, the areas which are worth analysis and teaching in classroom activities can possibly be: the numerous gestures and facial expressions with regard to their linguistic and socio-cultural significance and functions. Additionally, the appropriate gestures to be learned, the necessary and right reactions that should be adopted and the various forms of non-verbal greetings, approvals or refusals. Moreover, the language teacher can provide information and possibly make students practise (using pleasant and funny activities) to use the eye contact. For instance, they can learn the eye contact variations which depend on the status, personality and sex of the interlocutors. Lastly, learners would become conscious of the different interpretations (hostile, friendly or welcoming) which are culturally distributed in the foreign language society.

The last key element that should be regarded as a necessary constituent in the elaboration of intercultural activities with respect to the four skills is the utilization of literature in the foreign language classroom. It is generally recognized that culture is best represented and beautifully expressed through the literary medium. The idea is efficiently summarized by J. M. Valdes (1986) who points out that one of the major functions of literature is to serve as an important medium to transmit the culture of the people who speak the language in which it is written. It is exactly in this context that we can see the positive gains that one can draw from the use of materials based upon the foreign literature in the teaching of the target culture.

The first advantage that we can put forward is that very often literary texts represent genuine and unaltered resource of authentic materials which students can make use of. A subtle and intelligent use of literary products would surely contribute in the development of students' language awareness and competence. In addition, the dynamism that learners exhibit in classroom discussions about the values, beliefs and assumptions which are embedded in literary works is in itself a means of evaluating and appreciating their own source culture.

There are certainly numerous and varied aspects which literary materials can take. A modern and practical means would be the use of films and television programmes in the EFL classroom because they offer the advantage to present the foreign language in a socio-cultural context. In

other words, they allow the associations of language and situations at the same time. However, teacher's management of the students' reactions and interactions in relation to the literary materials requires an appropriate and particular methodology that should be applied in the foreign language teaching operation.

As a matter of fact, a great number of procedures and techniques related to the methodology of teaching the target culture have been proposed; their major objective is the elimination of the orthodox limits within which the use of literary materials have been confined. Hence, a reductive view underlies the conception of the teaching materials because the founding principle is to give priority to the linguistic aspects through the sketchy presentation of literary texts and other materials. In fact, the foreign culture teaching is minimized and a more traditional procedure that gives importance to the sole linguistic factors is usually adopted. This secondary or sometimes trivial consideration which is assigned to the cultural components is largely prejudicial to the intercultural teaching of English as a foreign language.

The drawbacks of these pseudo-intercultural teaching materials are numerous; one can just mention the negative repercussions that take many forms like misunderstandings, culture shocks or even hostility towards the target culture. The readjustments that we think are necessary should put a special emphasis on the principle that the cultural references in foreign language teaching materials are irreplaceable factors as facilitating devices. They would essentially imbue students with various beautiful and useful products of the target culture.

The mastery of the foreign language should really widen the scope of not only the target culture but it should also enable learners to bring to view different universal human cultures. Moreover, the significance of the use of literary texts is to provide foreign language learners with the means to discover the target culture with the contribution of its own people. Within this perspective, students would be given opportunities to ignore the possible prejudices, misconceptions and stereotypes which they might have towards the target culture. Therefore, they would probably develop positive awareness, open-mindedness, a fresh look and friendly attitudes with regard to the foreign language and culture.

Cultural knowledge does definitely not imply the 'transformation' of language learners into universal mono-cultural adepts but rather they should become observers and also active participants in the noble endeavour of valuing and promoting their own culture in addition to the appreciation of other cultures. Likewise, it would be possible to learn the target language and culture along with the occasion to narrow the gap between the various human cultures.

We think it is necessary to point out that at this level of the analysis we have just tried to present a global enumeration of the numerous advantages which can be obtained from the use of literary texts and other related materials. In addition, it is worth reminding that the effective foreign language teaching cannot take place without the cultural component as it has been nicely and cleverly formulated by D. Peck (1998), he states that culture should be our message to students and language our medium. The choice of literary materials should be carefully selected and pedagogically depicted in such a way that the foreign language teacher is able to present a true image or representation of the target language and culture. The optimal and efficient use of this type of materials is not really an easy task; actually we strongly advocate the necessary procedure of providing the foreign language teacher with both the appropriate experiential and academic in-service training.

On the practical level, the literary texts and connected materials should allow the language learner to picture and better understand the values, attitudes and beliefs of the foreign language community. Students should know how these elements work as an integrated part of the linguistic units and combinations. The successful acts of communication in the foreign language especially those which occur with native speakers depend in a vast measure on the language teacher's right choice of the materials and their effective use in the language teaching process.

The principal criterion which should guide the teacher in the selection of the literary materials is the fact that any cultural product should necessarily comprise and reflect elements like: behavioural appropriateness or inappropriateness, the sense of etiquette and the varied sociocultural connotations. The ultimate goal, as it were, would be to make it possible for the language learner to easily become a real or virtual member of the target culture.

However, one would note that an objective analysis would be rather incomplete if it does not focus on the difficulties and unexplored issues which still exist in the domains of literary cultural teaching. There is certainly space for improvement if further investigation is undertaken in the areas connected with the nature and processes of foreign language culture acquisition. There are in addition problems that hinder the choice of the cultural patterns in terms of delimitating the actual needed constructions at the suitable levels and the precise phases.

Furthermore, the techniques that should be used by the foreign language teacher are still limited and their efficiency is not clearly established. Therefore, the creation and development of new teaching techniques- which are specifically devoted to target culture teaching- represent a challenge to professional course designers on the theoretical level; and also their difficult application by the teacher on the practical level. Moreover, it is not possible to deny the existence of very interesting and useful pedagogical products such as teacher's and students' books and sometimes whole programmes of literary cultural teaching; nevertheless, the range of cultural syllabuses with particularly designed contents and materials is still relatively limited in large parts of the world.

1.9.2. Intercultural Techniques in a TEFL Situation

1.9.2.1. Goals

At the beginning, before we broach the present section which is concerned with the discussion of strategies and techniques in target culture teaching, we think it would be positive to call back the most significant goals that are usually assigned to intercultural teaching. One would point out that the work undertaken by H. N. Seelye (1988 and 1993) within this context represents an unavoidable reference which should be analysed. The goals have been arranged into six main categories and each objective bears a key-component which reflects the true significance of the element.

The first goal is referred to as 'Interest': it consists of rising students' interest or curiosity about the target culture and tries to create empathy towards the foreign language community. The second goal is called 'Who': it means that students should know a very important cultural determinant which is the fact that people's cultural behaviours are always affected by social variables and role expectations like age, sex, social class, ethnicity and place of residence. The third objective is entitled 'What': students should realize that efficient communication in the foreign language certainly requires the discovery of the cultural images which native speakers always have in mind. These cultural images shape the persons' thoughts, acts and reactions to their environments.

The fourth aim is named 'Where and When': learners should be able to discern that contextual variables and social conventions have a crucial impact on people in relationship to all events which take place internally (within the speech community) or externally (throughout the world) whatever the degree of importance of such happenings. The fifth objective is labelled 'Why':

students should learn and precisely understand that people act in some specific ways because they are guided by their physical and psychological needs. Additionally, the cultural patterns are interdependently structured to satisfy these needs on both the individual and collective levels. The sixth aim is alluded to as 'Exploration': learners should be encouraged to look for the foreign or abstract cultural information through different classroom or field research activities.

1.9.2.2. Techniques

As early as the sixties, a large number of professionals have tried to conceive, to develop and eventually put into application some interesting techniques that globally aim at teaching the target culture. Obviously, it is not simple to present an exhaustive study of all the existing techniques until the present day; however, we would certainly shed light and evaluate the most influential and actually practised techniques. The arrangements and presentations are not chronological but rather thematic following the procedure of R.C Lafayette (1978). In addition we would also analyse the relatively new reorganizations suggested by Christine Elmore-Yale (2005).

* Cultural Islands.

The term Cultural Islands refers to the various pictures, maps, posters and relia that should be part of the classroom environment. The aim is to use these cultural visual aids in order to help students create a visual image of the foreign community through the multiple artefacts which are represented by these aids. The language teacher's task consists of presenting samples through brief explanations related to culturally affected behaviours or products which are of interest to learners. In a second phase, students themselves should be required to undertake research and make classroom presentations particularly in group work using as a major support the various pictures that they may find out. The principal objectives of the Cultural Islands activities are respectively the indication of the foreign cultures influence, the linguistic universality through the process of borrowed words and; the discovery of possible cultural phenomena that might be common to the native and foreign cultures.

* Culture Capsules.

Culture Capsules require the direct implications and contributions of the foreign language students. Generally, it is preferable to undertake this work individually because it is a kind of a personal investigation which consists of the writing and oral presentation of a research work. For example, the short task can demonstrate the small differences that exist between customs or

rituals in the native and foreign communities. The piece of work can be presented in the form of a brief written report or an oral presentation in the class which is usually consolidated by various pictures or posters in relationship to the topic under investigation. Learners are often encouraged to use different technical supports.

Culture Capsules are widely considered to be one of the best established methods for teaching the target culture. These activities have been tried primarily in teaching English as a foreign language and; they have been proved to be very effective and stimulating in the students' descriptions of attractive aspects of the target culture. In addition, Culture Capsules can serve to enhance classroom discussions through the comparison of cultural elements in the source and target cultures. What makes the technique enjoyable to students is the pleasant feeling of discovering similarities between the two cultures.

The learners' oral presentations are usually preceded by a short introduction and description of the selected cultural point on the part of the foreign language teacher. The teacher would eventually intervene at the end of the 'expose' to moderate and direct the classroom discussion. He can also provide part of the information in the introductory explanation (in order to give his own information) and; lately, to propose the complementary parts if they have not been mentioned by the students. Of course, the language teacher is strongly advised to make use of the available visual aids such as handouts, transparencies or pictures.

* Culture Clusters.

Culture Clusters represent a more complex version of Culture Capsules. They are constituted of a combination of three or more Culture Capsules that deal with the same topic. Therefore, the time allocated to Culture Clusters is longer (30 minutes) because students need to illustrate the cultural information contained in the capsules. The students' expositions take the forms of simulations or short plays. The teacher's role is to narrate the events in order to guide students and give them opportunities to improve on their performances. Shortly, Culture Capsules and Clusters are interesting activities that provide accessible knowledge about the cultural aspects of the foreign society; moreover, they create classroom situations where students are active in the explanation process.

* Culture Assimilators.

The main concerns of Culture Assimilators are the analysis and teaching of cultural behaviours in the target language community. The idea is to study situations where cross-cultural communication takes place. Usually, Culture Assimilators are composed of brief written descriptions of events or contexts where interaction occurs between interlocutors from different cultures. After the description of a specific event, students are asked to choose the most appropriate and meaningful behaviours, actions or words among four possible options. Even if the focus is put on the behaviours of target culture individuals, it is possible for learners to suggest and explain their own reactions in accordance with their proper cultures and also the target culture behaviours.

Generally, the Culture Assimilators consist of the provision of seventy-five to one hundred chain events which illustrate cultural behaviours but each event is independently analysed. Another interesting feature of Culture Assimilators is the possibility to read the description as a first step and; then decide what would be the correct interpretations or explanations of crosscultural interactions. The second step which follows the students' choices is the vivid general discussions about what should be the correct or incorrect interpretations; obviously learners have to put forward their arguments.

Needless to point out that the whole activity is under the supervision of the language teacher. His role in this kind of technique is both important and subtle because his task is to plan the issue that should be debated in each of the four possible options. The advantages of Culture Assimilators are to provide students with occasions for better understanding of the cultural information; moreover, Culture Assimilators may constitute positive factors to enhance empathy if students feel they are personally involved in the chosen options.

* Critical Incidents.

The significant principle which underlies this technique is simple, as it is indicated by its name; the emphasis is put on events which are preferably important or useful to classroom interactions. Critical Incidents consist of a description of happenings that should be presented by a student but; nevertheless, he is required to make a sort of decision. The incidents may be culturally impregnated or simply ordinary events which do not involve intercultural discussions. The time that should be allocated to this type of activities is apparently short in comparison to

other techniques. The brevity of time for each Critical Incident allows the presentation of many events during the same session.

If this type of techniques is seriously conceived and prepared by the language teacher; it would certainly offer occasions to students to discuss many incidents which deal with the same cultural issue. Indeed, the most appropriate procedure that should be adopted is to make learners read or even perform (acting for those who would like to) the incidents and; afterwards, propose their personal solutions to sort out the exposed problem. Classroom discussions are particularly encouraged through the constitution of small groups in order to debate and evaluate the process suggested by students; these debates can serve as possible answers to the culture problem.

The following step is to move on to a general classroom discussion about the different answers of each small group and; lastly, try to agree on the choice of just one 'best' solution. In fact, what we believe to be quite interesting in relation to this technique is the opportunity that is given to students to compare and contrast their selected decision to the solutions and logical reasoning which might be proposed by native persons of the target culture. An additional activity may be assigned to students; the point is that they can be asked to write reports describing the differences and similarities between their own decisions and those suggested by the natives. They should certainly take into account the reasoning and justifications which consolidate the natives' proposals.

However, in our situation the language class occurs in a TEFL context; therefore, students may face difficulties to find out the natives speakers' useful information. In this kind of situation, the teacher's role is important because he may provide students with the right information from various sources like English books, newspapers or; possibly, through the use of modern technology of communication (chat-rooms, 'skype' etc,.) in order to reach native speakers of English.

One would point out that Critical Incidents do constitute a practical technique which permits the rising of students' emotions and positive evaluations of the cultural issue. In addition, two major language skills are effectively developed: the first is in the form of students' individual presentations of the issues which develop learners' speaking skills. The second is represented by the written reports on the surveys that contribute in the improvement of students' writing skills. Moreover, the involvement of native speakers of English in the debates encourages intercultural understanding and provides further information about the target culture.

* Mini-Dramas.

The term 'Drama' is an allusion to the nature of the technique because the significant implication in this case is the presentation of miscommunications or even complete breakdowns of communication in an intercultural context. This activity consists of a maximum of five related parts or episodes (chain pattern) that describe different forms of cross-cultural communication problems. The information is gradually and partially imparted through each episode but the precise cause of misunderstanding is not designated or known until the last part. At the end of each episode, a general classroom discussion is organized by the language teacher; for example he can ask students an open-ended question and; in this manner, they would be able to give their personal opinions. The technique is conceived in such a way that it incidentally presents the reasons of miscommunications and suggests the appropriate remedies in intercultural communication.

The intended objective which may be reached through the use of this technique is to rise students' awareness of the importance of cultural elements in the two communities. Moreover, the sample of the misunderstanding is portrayed in a way which does not imply hostility or rejection of the values or beliefs of the source and target cultures. On the contrary, Mini-Dramas indirectly suggest the strong possibility of better understanding (between native speakers of English and EFL learners) provided that the appropriate information about the two cultures are known and shared; in addition to the mutual comprehension and acceptance.

In general, what is positive about Mini-Dramas is that the scripts of the dialogues are distributed to students a short period before the planned session. The aim is to enable learners to rehearse their roles, and at the due time they would actually play their parts. At the end of each act, the 'audience' which is constituted of classmates are asked by the teacher to give their opinions about the actions and characters in the Mini-Dramas. They are particularly encouraged to present their personal interpretations and judgements of the cultural behaviours of the participants who take part in the play.

At the end of the Mini-Drama, when all scenes have been presented and the total parts of information have been provided; students are again required to make a reinterpretation of the characters in light of the overall image reflected by the students' playing.

The main goal which would be possibly attained through the use of Mini-Dramas in an EFL context is the presentation of real life situations of intercultural misunderstandings and the emotional reactions of the interlocutors. In this technique, the reasons of miscommunications are displayed and explained within the intercultural prism; and the principal consequence is the provision of useful information and knowledge about the target culture. In this manner, students would be much more aware of the influential cultural elements and the crucial role they play in the foreign language in particular. This kind of information would certainly increase students' abilities in cross-cultural communication.

* Audio-Motor Units.

Audio-motor Units are usually very pleasant activities in intercultural EFL teaching. The reason is that they necessitate physical actions from students in order to 'mime' the cultural routines in the target language community such as eating at restaurants, taking a means of transportation or meeting in public places. The oral instructions are given by the language teacher who tries to describe very precisely the involved routines; students in turn should carry out the actions. One contributing factor for the success of Audio-motor Units is the physical arrangement of the classroom; in fact, the aim is to create the suitable setting of the implied routines. Another element which can bring about additional information in the descriptions of routines is the various supports or requisites that can be used by learners.

The process would be repeated many times by different students; nevertheless, it is preferable that they perform the same routines but they should depict various scenes. The objective is to present multiple cultural aspects and the implication of a great number of students. For instance, learners can practise restaurant routines in England: a student would carry out the waiters' actions and another would perform the customers' ways of eating. When the students' performances are completed; the other classmates- with the help and direction of the teacher-should try to pin point factors which need readjustments and would possibly propose the missing elements.

In other words, there are numerous and minute cultural elements which require students' full awareness. To clarify this point, it is useful to refer back to the example we have cited above: at the restaurant, will it be appropriate to take the fork with the left or right hand and in what speech community? Or, Will it be suitable to eat and talk at the same time? These aspects may seem trivial or at the upmost unimportant to the non-initiated foreign language learner; however, in reality they do constitute important social conventions in the target culture and their ignorance

by the learner may seriously cause miscommunication. Lastly, Audio-motor Units have other advantages in intercultural foreign language teaching, because they make close connections between knowledge and practice in the foreign society; in addition, they equally acquaint students with the 'correct' or appropriate behaviour.

* 'Cultoons'.

'Cultoons' are also used with the help of visual aids; the language teacher gives students a series of four pictures that represent astonishment or miscommunication for foreign language learners. The teacher should be actively involved because he usually presents an oral account of the situation reflected in the pictures; otherwise, learners can read the written descriptions which are provided with the pictures. The students' participation is really significant for they have to give their points of view about the characters' reactions; especially their personal appreciations of the appropriateness of the actions. Afterwards, they can read the suggested explanations of the events and the reasons of the misunderstandings. The principal goals of 'Cultoons' are to increase students' comprehension of cultural facts and to indicate the possible areas which can cause problems; in this manner learners would probably develop the appropriate actions to avoid such difficulties.

* Audio-Visuals.

In the present days, it is obvious that language teachers and learners have, at their disposal large varieties of audio-visual pedagogical tools which they can possibly use; in addition to the nearly unlimited possibilities that media can provide. Indeed, Media/Visual presentations in the forms of magazine pictures, slides and videos represent efficient means to teach the target culture. Usually, the language teacher chooses specific pictures or videos which expressively show behaviours, actions or happenings and their significance in the foreign language community.

The present technique allows the exposition of many aspects of the target culture like acceptable dressing in certain ceremonies, appropriate behaviours with regard to social relations, public transportation and various other cultural events. Generally, Media/Visuals are useful because they particularly provide information related to intercultural issues; moreover, they can develop students' understanding of the target culture phenomena.

* Festivals.

The celebrations of festivals and ceremonies- which are natural components of the foreign society cultural behaviours- in the language class bring about much excitement and pleasure to the teaching process. Students are very enthusiastic about the preparations, costumes, decoration of the classroom; in fact, all these factors contribute in the best possible representation of target culture festivals. This type of activities enables students to become active participants in the ceremonies and; indirectly, promote students' comprehension and probably enjoyment of the target culture happenings.

* Kinesics and Body Language.

It is certainly recognized that culture implies verbal and non-verbal communication; the role of gestures and facial expressions in any speech community is very important. In fact, these factors are necessary with respect to the consolidation and clarifications which they add to the verbal expressions. The language teacher should not neglect these socio-cultural elements since cross-cultural teaching can not ignore such indispensable factors in any act of verbal communication. For example, gestures convey the lively feelings of native speakers; in addition, expressive gazes, frowns or smiles are effective elements that add more clarity and significance to the oral communication.

The appropriate classroom activities which largely promote the teaching of gestures and other non-verbal expressions are generally dialogues and plays. These activities are performed by students and should be necessarily accompanied with the most suitable movements and facial expressions. These tasks are usually vivid and pleasant since they make students 'act' or actively participate in the teaching/learning process. Foreign films and videos can as well be used by the language teacher to show the varieties of movements or body language of native speakers. However, in this kind of classroom activities, the majority of students are passive. The problem can be solved if the language teacher organizes general discussions about the significance and usefulness of the target culture non-linguistic expressions. In this way, interesting information is acquired by learners and probably their cultural awareness and comprehension would logically increase.

1.9.2.3. Major Difficulties in the Application of the Techniques

The carrying out of the principal techniques discussed above is generally confronted with a certain number of problems. We think it is more practical to group them into five major types which we would briefly discuss and; eventually, we will suggest some suitable solutions.

- 1. The first problem which faces the language teacher is the delicate equation of lengthy programmes and shortage of time. Indeed, TEFL curricula are already composed of a large number of themes which essentially give priority to the mastery of the fundamentals of English grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Language teachers usually complain (especially at the local level) about the difficulty of inserting cultural manuals in already extensive programmes. They also think that it is practically very complex to devote entire sessions which are exclusively dedicated to the teaching of the target culture. However, we believe that the problem might be at least partially resolved if the procedure followed in teaching the foreign language is rearranged. In other words, instead of a serial organization which implies two separate cycles in teaching the linguistic aspects and then the cultural matters; it would be much more fruitful if language teachers could apply an integrative procedure. This type of planning is certainly more effective for it requires the incorporation of the cultural components along with the linguistic patterns. This combination and interrelationship of the two constituents of ELT is by and large a more 'natural' approach to the human language; indeed, as we have tried to demonstrate in the precedent parts of the present study, we cannot really separate language from culture.
- 2. The second problem that usually hinders the application of these techniques is the possible inadequate training which the language teacher has received. Teacher's experience and competence are traditionally within the sphere of linguistic aspects of the English language. Obviously, little training in the methods and techniques of target culture teaching are incorporated into the different programmes at University level. The language teacher finds himself psychologically disarmed and not adequately equipped in the fulfilment of his tasks. He is especially inhibited by the idea that his knowledge of the English cultural issues is not sufficient. However, we believe that the question is not actually to pass on detailed facts of the English culture to students. The task rather consists of helping learners to acquire the effective skills to find out and possibly adopt the facts which are inherent in the target culture. Therefore, the aims that should be realized in cross-cultural teaching are governed by a procedure which encourages the inculcation of processes not facts. Students' proficiency in English with regard to the intercultural dimension does not consist of compiling elements of the English culture but

rather, learners should be offered opportunities to discover and grasp the significance of these elements at the linguistic and cultural levels.

- 3.The third difficulty which is in our view very acute lays in the students' negative attitudes towards the target culture. Surprisingly enough, some learners who are supposed to have deliberately chosen to learn the English language (and as such they are expected to be highly motivated) often adopt hostile or at least cautious attitudes in connection with the foreign culture. There is a sort of a psychological barrier in students' minds that probably prevents them from any kind of foreign culture assimilation. These attitudes are founded on the debatable belief that positive appreciations of the foreign culture are incidental to undermining the source culture. Indeed, these stereotypes often lead to regard intercultural differences as negative factors in the target culture and rather positive elements in the native culture. In our opinion, the solution is embedded in the intercultural foreign language teaching itself; because the main concern of this type of instruction is in fact to develop students' tolerance and awareness with respect to the target culture. Learners should be perfectly conscious that a high level mastery of the English language would remain incomplete if it is only limited to a broad linguistic proficiency. In short, the foreign language teacher is required not only to 'revise' students' linguistic abilities but above all he needs to 'review' their cultural patterns in the foreign language.
- 4. The fourth obstacle which actually represents a stumbling block in the application of the proposed techniques is that language teachers lack, at least locally, an in-service training (culture teaching programmes in a TEFL situation) at University level. It is recognized that the teaching of foreign culture requires an appropriate training which would be certainly useful to both novice and even experienced language teachers. We also think that it is self-evident that intercultural teaching needs the elaboration of specific teaching strategies and the assignment of precise objectives. Once these parameters have been fulfilled, foreign language teachers would be able to create a credible framework for the necessary arrangements of cultural topics. As a matter of fact, we have been advocating through the present part the true necessity to conceive, develop and undertake in-service training programmes for the foreign language teachers. The realization of those programmes at the local level would undoubtedly improve on English language teachers' qualifications and competences particularly in the teaching of the target culture.
- 5. The fifth problem is interconnected to the outcomes of the intercultural teaching programmes. It is known that at the end of each unit of a teaching programme, a kind of feedback (whatever the forms it takes) is always necessary to evaluate students' progression so that it would be

possible to the foreign language teacher to make the needed adjustments. However, it is really difficult for the teacher to measure students' cross-cultural awareness and changes in their attitudes. Indeed, we should acknowledge that the foreign language teacher lacks the necessary tools for testing the students' intercultural achievements. Only a small number of scales of measurement have been proposed because of the difficulties that exist in developing tests which specifically evaluate students' foreign cultural awareness. However, there are some acceptable methods that have been put forward and within this context; we suggest some concise criteria which can be used to undertake the operation. Cultural awareness is concerned with factors such as stereotypes, compare and contrast, intellectual conception and the degree of empathy. Measurements of change in attitudes are usually determined by elements like degrees of social distance scales (between the source and target cultures), checking students' judgements of foreign culture behaviours (indicates negative or positive reactions) and verifying self-esteem changes. On the whole, the general permanent requirement is the continuous checking of students' consideration of the others (namely native speakers of English); specifically, the semantic differential scales from negative to positive qualifiers.

Finally, one would notice that the application of these techniques is deemed to encounter various obstacles as any other enterprise; nevertheless effective solutions are available to the foreign language teacher. In fact, many successful procedures have been used in different institutions and; we think it is possible to summarize the common positive features that constitute the stand of such effective methods.

First, the foreign language teacher and learners should recognize that the process is gradual; and target culture knowledge should be continuously renewed and enriched. It is primordial to admit that our assumptions about the cultural behaviours of foreign people might be wrong; moreover, intercultural similarities consolidate mutual tolerance but differences should also be assumed.

Second, our personal evaluations cannot be realized before the satisfaction of an essential condition that is the collection of as much information about the target culture as possible. Accurate and nearly complete descriptions of the situations should precede any kind of judgements.

Third, the foreign language teacher and learners should try to project themselves into the target culture; indeed, a feeling of empathy is very useful in understanding the foreign cultural behaviours. These positive attitudes allow us to be permanently conscious of the ways people

would like to be treated and vice versa; consequently, peaceful and harmonious relations would be established between foreign language learners and native speakers. In reality, it is not possible to 'step aside' or to isolate oneself and to pretend at the same time that one is able to understand foreign people.

Fourth, our personal assumptions should be verified constantly; indeed, pre-conceived truths may lead to the wrong direction. As a matter of fact, systematic checking of our suppositions about the target culture can be compared to those adopted by our colleagues (teacher or learner) in order to ensure that we really understand the situation. Fifth, ambiguous behaviours may face the foreign language teacher and students alike because complexity tends to put us in a position of permanent search of control. The question is not to evaluate the cultural products (artefacts or abstract) which are present in the target culture but instead we should assume without judging that the others may also possess and display very valuable and positive resources.

The sixth and last point is that the acquisition of these foreign cultural behaviours certainly facilitates the global process of foreign language learning. It is definitely necessary to master foreign cultural manifestations because they would greatly enlarge the scope of practical solutions to various learning difficulties. We think that a meaningful recommendation to target culture learners would be the total acceptance of diversity. In fact, mutual intercultural understanding and tolerant attitudes cannot be built without the famous principles of identity, diversity and recognition.

1.10. Foreign Language Teacher's Roles within the Intercultural Dimension

Teaching English as a foreign language within the intercultural perspective aims at the realization of many important goals. The foreign language teacher represents a key element in the attainment of these objectives and as such he is expected to assume some principal roles which are actually non-conformable or traditional. Obviously, the interpretation and understanding of these roles depend on many external and idiosyncratic factors. In general, these elements are related to questions like the foreign language teacher's experience, teaching styles and methods, his personality, the institution in which he works and; lastly, his global foreign cultural background.

However, the status of English as an international language and the modern cross-cultural context through which it is taught presuppose the development of additional novel roles which would satisfy these parameters. Consequently, in this part of our work we think it would be

useful to present and analyse some of the most important roles which are nowadays assumed by the English language teacher within a non-speaking English community. Moreover, it is necessary to point out that these 'intercultural roles' as it were should be by no means separated from the more conventional tasks of the foreign language teacher. On the contrary, we believe that an encompassing procedure would be more effective in the foreign language teaching operation.

1.10.1. Enhancing Intercultural Competence

It is widely recognized that English in the present days has become, more than ever an international language which is taught in multiple culturally varied contexts. Therefore, foreign language teacher's roles are not anymore limited to the promotion of students' linguistic competence; as a matter of fact, the global tendency in ELT is now the special emphasis that should be put on intercultural learning. Indeed, the foreign language teacher's main significant task is to assist learners in acquiring foreign language communicative competence within an intercultural perspective. In fact, the language teacher's general role consists of developing students' communicative skills with regard to interactions that occur between the English language learners and other speakers of this language who belong to varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

We have already tried to demonstrate the great significance of teaching intercultural competence in previous parts of this study (M. Byram 1997 and 2002; J. Corbett 2010); nevertheless, we think it is profitable to call back a number of necessary activities that participate in the accomplishment of this important role. Skills like the ability to discover cultural information or how to relate and interpret meaning in connection with the cultural dimension need the students' engagement in activities which not only raise the awareness of their proper cultures but also English people's cultures.

The following objective is to encourage the understanding and respect of foreign cultural behaviours along with positive attitudes in view of cultural differences. Most importantly, EFL students should become competent in resolving problems which may take place in cross-cultural communication. Intercultural interactions necessarily imply possible misunderstanding in any act of communication; therefore, students are expected to sort out this type of problems with ease and competence taking into consideration the source and target cultural factors.

Within this context, we suggest a useful model in the form of a procedure put forward by J. Corbett (2010) in an attempt to enhance target culture teaching. Briefly, these activities are elaborated in order to enable learners to acquire skills in observing, comparing and evaluating cultural practices in the native and foreign speech communities. The cultural behaviours are continuously conveyed in people's interactions in terms of the choice of linguistic items (words and expressions), non-verbal units (paralinguistic features) and also the various socio-cultural conventions. In general, the central task of the foreign language teacher is to afford opportunities for students to grasp the required information in order to increase their intercultural communicative competence.

1.10.2. Information about Different Varieties of the English Language

The traditional practices in teaching English as a foreign language are simply limited to the promotion of restrained varieties of English. Locally, it is still considered to be highly prestigious to just learn native speakers' varieties and to favour these models in foreign language learning. However, the role of the foreign language teacher in the intercultural context of instruction should not be confined within the limits of what is usually called 'the inner circle varieties'.

New horizons and directions have become quite essential in English language teaching which can take the forms of exploring new varieties of numerous 'Englishes'; especially those 'versions' with whom students can come into contact. In addition, the English language teacher would probably need new methodologies which are actually necessary in teaching the different varieties of English. The main function of new methods of target culture teaching is the possibility to widen the students' scope of information about other important varieties of English and to develop positive attitudes with respect to such varieties.

1.10.3. Promotion of Multilingualism in the English Language Class

In previous years it was regarded as extremely prejudicial to use other languages in the classroom apart from the foreign language (English). It was believed that even the limited use or reference to the students' native languages would encourage mother tongue interference and; therefore, would cause 'distortions' in the language teaching/learning process. The question is still open to debate but more and more proponents of multilingualism in the English language classroom continuously propose interesting and credible works. Indeed, these works do

constitute significant counterarguments put forward in support of the use of learners' native languages in foreign language teaching.

In fact, there is no unquestionable empirical evidence to prove the effectiveness of monolingual teaching methodology; on the contrary, there are no obvious discrepancies in the achievement of high level proficiency in English through the application of one approach or the other. The essence of cross-cultural foreign language teaching is not to exclude any manifestations or features in both the native and target languages. Within this context, students refer nearly constantly to both cultures; it is even advisable to make comparisons at all levels. Therefore, the foreign language teacher should encourage his students to be aware of the differences (linguistic or/and cultural) which might exist between the two languages and also other languages if the class happens to be multilingual.

Generally, students' awareness of these factors can facilitate the learning process because it increases their motivation and consolidates their understanding of the target language and culture. An additional reason to encourage multilingualism in the language class is related to the professional qualifications which are usually sought. Hence, it is highly beneficial nowadays and it also offers better opportunities to obtain a job if the postulant perfectly masters more than one foreign language. Consequently, the language teacher's application of various pedagogical approaches and methods that enhance multilingualism in intercultural teaching is mostly recommended since his role in this situation is to work for the qualification of rather multilingual users.

1.11. The Use of Intercultural Instructional Materials

At the local level, the general tendency which one can observe in intercultural English language teaching; is to use materials that certainly represent particular traits of the English and American cultures. However, we do believe that additional benefits can as well be drawn in the case that the foreign language teacher utilizes materials related to other cultures. As long as the vehicle which is used in the classroom is English, it would be probably motivating and useful to have insights into other completely different cultures. Accordingly, a universal view of cultural components would certainly enrich students' conceptions and general knowledge of the world around them.

Unfortunately, the actual situation (at local university studies level) of TEFL indicates a priority which is given to the incorporation of materials which abusively include the cultures of the local and English speaking countries and neglects other cultures of the world. One would point out that the over-representation and exaggerated use of just the two cultures (source and target) may be counterproductive and does not fulfil the objectives of cross-cultural foreign language teaching. In fact, the essence of modern intercultural teaching is to put emphasis on the extension of learners' knowledge and culture to a great number of other different cultures (F. J. Yuan, J. H. Lin, and S. Boutery, 2011).

Consequently, the foreign language teacher should be more careful in the choice of the contents of his programmes; indeed, he needs to avoid the possible contradictions which may appear between the nature of the adopted approach in foreign language teaching and the real materials that he actually uses. The cultural components of the teaching materials should be varied and rich in such a manner that acknowledges students of all the multiple features which characterize the true multilingual syllabus. Certainly, a great number of textbooks and other materials are available; however, the real meaning of the language teacher's role is to select the most suitable materials and dismiss all those which adopt a one-sided or bias position in English language teaching.

1.12. The Adaptation of Socio-Cultural Methods of Foreign Language Teaching

It is commonly admitted that the most appropriate approach which, to a certain level encompasses the cultural perspective is the communicative language teaching methodology. However, it is possible to observe that the majority of syllabuses are founded upon assumptions and beliefs which reflect the typical orientations of the Western World. Therefore, a great number of these programmes are often inadequate or ignore the universal dimension; this situation results with the difficult acceptance of such teaching programmes.

The major difficulty which faces the foreign language teacher in carrying out this type of programmes is represented by the conflicting differences or even oppositions that might exist between students' strategies of learning and those which have been adopted in the syllabuses. As a matter of fact, the general principles which are advocated within the communicative language teaching approach are mainly the constant promotion of meaning, process and fluency instead of form, product and accuracy. However, these aspects may cause students frustration and demotivation because traditionally they have been practising completely different parameters which give priority to the linguistic structures and the development of grammatical skills.

Indeed, the newly introduced intercultural approaches of foreign language teaching are largely different from those that have been used in the past. In fact, students have been accustomed to traditional structural foreign language learning and; consequently, there is a high probability that they would show resistance or even hostile attitudes towards these novel methods of foreign language teaching. As a matter of fact, we have often noticed that many activities are indeed communicatively oriented; nevertheless, their manifest Western orientations are not easily accepted by students at local universities.

Evidently, the implication which might be grasped from this conflicting situation is by no means a re-consideration of the communicative foreign language teaching approach which is broadly adapted to intercultural teaching. However, the diversity of the socio-cultural contexts in which English is taught requires appropriate readjustments that take into account the social and cultural components that are proper to the local environment. The foreign language teacher's role in this kind of situation is essential; because the rectifications which would be introduced necessitate a careful procedure

For instance, the probable remedies that the teacher might suggest should be necessarily concerned with the following important elements: the suggestion of activities which are more in harmony with learners' local cultures and the refinement of the tasks in a manner that takes into consideration students' strategies of cultural learning. In addition, a gradual process should be adopted in the introduction of the new intercultural methods of teaching/learning because students should be given sufficient time for an effective adaptation and familiarization with the proposed innovations.

In summation, one should acknowledge that globalization has given the English language a much wider international status; indeed, it is nowadays taught throughout the whole world in very diverse cultural contexts. Consequently, the English language teacher should constantly question and analyse his pedagogical methodologies and make the indispensible rectifications which are in line with the essence of intercultural foreign language teaching. Obviously, the implication is not to adopt totally new teacher's roles but rather to create a sort of harmonious completion between the more traditional but universally accepted tasks and the new crosscultural requirements.

Additionally, it is evident that the success of the foreign language teacher's tasks depends on the entire collaboration of the learners. Indeed, it is reasonable to advance that the fulfilment of the discussed roles should take into account the factors which are intimately connected to learners' needs. The students' preferences are inclined to favour teachers who are highly competent in intercultural teaching contexts and who personally display understanding and awareness of the various cultures of the world.

The point is that learners usually put a particular focus on the combinatory nature of the syllabus; that is to say, the local foreign language teacher is greatly appreciated and thought to be able to efficiently achieve his roles if he is perfectly 'acculturated' to the foreign language cultural components. On the other hand, the cultural elements which should be introduced by the foreign language teacher in the various classroom activities are generally related to international topics. This situation implies that universal issues through different cultures of the world should necessarily characterize the tasks which are submitted to learners; however, priority should be assigned to the target culture (English in this case).

On the whole, whatever the socio-cultural backgrounds of students; they often display nearly common views and similar attitudes. Indeed, at the local level students are particularly active and motivated; moreover, they continuously collaborate with their English language teachers as long as the nature and contents of the teaching programmes are broadly and deeply intercultural.

Conclusion

In summary, we have analyzed in the present chapter some essential parameters that have an important impact on intercultural communicative teaching. First, it is necessary that text books in intercultural communication should permanently integrate the threefold component which is the source culture, the target culture and also other international cultures. Second, the foreign language teacher should be aware of the learners' possible prejudices and stereotypes in relation to the target culture. Consequently, he should be able to provide the appropriate remedies in terms of learners' cultural awareness and open-mindedness. Third, it is primordial that intercultural communicative teaching should develop the necessary classroom activities that are characterized by the combination of various cross-cultural manifestations and the four language skills. Lastly, we believe that intercultural communicative teaching constitutes the adequate framework for the thriving of learners' motivation and collaboration in the target culture teaching process.

2. The Language Skills within the Intercultural Perspective

Introduction

At present times, it has become evident to the majority of teachers of English as a foreign language that the incorporation of the cultural dynamics is a pre-requisite in any kind of target language communication. As a matter of fact, foreign language learning is not solely the acquisition of competence in the linguistic aspects like grammar or lexis; in fact, there are other domains which constitute natural and important parts of the foreign language. These factors are mostly represented by the discourse and socio-cultural parameters which should be necessarily included in any programme of teaching English as a foreign language.

Therefore, the integration of the cultural components in addition to the traditional language skills into EFL syllabuses is largely recognized as a necessary procedure in the foreign language teaching process. The foreign language teacher's tasks are extremely important within this perspective especially in relationship to the choice of the most effective mechanisms which would help teachers reach their stated objectives with regard to intercultural teaching. In fact, there are two main approaches that have been applied and tested in various institutions: the content-based instruction and the task-based instruction. In many studies, these approaches resulted with positive outcomes particularly those related to some specific areas of foreign language teaching. These domains are related to aspects such as content learning, cultural awareness, the improvement of language skills, the use of new technologies of information and communication and; above all, the students' abilities to cross-culturally communicate with a high level of success.

The principal objectives which are assigned to the two approaches are really ambitious because they incorporate within the teaching process a large variety of significant cultural components. The organization of materials which include various themes can take many forms namely the development of logical and complementary information and the improvement of students' abilities to handle complex materials. The main issue is that the application of these approaches should provide the foreign language teacher with materials which are precisely organized. The focus should be particularly put on the fact that the contents should reflect the necessary completion between the four traditional skills and the cultural dimension which is usually referred to as the fifth skill.

The most important challenge which faces the syllabus design operation and eventually the foreign language teacher is the harmonious and efficient integration of the cultural components as the fifth skill in the EFL class. It is not possible to deny that the traditional four skills constitute an integrated and indispensable part of EFL classes; nevertheless, experience has shown that the mastery of these language skills does not represent a guarantee of students' complete success in foreign language communication. In other words, one cannot clearly assert that the sole proficiency in the four skills necessarily ensures communicative competence or the ability to use the foreign language appropriately in all circumstances. The constituents of communicative competence are certainly far more extended than the simple mastery of the linguistic aspects.

A great number of scholars and professionals have analysed these parameters at length such as L. F. Bachman (1990), M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dornyei, and S. Thurell (1995), R. Brown (2000); and some of the principal issues have been already discussed in preceding parts of the present work. However, what is practically important at the local level should be the development of effective procedures and techniques in order to integrate elements like fluency and language use, authentic materials and the creation of appropriate contexts in the EFL class. The founding principles of intercultural teaching are clear and; among the most important is that foreign language learning and culture learning are intimately related.

The cultural implications in the teaching of a foreign language are numerous; one should give importance to various aspects including foreign cultural behaviours, ways of thinking and how emotions and feelings are conveyed in the foreign language community. The classroom situation should provide the essential means and opportunities to cultural learning/teaching without obviously the negligence of the traditional skills. Indeed, there is no contradiction between the two types of learning; as a matter of fact, it is strongly believed (L. Damen, 1987) that EFL teaching can easily and usefully integrate the four skills together with culture learning. In fact, the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and the cultural components are all interrelated and overlap throughout the linguistic and cultural dimensions.

In the past years, English language teachers at the local level believed that culture teaching should not constitute an independent skill; because they simply assumed that a focus on the four skills would certainly incorporate cultural information through the different textbooks and materials used in the EFL class. This position has relatively undermined the teaching of the target culture; in fact, the assumption that students possess some information about the foreign

cultural components was not really founded on clear evidence and practical experience. Indeed, the majority of students usually do not- or at least very little- know the different aspects and details of the cultures of English speaking communities. This situation has often resulted with miscommunications and/or misunderstanding because of students' low proficiency in the target culture.

Therefore, we can simply deduce that the teaching of the foreign culture (at the local level) should necessarily occupy a more important place in the teaching programmes. Moreover, target culture instruction should be definitely emancipated from the view that regards culture teaching as only a secondary constituent of the traditional four skills. The pedagogical framework which naturally incorporates the principle of teaching the five language skills together is generally referred to as the Integrated-Skill Procedure. Ideally, this notion is quite simple because it is assumed that all the elements which are involved in the foreign language teaching operation (particularly the foreign language teacher, learners, materials and classroom) should form an integrated society process.

In other words, the implication which directly affects the point under discussion is that the five skills have to be integrated to each other in such a manner that reflects their interdependence. Indeed, we have already indicated in the introduction of the present part that the two approaches have been elaborated and put into application in line with the contents or rather tasks that should characterize the foreign language teaching programmes.

2.1. Major Approaches to Intercultural Language Skills

We think that at this point it is worth analysing with further details the two main approaches in connection with the intercultural language skills.

* Content-Based Language Teaching.

A simple definition of CBT describes the process as an interrelation and combination of a specific content and the objectives to be realized; in other words, the teaching of the five skills is permanently associated with the themes (socio-cultural); which in turn constitutes the overall content of the teaching programme. The foreign language is considered to be the medium that conveys culture information which are particularly useful to learners. The constituent units of the content are all entirely determined by the discourse communities; consequently, the foreign language teacher main task is to make students integrate these elements in the learning process. The objective is that these discourse communities (different types of discourse depend on who is

the interlocutor) and the contextual parameters should become part of foreign language proficiency.

Therefore, the foreign language teaching/learning process in this manner becomes more realistic and concrete. The reason is that the kind of discourse in the target language is continuously connected to the socio-cultural context, participants, setting and actions. As far as the foreign language teacher is concerned, the question which is worth discussion is related to the most appropriate level of CBT application (beginning, intermediate or advanced). There is a common belief (certainly not completely backed by evidence or empirical investigation) on the part of foreign language teachers that elementary or even intermediate levels students of English are unable to grasp all the various nuances, abstractions and allusions which are found in the target culture.

Generally, the overall observation that one can suggest is that CBT definitely acts as a pedagogical tool which allows the integration of the five language skills. The arguments which one puts forward are related to the principal aim of this approach; namely the improvement of a type of foreign language teaching thoroughly oriented to the real contextual use of the English language. The different units which constitute its contents are specifically linked to various socio-cultural behaviours of English native speakers within their speech communities. Students are also offered the opportunity to compare these foreign usages to their own native societies and other nations; therefore, they probably would be able to distinguish the similarities and differences across numerous speech societies.

Additionally, the different classroom activities are equally cross-culturally oriented in relationship to multiple topics which are carefully selected by the foreign language teacher. Indeed, students voluntarily participate in the language activities such as problem-solving, reading, discussing, field investigation and writing reports. The culture contents permit the practice of all the five skills in a communicative manner and; ultimately, foreign language learners would possibly develop both linguistic and communicative competence.

* Task-Based Language Teaching.

The second approach which is characterized by the integration of contents and language skills is the Task-Based Language Teaching. A large number of scholars (D. Nunan, 1992; R. Brown, 2000) present this approach as featuring in the first place interaction in the target language. In fact, socio-cultural events characterize the learning situations that serve as activators of students'

discussions of their personal experiences; the aim is the possible creation of a junction between the target language as it is manipulated in the classroom and the one which might be used by native speakers of English in real life situations.

The linguistic objectives that are assigned to the lessons do not prevent but rather enhance students' communicative- pragmatic competence. On the other hand, there is another aspect which also needs clarification and it is closely related to the question of foreign language teachers' tasks. As a matter of fact, R. Brown (2000) defines a task as a highly structured language learning enterprise or exercise that constitutes a main objective to be reached. However, the attainment of this goal depends on the application of a particular procedure to suitable contents in addition to a number of achievements that should be realized by learners.

In addition, a task is not necessarily correlated with one skill, the same task deals with the five skills at the same time. For instance, a task which consists of a problem-solving activity may imply the foreign language teacher's explanations, the use of a literary textbook, reading comprehension and; lastly, classroom discussions of some issues presented through materials that are closely linked to the target culture.

On the other hand, it is worth pointing out that TBT approach does not give priority to the structural language practice; in fact, the activities are necessarily in relationship to the goals of the teaching programmes. Indeed, the foreign language teaching operation encourages the understanding of the target culture through the manipulation of communicative tasks. Moreover, the organization and presentation of the tasks is certainly not random; as a matter of fact, the foreign language teacher is provided with planned and sequenced activities which follow a precise procedure. Obviously, the procedure is conceived in order to realize particular objectives that have been already pre-programmed.

Additionally, the communicative tasks are divided into categories that provide multiple kinds of input which would be eventually used by students in communicative acts. However, it is evident that the foreign language teacher should have a clear and precise idea about his role and the students' expected behaviours. Moreover, it is essential that the foreign language teacher who decides to adopt the TBT approach should always concentrate on the main focus point in the language teaching operation that is the combination of the language functions with their cultural contexts.

Concerning the sources which originally provide the materials in order to create real-world tasks; they should definitely be authentic. Indeed, there are many types of motivating tasks such as interviews, discussions and particularly speeches and mass-media audio and video recordings with native speakers of English from various social categories. Certainly, the pedagogical tasks are intended to present real world communication; for example learners can be taught the social, administrative and personal repercussions in a job-seeking activity. In this respect, many elements are implied like job interviews (and the kind of discourse which is developed), the practice of role-play activities and the intercultural rules which govern the communicative acts of the different participants. Therefore, this type of tasks actually presents the language skills parameters of reading, writing, listening, speaking and; lastly culture; enfolded in a specific activity which indicates to learners certain language functions in the social context.

In short, the advantages of CBT and TBT in intercultural foreign language teaching are numerous and they are mostly useful to both foreign language teachers and students. We can first mention the positive use of authentic materials in natural socio-cultural contexts. The second useful point is that students are given the opportunity to practise and experience the complexity of the target language in cross-cultural communication. The third advantage is that the foreign language teacher is able to precisely follow the acquisitive progression of his students through various skills at the same period of time. The last benefit we can draw from these approaches is the real possibility for the foreign language teacher to stimulate and higher students' motivation because of the use of real and genuine contents.

Evidently, the adoption of these approaches requires much care in the choice of selected materials, textbooks and the daily use of modern technologies. Indeed, the contents should fully integrate the five language skills together in order to effectively develop learners' communicative competence.

2.2. The Relationship between Culture, Listening and Speaking Skills

In the preceding parts of the present study, we have already tried to demonstrate the importance of teaching the target culture; and the emphasis that should be put on specific aspects related to cross-cultural communication. However, we think that the main point which needs further analysis is the perception of cultural behaviours in the context of the satisfaction of human needs. These essential needs can be categorized into two types: the lower level needs that are linked to physical aspects (food, water, shelter etc...) and the high level needs related to education, development and fulfilment (A. Maslow, 1962).



Indeed, the cultural behaviours are continuously determined by those needs and expectations which are shared by the members of a speech community (J. Straub, 2005). Accordingly, the most significant foreign language teacher's concern is the promotion of cultural learning within an appropriate framework which would probably be the communicative syllabus. In this perspective, the importance of listening in intercultural foreign language learning should not be in any manner neglected. The receptive processes enable learners to internalize the target linguistic and non-linguistic information since it is known that listening competence is much larger than speaking competence.

The pedagogical frameworks that support the teaching of listening comprehension have been extensively discussed in many studies and; therefore, our purpose is not to present complete and detailed accounts of those procedures. However, we believe it is important to discuss the pioneering work presented by James Asher through his study of the Total Physical Response (1977) which is mainly characterized by the presentation of a large amount of reading materials to learners before the actual oral responses. The second framework is the Natural Approach which is based upon the principle of the 'silent period' which stipulates that learners should undergo a limited period of time listening to the target language. The process can be realized through the use of diverse materials and; in a second phase learners would be probably ready and willing to begin the speaking activities.

However, one cannot deny that the emphasis in foreign language teaching- even within the intercultural dimension- has always been on the development of the speaking proficiency. The reasons can be traced back to the 1960's and 1970's because of the widespread popularity of the audio-lingual approach and; during the 1980's due to the noticeable developments of communicative competence theories. Additionally, there is the traditional learners' conception of foreign language proficiency which is usually framed within the mastery of the speaking skills; nevertheless, at present time there are certainly new and various types of needs which would probably require different skills.

On the whole, it is not possible to conclude this brief overview of the speaking and listening skills and their interrelation to the target culture without the presentation of some useful activities in the foreign language classroom. Locally, the most popular and pleasant task according to students is the introduction and use of videos or films in the classroom. For example, the foreign language teacher can carefully select and suggest a film which specifically deals with an intercultural issue. The objectives related to the improvement of culture, speaking



and listening skills are undeniable because students have the occasion to listen to various conversations which implicitly display different types of foreign language discourse.

Afterwards, the foreign language teacher can organize classroom discussions in order to allow students to give their opinions at the end of the film. Lastly, intercultural issues and behaviours are dealt with in an incidental manner in order to increase learners' cultural awareness, understanding and the encouragement of mutual empathy.

Practically, the procedure and activities concerning the use of films in the foreign language classroom can be summarized as follows: the foreign language teacher presents the theme of the film and additional information related to the film making operation (director, actors, techniques etc...). Then, students actually watch the film and afterwards they should perform specific tasks in order to check listening comprehension (for instance a short written summary of the main questions) in the movie. The last activity would probably be the organization of a general classroom discussion (speaking skill) under the supervision of the teacher (focus should be principally put on the students' pronunciations if necessary, and debated around cultural matters).

Finally, it is important to indicate that speaking, listening and culture skills would be individually and largely discussed in other parts of the present work. However, in the above presentation we have briefly tried to highlight the significance of interconnecting the cultural variables with the speaking and listening skills. Indeed, a special emphasis has been put on the cultural components in addition to the suggestion of some practical oral and listening activities; obviously the major aim is to enhance students' communicative proficiency.

2.3. The Interconnection of Culture, Reading and Writing Skills

It is noticeable that the reading skill still provokes many theoretical debates with respect to the principal procedure which should be followed in order to teach it within the foreign language class. The dilemma is quite intrinsic, on one hand many teachers think that reading should be singled out because of its particular features and; on the other there are numerous foreign language teachers who are in favour of associating reading with other skills in particular the writing skill. However, in present days interactive language teaching is the method that is principally adopted by the foreign language teacher because the association of the entire foreign language skills offers numerous advantages.

In fact, the reading process involves various mental activities which imply the recognition of the linguistic symbols and the selection of meaningful data. The processing and analysis of the information laid out in the text depend on the different elements which are brought by the reader; namely the necessary additional information, knowledge, experience and culture which play a crucial part in helping the reader better grasp and understand the written texts.

As far as the writing skill is concerned, our purpose is not to discuss the multiple approaches and procedures which are proposed in order to teach writing. However, we think it would useful to briefly remind that the most used approach by the foreign language teacher at present is the Process Approach which puts emphasis on the content and message in the students' writings.

Foreign language learners are generally taught the different strategies with regard to prewriting, drafting and rewriting. In addition, students' planning and revising of their writing products represent crucial phases in the writing process because they provide the necessary feedback in the form of the revision which they can obtain from the foreign language teacher and also classmates.

Moreover, it is worth signalling that the advocators of the process approach do not undermine the writing product in itself; nevertheless, they believe that the process represents an inevitable ritual pre-requisite to the final product or piece of writing. Most importantly, the foreign language teacher should be aware of the students' native patterns of thinking and writing which permanently interfere in the foreign language writings of learners. In other words, the cultural component is always present in the writing process; as a matter of fact, students are greatly influenced by their own traditions, values and beliefs. These factors are constantly compared and contrasted to those which exist in the English culture; consequently, the final decisions and interpretations are naturally reflected in the students' writing products.

On the other hand, the realization of the objectives of intercultural programmes of foreign language teaching depends definitely on the integration of the reading, writing and cultural skills in the contents of the syllabus. Indeed, within this perspective, many intercultural materials can be suggested by the foreign language teacher such as short stories, articles in newspapers or official reports which deal with socio-cultural issues in the native and foreign communities. In fact, the main purpose is to encourage the practice of various classroom activities as follows: reading the text silently or loudly and discussions of the cultural issue presented in the piece of writing. The question of classroom discussions is quite useful because students can reveal their points of view and attitudes while they compare their own native cultural elements to those



which exist in the target culture. Lastly, individual students or small groups of learners can submit written reports over the text that has been studied in the classroom.

In addition, modern technology provides almost limitless materials which can be properly used to develop the three skills (reading, writing and culture) at the same time. In reality, an infinite number of articles, reports, short stories are available (particularly through the use of multimedia means) and they do offer authentic materials that can be utilized by both the foreign language teacher and learners. Indeed, a simple and brief research operation can result with the provision of very interesting materials which are possible to adapt to classroom situations.

It is equally interesting to remind that recent experiences have proved that such types of materials not only do they actually enhance the traditional foreign language skills but they largely promote the teaching of the target culture as well. However, the appropriate choice of materials, their adaptation to the objectives of the lesson and students' needs and; lastly, the effective achievement of the foreign language teaching operation certainly constitute the primordial tasks of the foreign language teacher. Moreover, we think it is evident that students' involvement and active participation in the proposed classroom activities or field research work under the permanent guidance of the foreign language instructor are essential preconditions for the plain success of the teaching/learning operations.

2.4. The Four Language Skills

There are usually two conventional ways of dividing the four language skills up. The first is into medium, with listening and speaking occurring in the spoken medium, reading and writing in the written medium. The second division is into the receptive skills of listening and reading, and the productive skills of speaking and writing (K.Johnson, 2008: 278-279). In some approaches to language teaching, the four language skills are treated separately while the intercultural approach to foreign language teaching requires the combination of the language skills and the socio-cultural behaviours of the foreign speech community. Accordingly, in the present section we have adopted a procedure that not only combines culture, listening and speaking skills but it also focuses on the interconnection of culture, reading and writing skills.

2.4.1. The Listening Skill

The foreign language teacher should be aware of the goals and problems in teaching listening. In fact, he needs to provide systematic instruction and extensive practice in listening comprehension and related practical problems. Generally, the main goal of teaching listening is to enable students eventually to cope with the natural listening situations that are most likely to encounter in real life. The foreign language teacher should stimulate natural listening which implies face to face interactive situations such as conversation, interviews, lessons, shopping or getting instruction which often display the social cultural constituents of the foreign speech community (P. Ur, 2012: 102-103).

2.4.1.1. Theoretical Background

The teaching of listening within the intercultural dimension has brought about considerable changes in our assumptions, and practice of foreign language teaching. Indeed, many issues have been questioned in relation to the appropriate procedures and classroom activities which should be used in order to ameliorate the teaching of the listening skill itself as a crucial component of foreign language teaching. The most important innovation has been the introduction of the crosscultural perspective in the teaching process.

The interest in the listening skill has been continuously increasing and this situation has resulted with the elaboration and improvement of many local university teaching programmes. In fact, these programmes have assigned great importance to this skill and have placed it among the first concerns of teaching English as a foreign language. As a matter of fact, the listening skill has gained its true significance because, in previous years the traditional assumptions and views concerning the listening skill have not really focused on the intercultural component due to the influence of linguistic theories and approaches at that time.

Consequently, the constituent elements of the listening skill which were emphasized and given priority were essentially the structural aspects of the foreign language. In fact, the objectives of the listening skill were only limited to the mastery of reduced forms of words, the identification of key words and expressions and the study of the grammatical cohesive devices in the discourse. Despite the fact that the development of cognitive psychology promoted the principles of prior knowledge and its schematic representation in the learner's mind, and came to look at the listening skill as an interpretive process; the impact of the psycho-cognitive theories on the teaching of the listening skill was not really important.

The main reason is that the different programmes did not take into account the learner's entity representing primarily the socio-cultural influence in the listening comprehension process. Unfortunately, the results did not reach the great expectations of the foreign language teachers especially in connection with the improvement of students' competence in the target language and culture. However, it is undeniable that the developments in the different theories of leaning and the numerous achievements which have been realized with respect to foreign language teaching have paved the way to the emancipation of foreign language teaching in general.

Therefore, the current views of the listening skill have shifted from the focus on the linguistic and psychological parameters to a broader perspective which gives importance to the socio-cultural determinants. These new factors obviously govern the speaker's understanding of real-life genuine discourse in the speech community. In fact, it has become clear that effective listening within the socio-cultural context requires a more 'active' attitude of the listener. Indeed, the listener needs the source as well as the foreign social and cultural strategies in order to simplify, arrange and evaluate the spoken discourse. Lastly, listening is not anymore seen as simply a comprehension tool of oral language but rather it is an integrated and efficient element in foreign language learning within the intercultural context.

In addition, there is another influential factor which has provoked the shift from rather a traditional view of teaching the listening skill to a new position that is influenced by novel ideas which define the students' communicative competence in the foreign language. Nowadays, the main concern is to enable the foreign language learner to totally master cross-cultural communication. Therefore, the implications are broad and important because they presuppose that the learner of English should not only be a proficient communicator in the source and target cultures but also across other universal cultural components.

On the other hand, this new perspective opened new horizons to the conception and application of some interesting approaches which aim at developing novel procedures and activities in teaching the listening skill. However, a general characteristic is common to the majority of these new approaches which is the permanent incorporation of the listening skill within the intercultural dimension. As a matter of fact, a noticeable and particularly useful work has been proposed by Jack C. Richards (2008) who views the teaching of the listening skill from two principal perspectives which we think are worth discussion and analysis.

2.4.1.2. Listening as Comprehension

The traditional view of the most important objectives of teaching listening is to ameliorate the foreign language students' abilities to comprehend oral English in particular. In other words, the listening skill has always been associated with the comprehension process. However, the separation of the two elements is practically more useful in the analysis and explanation of the listening question. Of course, the students' degrees of proficiency in the listening skill depend to a great extent on the spoken discourse and the various challenges that it poses to the English language learner.

Indeed, the understanding of the spoken record obeys to completely different parameters than those one can find in the written discourse. The common features which posit tricky problems to learners of English as a foreign language in the spoken discourse are principally the time factor afforded to the listener to catch and grasp the sense of each word which is very short. In addition, the usual and natural speed of delivery even if the rates vary from one speaker to another. Moreover, the written record is highly organized whereas spoken language comprises many spontaneous and natural features that represent various difficulties to English language learners. The most common problems are usually hesitations, incomplete utterances, shortened forms and multiple 'accents' that change according to personal and socio-cultural parameters.

Additionally, the structures of the written discourse are rather hierarchically organized through direct and indirect relationships. In contrast, the spoken discourse takes a linear construction which results with the production of long clauses that are simply coordinated. This situation of combinatory constructions increases foreign language learners' problems because of the difficulties in making-up the correct interrelationships. There is also another significant element; it is the fact that the spoken discourse is largely affected by the socio-cultural contexts in which it takes place. It is evident that the listeners' abilities to 'understand' the oral foreign language are conditioned by various cultural conventions which constitute the shared cultural background of native speakers of English.

The effective teaching of the listening skill, at least in the traditional context requires a precise and encompassing knowledge of the processes which are involved in the perception and analysis of spoken language. Indeed, the most significant processes are discussed as follows.

* The Bottom-Up Process.

The first process is usually referred to as the 'bottom-up processing'. The main question in this type of listening –comprehension is the decoding of the oral input; in other words, the spoken message is divided into its constituent elements (sounds, words, clauses, sentences and texts) until the ultimate phase which is the derivation of the meaning conveyed. The listener's competence at this level is uniquely characterized by vocabulary and grammar. It mainly consists of respectively the identification of the familiar meanings and the structural combinations of the grammatical items and their relationships.

Indeed, in order to understand the meaning of any utterance produced by an interlocutor; the listener has to mentally 'decompose' it into constituent elements. In fact, the breaking-down operation helps the hearer to identify the various propositions which are carried out by the utterance. The result is that the obtained semantic units facilitate the overall comprehension of the spoken discourse.

The pedagogical implications in the teaching of the listening skill in a TEFL situation are clearly summarized by Jack C. Richards (2008) who proposes the following steps in order to develop the foreign language learner's bottom-up processing. The maintenance of the input during its processing, the recognition of the divisions of words and clauses, the emphasis on the key words, the identification of the transitory items in the speech, the grammatical interrelations of the important elements and; lastly, the focus on the role of stress and intonation to determine the functions of these units.

Obviously, this is a conventional conception of the manner in which the listening skill should be taught. Hence, a special emphasis is put on activities which promote bottom-up processing like dictation, cloze listening, multiple choice questions and other activities that enhance the recognition and processing of the oral discourse as the input. In fact, the bottom-up process implies an issue which is nowadays thoroughly criticized because it presupposes that what is needed by the listener in order to understand the message is comprised in the input itself. Consequently, the different tasks which are proposed by the foreign language teacher to learners consist of the following operations:

- * Find out the key elements that are replaced by pronouns.
- * Identify the time of the different actions.
- * Classify the positive and negative statements.
- * Concentrate on the word-order in the utterances.
- * Pay attention to the sequencing of the speech and how it is marked.



- * Single out the key words in the spoken discourse.
- * Recognize the various modal verbs and the different 'moods' they express in the speech.

On the other hand, the listening activities which can exemplify and realize these objectives are numerous; we can very briefly mention some of them:

- * Students listen to statements which are negatively or positively expressed, then they are asked to choose the suitable corresponding forms.
- *Students listen to interrogatives which can have a dual interpretation depending on the speaker's stress and intonation, the main objective is to identify the intended information focus.
- * Students listen to a piece of spoken discourse, afterwards they are given a number of words and they are asked to select the elements which they have heard and dismiss the others. The objective is to develop the students' abilities to identify the key words.

* The Top-Down Process.

The second process in teaching the listening skill is characterized by the use of what is usually called 'the background knowledge' in order to grasp the meaning of the spoken message. In fact, it is the reverse order which occurs in comparison with the bottom-up process; that is to say, the listener undertakes a processing which moves from meaning to the actual utterance. In this case, the listener's previous background knowledge plays an important role in facilitating the understanding through the provision of necessary information about the topic of the spoken discourse.

In addition, there are two principal aspects that are related to the spoken discourse; namely, the contextual information and the knowledge about the general structure of the events and their interrelationships. In fact, the listener's attention is attracted by a particular key word because it generates further questions that need specific answers in connection to the hearer's background knowledge. These questions guide the listener and help him understand the subsequent utterances in the discourse in addition to the concentration on the eventual information that the hearer might obtain. The focus words or expressions start up a related schema in the mind of the listener with the necessary dimensions such as the setting, participants, objectives, procedures and; finally, the results of the activities or events.

On the other hand, the kind of knowledge which the hearer utilizes in the interpretation of the spoken discourse is intimately linked to the socio-cultural conventions of the community. Hence, the oral language is determined by many factors and the first is the situation and the participants who are necessarily present in that context. The second element is in the form of the objectives which are assigned to the discourse. The last element is represented by the various ways in which interlocutors can reach the stated goals.

In addition, the foreign language speaker in particular should develop an awareness of the numerous subjects and notions and their possible associations which possibly permit a better understanding of the situation. The prior knowledge represents a pre-requisite that largely helps the listener to rightly interpret the speech event and then react in the appropriate way. Moreover, the nature of the hearer's knowledge is not primarily related to the linguistic aspects but rather they are characterized by the intercultural components such as concepts, persons and social events which influence the types of utterances that are delivered.

Indeed, these cultural factors contribute in the interpretation of the spoken discourse; therefore, the speech which is heard by the listener simply represents a kind of completion in the form of confirmations and additional details. In this manner, we can say that the listening process is particularly 'top-down'. Therefore, the listener's comprehension of the utterances depends on the social context in which they are produced and also the cultural background knowledge that is brought by the foreign language speaker to the situation (M. Ross, 2001:8).

Furthermore, the significant foreign language competence that is encouraged by top-down processes generally aims at improving the listener's abilities to achieve certain tasks in the foreign language such as:

- * The appropriate use of the key words in the discourse in order to build the listener's interpretation of the conversation.
- * The construction of the suitable setting of spoken discourse events.
- * The understanding of the causes and consequences of the speech.
- * The discernment of the roles of each interlocutor in the discourse and their possible objectives.
- * The detection of hidden or unstated details which underlie the discourse and the situation.
- * The anticipation of the participants' reactions or questions.

However, in order to attain this level of proficiency, the foreign language teacher should incorporate in the lesson some useful classroom activities which would specifically develop the

top-down listening skill. Indeed, the most representative activities can be summarized in the following:

- * In accordance with the cultural parameters of the source and target or even other cultures; the listener can imagine a number of issues which are related to the topic of the conversation and; eventually, verify if they are dealt with.
- * Students can prepare in advance an inventory of the elements which they already know about the topic of the discussion and the additional information that they expect to hear at the end of the spoken discourse. Afterwards, they are asked to check their lists and compare their contents to the elements mentioned in the conversation. In this way, they would be able to make a precise evaluation of the entire discussion.
- * The foreign language teacher can ask students to read the turn of one interlocutor and try to guess the probable answer of the other speaker in a dialogue. Then, the foreign language teacher plays the recording so that learners compare their predicted turns in the speech to those which are actually produced by the speaker. The aim is, firstly to check the students' information about a particular topic and; secondly, to find out the learners' abilities to build a schema about the personalities of the participants.
- * The actual listening of the discussion can be preceded by a simple task; which should be realized by the students. In fact, the foreign language teacher asks learners to write down a list of important points that supposedly should be covered by the speakers. Then, after listening to the recording, they would be required to compare the elements mentioned by the interlocutors to the list of units which they have previously prepared.
- * Learners are asked to listen to the first part of a story or debate, then, the foreign language teacher stops the recording and requests the learners to guess the possible endings and results of the story or debate. Lastly, learners would listen to the rest of the materials and compare their guesses to the actual outcomes on the recording. The main objective of the activity is to develop students' awareness of certain socio-cultural topics or issues. Moreover, it would be possible to check students' expectations and attitudes in connection with the various intercultural manifestations.

*The use of recordings of radio news broadcasting of events that have occurred either in the students' own community or in the target language society can be beneficial. Indeed, students can just listen to the news headlines and then try to foresee the probable happenings; afterwards, they would hear the rest of the whole news broadcasting and compare the items. The goal which is expected to be reached through this activity is the improvement of students' right expectations and understanding of people's reactions in the foreign language community.

* The combination of Bottom-Up and Top-Down Listening Processes.

It is known that in real life interaction the listener makes use of the two processes at the same time. Evidently, the preponderance of one process over the other usually depends on the hearers' abilities which can take many aspects; particularly the listener's degree of familiarity with a specific subject and the content that is borne by the spoken discourse. An additional element is the amount of information carried out through the discussion; certainly the nature of knowledge is nearly totally related to the intercultural components. The following factor is the type of spoken record; in this case we refer to the kind of conversation like official or casual conversations or classroom lessons together with the contexts of the discourse. Lastly, we should mention the purposes of the hearer in respect to the listening operation.

On the other hand, modern teaching materials involve and represent the combination of the bottom-up and top-down listening processes and; they are nowadays largely available to the foreign language teacher. One would believe that the choice of any material in particular is determined by various factors which are related to the foreign language teacher's competence and experience. In addition, the objectives of the lesson, students' levels and motivation and probably many other elements are directly or indirectly connected to the entire pedagogical process.

However, we think that a specific experience can present a more explicit and detailed view of the effective combination of the two major processes. Within this perspective, we believe it would be interesting to discuss J. Field's model (1998) as a positive representative of the works in relation to this kind of materials. Indeed, J. Field divides the lesson into three distinct phases: the pre-listening, the current (while) listening and the post-listening. The main goal of the pre-listening part is to practise particular activities like the reminding of previous knowledge, the making of predictions and the review of significant vocabulary related to the topic. One surely

notices that all these activities require the linkage of bottom-up and top-down listening processes.

As far as the current (or while) listening phase is concerned, it mainly puts emphasis on exercises that deal with what the author names selective listening. In fact, selective listening consists of the focus on the main events and key words, gist listening which represents a tentative summary of the most important information and; finally, sequencing the order and chronology of the speech events. The general remark we can draw from this phase is that it tries to develop students' comprehension. Lastly, the third element is the post listening phase which is related to the students' reactions to the listening comprehension process. This is usually achieved through activities such as classroom discussions or individual presentations of one's opinions.

On the whole, the principal advantages of the present model are represented by the highly structured organization of the procedure, the interdependence of the two processes and the variations of the suggested activities.

2.4.1.3. Strategies of the Listening Skill

We believe that the success of the listening skill process largely depends on the appropriate information which the foreign language teacher possesses in relation to the various strategies the hearer employs during the listening operation. In fact, knowledge of these procedures positively contributes in the elaboration of effective methods of teaching the listening skill. As a matter of fact, access to these strategies helps the foreign language teacher in understanding the different mental operations that occur and; consequently, he would be better equipped to adopt his teaching methods to learners' needs.

In reality, we have tried to demonstrate that the listener is by no means passive during the hearing process of spoken discourse. On the contrary, the listener adopts specific approaches and ways to manage the listening tasks in order to remain an active participant in the different activities. Within this context, it would be useful to analyse the two types of listening strategies which have been proposed by G. Buck (2001).

The first type of strategies is called the cognitive strategies which represent the mental activities that mainly consist of assimilating and storing information for their eventual utilization whenever necessary. The cognitive strategies with regard to the listening process imply three mental procedures: the first one is the comprehension processes which deal with the analysis of linguistic and non-linguistic information. The second procedure consists of storing and memory

processes: these are related to the storing of verbal and non-verbal input which can be used either in the working memory or the long-term memory. Lastly, the third operation is the using and retrieval processes that are connected to the accessing of memory and extracting of information for necessary output.

In addition, there are essentially other interesting studies which have been undertaken in relationship to the listening strategies; in fact, we believe that the work of S. C. Goh (1998) is equally worth analysis. Indeed, the author has tried to interconnect the meta-cognitive functions which imply planning, monitoring and evaluation to the teaching of the listening skill. According to this scholar, the planning phase consists of the conception of the strategy which determines the listening skill and the necessary means that should be used in order to attain the objectives.

Concerning the planning strategy, it is composed of two principal phases: the first one represents the general listening development, the determination of the appropriate ways to reach these objectives and the categorization of the required short-term and long-term goals in order of priority. Additionally, it is possible to incorporate the search for occasions or the available opportunities for listening practice. Moreover, the second phase constitutes the planning strategy and it essentially represents the specific listening tasks. The functions of the second phase are the fulfilment of the preview of the most important ideas before the listening tasks, the rehearsal of the language required for the tasks like pronunciation and; finally, the localization in advance of the principal aspects of the discourse which listeners should concentrate on during the listening process.

On the other hand, the monitoring strategy is connected to the verification of the progress in the general course of learning or during the application of a particular learning task. The main functions which concern the general listening development in the monitoring phase are the consideration of the progress in relationship to the predetermined parameters in addition to the precision of the necessary time for the achievement of the short-term and long-term aims. Lastly, the foreign language teacher should check whether the same mistakes are repeated or definitely not being made.

However, the specific listening operation should also realize other significant tasks; namely, the checking of the listeners' understanding during the listening process. Additionally, the new information is supposed to be appropriately and accurately grasped by hearers and; lastly, the identification of the sources of the difficulties which listeners may encounter.

Furthermore, the evaluating strategy is concerned with essentially the determination of the due success of students' listening tasks or whenever necessary it is possible to complete a learning task. The operations included in the general listening development are principally the assessment of students' listening progress in accordance with the planned criteria and the evaluation of the efficiency of the learning and application strategies. The final point consists of the analysis in terms of appropriateness and usefulness of the assigned learning goals.

The following aspect which conditions the listening process deals with the actual fulfilment of the specific task which should take the form of a checking operation. This function is related to the appropriateness and accuracy of the information having been grasped by hearers and; eventually, the demonstration of the efficiency of the strategies used in the performance tasks. Finally, the last element is the question of the assessment of the general comprehension of the spoken discourse.

On the whole, we can notice that this approach presents different advantages that are essentially related to the actual applications of specific activities during the listening process; however, there is another significant work which also positively contributes in the improvement of the listening operation presented by S. C. Goh and Taib.Yusnita (2006). Principally, this second approach promotes the incorporation of listening strategies in a practical way which is reflected in a listening lesson.

In this respect, the authors suggest a number of steps which can be followed by the foreign language teacher in a guided meta-cognitive sequence. The first step is about the pre-listening activity, in fact, English language learners work in pairs and they are asked to predict (write down) the possible words or expressions in relation to the topic of the spoken discourse (they are also given the possibility to write some words in their mother tongues).

The second step is called 'first listen', the task consists of circling or underlining all the words they might hear in the spoken discourse which correspond to those they have already chosen in their note lists. While they are listening, students should also pay attention to the equivalent words they have written down in their native languages. The principal aim of the activity is to assess learners' right predictions and explanations of the foreign language and culture.

The third step is designated as the 'pair process-based discussion'. In this task students also work in pairs, the foreign language teacher stops the recording after a medium length period of time listening to the conversation, discussion or dialogue under study (usually after 15 minutes).

Learners are required to discuss the points they have understood so far and should explain the elements of disagreement and the reasons which have led them to such confusion. These conflicting points in particular should be noted because they necessitate a special attention during the 'second listen' of the material.

The fourth step which should logically follow is named 'second listen' and it consists of playing the spoken discourse another time by the foreign language teacher. The principal goal of the task is to listen very carefully to the parts which have caused disagreement; and to write down any further notes that may add new information in an attempt to find out the reasons of the discord.

The fifth step is entitled 'whole-class process-based discussion', as it is clearly indicated by the reference, the foreign language teacher in this activity leads a general classroom discussion. The intention is of course to confirm students' comprehension of the spoken discourse and to analyse the strategies they have employed in the constitution of their opinions.

Listening as Acquisition.

At this point of the discussion of the listening skill as proposed by Jack C. Richards (2008) in particular, we believe it is preferable to make a brief recapitulation of the most significant elements with respect to the concepts of listening comprehension. Indeed, it is obvious that the main assumption in this perspective is that the role of listening in a TEFL programme is essentially the development of learners' abilities to comprehend the spoken discourse they listen to. Therefore, the principal functions which we assign to the listening skill can be posited within the following framework:

- 1. The main objective of the listening skill is to select and present the meanings that are conveyed through the oral messages.
- 2. In order to attain this goal, foreign language learners are implicitly taught the procedures in which bottom-up and top-down processes should be used in order to understand the spoken discourse.
- 3. The focus is not on the structural aspects of the spoken language; hence, syntactic elements, combinations of words and expressions are only perceived as simply carriers of various meaning of speech.
- 4. Listening strategies and the undertaking of corresponding activities participate in making students effective listeners to spoken discourse.

The realization of the stated objectives requires the elaboration of a certain number of tasks that are incorporated in the teaching materials. Evidently, the significant aim of the proposed tasks is to enable learners to recognize the general or specific or embedded meaning of the oral discourse. Of course, the purpose is not to discuss all these activities but we can just cite some of them like the identification of pictures, summaries, true-false exercises and sequencing.

On the other hand, the second perspective of the listening skill is to regard it as an acquisitive process. Hence, the listening skill is perceived to involve a conscious activity which permits the selection of specific 'noticed' points that are added to the linguistic competence of students. This concept is further clarified by R. Schmidt (1990) who differentiates between the notion of input or what is heard by the learner and the intake or what is particularly noticed by the learner in the overall spoken discourse and that serves as a basis for the development of the foreign language.

However, listening as acquisition presupposes a much complex process; because the learner attempts to integrate new linguistic items into his foreign language repertoire with the possibility of using them whenever necessary in his oral production. Our purpose is obviously not to analyse all the implied operations within this context; nevertheless, it is worth mentioning the most important processes which are restructuring, elaboration of complex items and producing primary input. They can be very shortly and respectively explained as the adaptation and incorporation of the intake; and the two remaining elements refer to the practice of activities which try out and test the new information before it is incorporated in the students' foreign language competence.

Certainly, the importance of this view lies in the practical implications of teaching the listening skill. In fact, the two processes are complementary; in some general English courses the focus is on the comprehension factor like the extraction of information from lectures, announcements or news broadcasting. However, there are other learning situations where the comprehension and acquisition processes are required such as the oral interactions which involve transactional functions in the forms of discussions or argumentations.

Additionally, there is the situation where a combinatory course of listening and speaking is utilized by the foreign language teacher. In this case, listening texts or other materials of spoken discourse can provide dual exploitation in the forms of first comprehension and then acquisition activities.

On the other hand, there are appropriate classroom strategies which are specifically designed for listening as an acquisition process. In fact, we think it is necessary to analyse the work put forward by Jack C. Richards (2008) as a representative model especially with regard to the useful activities that enhance the listening skill as acquisition. Indeed, this scholar suggests two types of foreign language teaching activities that he labels 'Noticing Activities' and Restructuring Activities'. The first type implies the return of the listening texts which have been used previously in the comprehension activities; however, this time the foreign language teacher uses them for the development of students' target culture awareness.

Moreover, the author suggests a number of tasks which can be performed by learners after the second listening of the recordings:

- 1. The comparison of the written version of the text to the spoken discourse in order to discover the differences between the two distinct parts of the discourse.
- 2. A cloze form of the text may be submitted to students for its completion.
- 3. Some sentences of the written record are singled out in order to be completed by students.
- 4. A number of important expressions (in terms of discourse strategies and socio-cultural conventions) which are part of the text are presented to foreign language learners in a list and they are asked to check off entries.

The second type of teaching activities involves the notion of 'restructuring' because written and oral tasks are incorporated; they imply the active and productive use of chosen units from the listening text. The same scholar also proposes a number of interesting activities that can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Classroom activities which involve pairs of students alternatively reading the tape scripts of materials like dialogues or conversations.
- 2. Completion tasks of selected sentences which take place in the text and that require the use of particular expressions or other linguistic units.
- 3. The foreign language teacher suggests to students some dialogues for practice which necessarily contain some elements from the text.

4. Key expressions and significant words chosen from the text should be appropriately used by learners in role-plays.

In summation, one can state that the listening course, where comprehension and acquisition constitute the principal teaching goals; it is primordial to put into application a two-sided strategy in instructional materials and classroom activities. Indeed, the beginning of the first phase should always be the listening as comprehension which implies the use of materials in a motivating and communicative manner.

In addition, the second phase (or ending) should be the listening as acquisition which requests the manipulation of listening texts for the practice of speaking activities through the process of noticing and restructuring. In this way, students are able to connect the listening and speaking tasks together which would probably develop their awareness of the numerous and varied possibilities in real life contextual communication.

2.4.2. The Speaking Skill

2.4.2.1. Theoretical Background

The speaking skills proficiency in English has always constituted a primordial goal for foreign language learners. The majority of students regard the mastery of spoken English as a definite criterion of their progress in target language learning. Consequently, their evaluation of any English programme in terms of effectiveness and usefulness is often solely based upon their achievements in spoken English. This view is consolidated by the existence of a tremendous number of course books, booklets and electronic materials which particularly emphasize the oral skills.

However, the question of the definition and application of the most appropriate and efficient methods of teaching the speaking skill is till open to debate. The range of approaches and procedures adopted in those teaching materials is extremely vast. Hence, the approach can be directly devoted to and it insists on particular areas of spoken interaction like questioning, turntaking or topic arrangement. In contrast, the approach can also be indirect and gives priority to the conception of the best conditions to create dynamic conversations such as activities which enhance group work tasks and field investigations.

The amount of research investigation which is especially interested in the spoken record like the accurate and advanced analyses of discourse, conversation and corpus is largely important. In fact, many studies have actually and effectively participated in the understanding of the nature of the spoken discourse and how it is fundamentally different from the written record. The general observation that one can present is that spoken interaction is a complex process in human language and it is characterized by specific features. These particular traits of spoken discourse are numerous and varied such as the division into units of brief phrases or clauses around the same idea.

In addition, the organization of spoken language can be planned as in a lecture or a political speech; nevertheless, the oral interaction can also be unplanned like in casual conversations. The choice of words in discussions or dialogues in real life interactions is neither precise nor very complex contrarily to the lexis of the written record. The oral language also uses limited or recurrent expressions and it often comprises hesitations markers and leitmotiv small words. An additional feature is the existence in spoken discourse of many slips of tongue or mistakes which reflect a lack of concentration or ignorance of certain norms.

Indeed, the spoken record involves exchanges or turn-taking because the oral interaction between interlocutors is jointly built. We can lastly mention the fact that spoken record is highly contextualized and the different variations (like formality or informality) which exist in oral language certainly reflect the roles, objectives and particular situations in which it takes place (S. Luoma, 2004). Generally, it appears that the oral elements we have discussed above are definitely and typically part of spoken language; in fact, in real-life conversations native speakers of English make use of a large number of these items which represent an inherent part of any spoken discourse. However, one can observe that there are certain features in the spoken record which are linguistically universal and often exist throughout different cultures. Therefore, we think it would be interesting to analyse the most significant components of spoken discourse.

* Conversational Routines.

A constant feature which is always found in the spoken discourse is the use of what is usually referred to as fixed expressions or 'routines' (R. Wardhaugh, 1969 and 1985; Jack C. Richards, 1990). These limited expressions have specific functions in conversations and introduce an element of spontaneity and naturalness in oral interaction. These routines are perfectly in harmony with the socio-cultural dimension of the speech community and the discursive competence in language. The cultural perspective can take many aspects like the positions of the interlocutors with respect to each other, the appropriate places to sit down or stand up at a party or a political meeting or how to offer hospitality (drinks, food, taking coats etc...).

On the other hand, the discursive routines are equally very significant and they certainly play an important role in the organization and regulation of oral interaction. These routines are intimately related to aspects like how to begin and end a conversation, topics introduction and transition, various ways of interruption and; many other linguistic or non-linguistic elements to show interest or indifference.

As far as the English language is concerned, many studies have indicated that these infinite conversation routines constitute an inevitable part of any oral interaction in this language. One may just cite some examples which are integrated as permanent elements in English conversations: 'just looking', 'thanks', 'you look great today', 'nearly time', 'I don't get the point' ...etc (Jack C. Richards, 2006). Indeed, these routines represent a lengthy repertoire which is part of the communicative competence of the native speaker of English and; eventually, should be mastered by the foreign language learner. It is evident that such important components should be incorporated in any programme of teaching the speaking skill.

Evidently, it is essential that these elements should be appropriately used by the foreign language learner of English; of course, the ultimate aim is to reach a nearly similar proficiency as native speakers of English in oral production. The operation is relatively not very difficult because the conversational routines may be used as fixed expressions in relationship to specific linguistic contexts and social situations. In fact, the teacher of English as a foreign language should be aware of the influence of routines and; therefore, he should probably use or design speaking activities and teaching materials which take into consideration this major aspect of the English language. The objective is to make the foreign language learner aware of such factors and we should enable him to master them (they are necessary in all speaking skills); because they actually determine the multiple functions of oral discourse.

* Functions of Speaking.

In the discussion of conversation routines we have clearly established, that these linguistic and non-linguistic elements achieve many functions in spoken discourse. Certainly, there are many research investigations which have attempted to classify these routines in an organized and precise framework. Indeed, one of the early studies which have dealt with this aspect of spoken discourse is the useful 'differentiation' suggested by G. Brown and G. Yule (1983). In fact, the authors have distinguished between two kinds of speaking functions: the first type is the interactional functions which are used to create and preserve social relations. The second kind is

the transactional functions which put an emphasis on the interlocutors' exchanges of information.

However, we think it would be more beneficial to discuss these functions in connection with another important feature of oral discourse that is Talk. We would try to describe and evaluate the frameworks suggested by Brown and Yule (1983) and Jack C. Richards (2001) in an independent part of the present work because of the significance of this concept in spoken discourse.

* Speaking Styles.

We have already tried to demonstrate in previous parts of the present study that interlocutors adopt particular styles of speaking in accordance with the circumstances and contexts that characterize conversations. In fact, the various types of speakers' styles are appropriately utilized; in other words, the style should reflect and obey to the socio-cultural conventions of the speech community. Therefore, different styles of speaking are necessarily determined by factors such as the roles, sex, age, social status of participants in oral interactions. Indeed, a large number of socio-cultural functions are achieved through the right performance and interpretation of the adopted speaking styles.

In addition, we can signal for example the variations that exist in expressions (styles) of politeness. They actually vary from one speaker to another according to the socio-cultural conventions which govern the interrelated linguistic and social performance. Within this context, it is useful to discuss Jack C. Richard's (2006) analysis of the sample of 'asking someone the time' and the different social interpretations this expression may have in relationship to the speaking styles that are used by participants:

- * Got the time;
- * I guess it must be quite late now;
- * What's the time;
- * Do you have the time;
- * Can I bother you for the time;
- * You wouldn't have the time, would you?

Obviously, one can notice that the various grammatical, phonological and lexical changes which are adapted to each style of speaking are surely influenced by the social relationships that exist between the different interlocutors. Indeed, this is particularly important with regard to

intercultural English language teaching; because speech styles differentiation minors the perceptions of the participants' social roles in any speech community. For example, the social status in the speech society often determines the speakers' styles. In fact, if the speaker and hearer are socially equal, the appropriate speaking style would probably reflect common interests and feelings; in addition, the expected social relationship is marked by solidarity and affiliation.

On the other hand, if the power (whatever its type) and the social status of the interlocutors are completely disproportioned; the appropriate speech style would be naturally more formal and would reflect a social relation of dominance of one participant over the other. However, it is very important to point out that since the social conventions and their interpretations differ from one speech community to another; the appropriate speaking styles are accordingly not similar in all societies. For instance, what is regarded to be a casual social situation in the Algerian (or precisely the local) context might not be necessarily the case in the English community.

Evidently, the existence of disparities between the socio-cultural conventions from one society to another logically results with different linguistic manifestations. These facts undoubtedly confirm and consolidate the necessity to teach English as a foreign language within the intercultural dimension. Speech styles are particularly important in oral interactions and; to a great extent, determine the success of cross-cultural communication. The reason is that the choice of the appropriate style of speaking brings a sense of politeness and rapport to the discussion. Therefore, the local Algerian learner of English definitely needs to be aware of the foreign socio-cultural conventions which condition the adoption of the appropriate style of speaking. Hence, it becomes clear that the right choice of the speaking style plays a major role in the success or failure of cross-cultural communication in English.

2.4.2.2. Talk as Interaction

As early as the eighties, Brown and Yule (1983) and ulteriorly Jack C.Richards (2001) have undertaken many interesting research work particularly focused on the concept of Talk in teaching the speaking skill. They have generally agreed, despite the existence of certain differences, to categorize Talk into three main types: talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance. Therefore, in the following we will discuss each type in details and independently from the others. The reason is that each of these speech activities is distinctively different in terms of form and function and necessarily needs dissimilar teaching approaches.

Talk as interaction is commonly known as the conversation which naturally occurs in real interaction. This type of speech discourse achieves an important social function which participates in the establishment of good social relations and friendly attitudes; this is generally realized through the expression of greetings, short talks or exchange of daily simple experiences. The social dimension of talk as interaction places more emphasis on the interlocutors and the manner in which they desire to express themselves whereas the message in particular, it is assigned a secondary role. Certainly, the contextual factors or the circumstances around the interaction determine the nature and kind of exchanges that occur between participants; especially the kind of conversation which can be formal or casual.

In addition, the characteristics of talk as interaction have been concisely and clearly described by Brown and Yule (1983) who firstly regard the function of this speech activity as fundamentally social. The second factor is that talk as interaction is viewed as the appropriate social framework which defines the participants' roles and relationships. The third element is that the adoption of a particular speaking style in a conversation necessarily reflects speaker's identity. The fourth factor is that talk as interaction determines the nature of language exchanges and social relations which are usually either formal or informal. The fifth point is that the organization and display of conversations largely depend on the socio-cultural conventions in oral interaction.

Moreover, the sixth element is related to the fact that through the turns of spoken discourse; speakers express various degrees of politeness and certain aspects of social etiquette. The seventh factor concerns the type of lexis which is generally used in this speech activity; it is usually simple and common to the social group involved in the discussion. The eighth point is related to the linguistic register in terms of grammar and vocabulary which are respectively characterized by simple grammatical structures and clear and straight meanings of words; this aspect mainly concerns the conversational register. The ninth and last feature represents the collaborative and shared process which is involved in the building of talk as interaction; in other words, the conversation is constructed as a joint enterprise between different participants.

On the other hand, the type of conversations which interferes in talk as interaction is extensively interactive and collectively oriented. In other words, all the interlocutors participate in the conversation and encourage each other to take turns. It is certainly not a question of one person counting some events or personal experience in front of an audience, but it rather favours the involvement of every speaker during the discussion. Additionally, it is useful to point out that

talk as interaction realizes numerous social functions in specifying the kind of social relations between the members of the speech community.

In reality, these social functions require many kinds of conversation which depend on the specification of the objectives that are expected to be achieved through oral interaction. Hence, some of these types of conversation have been suggested by Jack C. Richards (2001) and also S. Thornbury and D. Slade (2006); they can be summarized as follows:

- * The polite conversation which does not aim at constituting a basis for future social relationships.
- * A casual conversation which is supposed to represent a progressive process of making friendship.
- * A formal and polite conversation which presupposes an unequal social status between interlocutors.
- * A conversation that involves two friends and requests the cooperation of both participants; its main objective is the sharing of personal experience through the recounts of one or the two speakers.

In addition, the use of talk as interaction requires the mastery of specific socio-cultural and discursive competence which is absolutely necessary to learners of English. In fact, the objective is to successfully attain a high level of cross-cultural communication in English. These socio-cultural and discursive conventions take usually the form of the following skills:

- * The ability to open and close a conversation.
- * The right choice of the topic of conversation which depends on various social, human and contextual parameters.
- * The use of small-talks that serve to establish a casual interaction.
- * The speakers' utilization of appropriate joking for the sake of creating a relaxed and pleasant 'atmosphere' during the conversation.
- * The suitable process of taking turns like the time to take a leave, the floor, interruption and many other discursive arrangements.
- * The attraction and involvement (active participation) of other interlocutors through the recounting of personal experiences or daily-life incidents.
- * The mastery of various other discursive orderings, namely the appropriate information about when and whom we can interrupt other's turns.

- * The adequate reaction with respect to socio-cultural and linguistic criteria to the talks of other participants.
- * The adoption of an appropriate and effective speaking style.
- *The use of adjacency pairs which commonly implies the hearer's suitable conventional reaction to the speakers' utterances. In fact, adjacency pairs are particularly useful to foreign language learners of English because they involve a large range of speech acts through social events (pragmatic competence) such as: how to complain, apologize, compliment, accept, refuse, invite and many other communicative acts.

On the other hand, one would recognize that the needs of foreign language learners may vary and their priorities in learning the English language may also differ. However, a great number of students believe it is necessary to master the speaking skills, because on numerous occasions they feel particularly frustrated due to their inability to express their ideas and opinions in the target language. The question is even more acute with regard to the local Algerian context because the majority of the English language students, after their graduation, choose to 'become teachers of English' in the intermediary and secondary levels. Consequently, it seems evident that a major requirement in foreign language teaching is the native-like proficiency in pronunciation and fluency; indeed, the obvious reason is that the use of talk for interaction represents a crucial skill in any classroom activity.

Additionally, there is another key aspect which is related to the teaching of talk as interaction; it is clearly the students' need of a broad range of topics in order to actively participate in different conversations. In fact, intercultural communication (in English) not only requests a large scope of information about the usual and simple topics, but learners should also have insights into subjects which are typically related to other cultures. Indeed, the foreign language learner needs to practise certain classroom activities which aim at developing specific skills like topic nomination and listening comprehension of native speakers' conversation management. For instance, the necessity to learn elicitation items for requesting repetition and clarification and any other information about a specific topic.

On the whole, talk as interaction is a key component of any programme of teaching the speaking skill since the essence of any language consists of oral interaction in the first place (E. Hatch, 1978).

2.4.2.3. Talk as Transaction

The focus in talk as transaction activities is rather put on situations or classroom activities, which give priority to language use (what is said) and task performance (what is done). The main goal which should be reached is the learner's transmission of his message in the best possible conditions. In other words, the foreign language teaching operation in this case gives priority to the clear understanding and accuracy of the message; in fact, the social interaction of interlocutors is simply secondary. In this kind of spoken discourse, the English language teacher and learners usually give importance to the meaning of the message and the ability to comprehend the various implications in spoken interactions.

The different classroom activities which reflect talk as transaction may take many forms. In general, they should enable learners to communicate messages in the foreign language that are clear and precise; particularly the act of communication should be connected to a specific social situation. For instance, students can undertake group discussions and problem-solving activities; in fact, this type of discourse (or discussions) should be linked to situations such as tourism, technical descriptions, making phone calls, requesting information, shopping or ordering at a restaurant. In reality, what is particularly important in talk as transaction is that the foreign language teacher tries concretely to present cross-cultural teaching through the transposition of real-life situations into the classroom.

Indeed, these situations in social interaction take various aspects of daily social relationships which require not only linguistic abilities but; essentially, a mastery of the socio-cultural conventions in the foreign community. The distinction proposed by A. Burns (1998) within this context is quite interesting; in fact, he differentiates between two main types of talk as transaction. The first kind deals with situations where the English language learner is expected to give and receive information; obviously, the principal concern is what can be realized through the transaction. As a matter of fact, the priority is not the exactness and correctness of the message from the 'pure' linguistic aspect, but rather the successful communication and actual understanding of the information. The second type of transactions represents more concrete social activities like to buy goods, order food or use some services.

On the whole, talk as transaction- which is certainly an important component of the speaking skill- is characterized by a number of specific features. We can mainly mention that the emphasis is especially put on the communication of context-related information and the importance is assigned to the message not the interlocutors. Moreover, students learn to use the necessary

communicative strategies which allow them to be clearly understood and; therefore, the classroom activities which are practised involve questioning, repetitions and various comprehension checks. One can also put forward that talk as transaction implies the achievements of real social operations that necessitate an ability to negotiate and make digressions with little interest in the linguistic accuracy of the message.

On the other hand, the foreign language teacher is requested to develop learners' skills which are needed particularly in talk as transaction. Briefly, these tasks should offer opportunities to exercise and eventually acquire the ability to make skilful transactions such as the precise explanation of one's needs or intentions in addition to the accurate description of activities or events. Indeed, students of English as a foreign language should be able to ask questions, seek clarifications, or confirm and consolidate information. The foreign language teacher in his turn should pay attention to some significant aspects of oral interaction like the process of making argumentation or justification of opinions; he can also emphasize the mechanisms of making suggestions, or the ways to express politeness and conviction. Additionally, students can learn the various manners to show agreement or disagreement through the comparison of points of view and; lastly, the ability to indicate and clarify understanding.

2.4.2.4. Talk as Performance

The third component of the speaking skill is generally called talk as performance. This kind of speech skills represents multiple significant aspects of oral interaction in the speech community; in fact, it essentially concerns public talk. The main function of the spoken discourse in this case is to transmit information before a relatively large audience; hence, the socio-cultural implications are varied and numerous. Indeed, the speech can be presented in front of a class; it can also take the form of public announcements (airports, shopping centres etc...) in addition to different types of speeches (political, sports or historical ceremonies etc...).

On the other hand, the main samples of talk as performance are more linked to the written record than to conversational language. As long as the oral performance consists of the presentation of a speech in front of an audience; the form of the spoken discourse is rather a monologue instead of a dialogue. The evaluation of this kind of oral interaction depends on the degree of the psychological impact (or strong impression) on the listeners. Therefore, the efficiency of talk as performance is closely related to the reactions (positive or negative) of the audience. In addition, there are many classroom tasks which generally exemplify the different sorts of talk as performance such as: the presentation of a report to classmates, the participation

in a classroom debate, teaching a lesson (particularly for teaching trainees), performing a sales presentation (marketing students) and; possibly, making speeches of welcome or farewell.

At this point of the discussion, we think it would be fruitful to make a recapitulation of the most important features of talk as performance. In addition, we will present a general analysis of the principal skills which are involved in teaching foreign language oral proficiency. Unlike talk as interaction and talk as transaction which respectively emphasize only one aspect at a time of the spoken discourse namely the message or the audience; the case with talk as performance is different because it gives importance to both language and audience. Moreover, talk might be prepared in advance (like a lecture or speech); consequently, this absence of spontaneity makes it possible to predict its organization and sequencing. In short, the remaining features which one can mention are firstly the implication of a particular form of speech that is the monologue; indeed, the monologue structure is similar to written language. The second characteristic is essentially the emphasis on both form and accuracy (J.Harmer, 2015: 392).

As far as the skills involved in talk as performance are concerned, they are particularly related to the appropriate presentation of information which respects the sequencing of actions. In other words, students should learn to present talk as performance in the suitable arrangement or procedure (lecture, speech etc...). However, the expected feedback from the audience in this kind of speech activity is extremely important because it serves as a 'criterion' of the success or failure of talk as performance. Therefore, learners should develop an ability to maintain the audience totally engaged and interested in one's speech.

The other aspect which is equally significant is related to the linguistic requirements of the spoken discourse (or talk performance) that should take the form of correct grammar and acceptable pronunciation. Lastly, one should mention the effect which should be created by the speaker since the ultimate objective of talk as performance is mainly the positive impact on the audience; as a matter of fact, the suitable effect is conditioned by the use of appropriate opening and closing sequences in the oral presentation.

2.4.2.5. Teaching Intercultural Conversation through the Speaking Skill

1. Interaction.

Teaching intercultural interaction is a very difficult task because it implies a complex process which is influenced by abstract socio-cultural conventions. Practically, the foreign language teacher has to introduce those invisible rules through specific activities and samples that are

conveyed in authentic materials. Indeed, these genuine examples of oral interaction enable students to practise particular tasks such as recounting personal events or actions, how to open and end a conversation, the presentation of appropriate feedbacks to other's speech and; lastly, how to make small talks. Those later usually serve to initiate conversations through the introduction of an element that is known to interlocutors.

Hence, in the British cultural context, it is socially appropriate to begin a conversation by a small talk about the weather, traffic, and other daily concerns like business or costs of life. The foreign language teacher can give learners models to practise in the form of short utterances such as statements and answers (or reactions). In a second phase, students are introduced to larger samples of oral interaction which may take the aspect of whole situations (instead of short utterances) that actually require small talks. These situations (or contexts) are evidently selected from real-life activities like to meet someone at a movie or theatre, at a bus stop or in a pub. What is really important is that cross-cultural norms should always be reflected by the initiating small talks.

The second significant aspect of oral interaction is the appropriate reaction or feedback of the hearer; in fact, it is a crucial element in the continuity and flow of the conversation. Students should learn to adopt the right socio-cultural attitudes to encourage the speaker to continue the conversation and to show him their interest as hearers. Indeed, feedback expressions are part of broader cultural phenomena like politeness, friendship or social etiquette. Therefore, expressions like 'yes', 'really', 'that is right' or 'how interesting'; should be taught and practised in order to be used at the right moment and in the appropriate place.

In fact, an ignorance of such social feedback expressions or their misuse is highly probable to lead to misunderstanding or even breakdown of cross-cultural communication. For instance, the foreign language teacher can submit to students dialogues without the suitable feedbacks (omitted by the teacher); and they would be required to complete them with the correct expressions. However, we think it is more beneficial to involve participants who are culturally different because their reactions can vary in accordance to their socio-cultural backgrounds.

The third parameter of teaching speaking as interaction is defined by the conversational items related to the initiation of narrations about personal experiences and activities. Within this respect, the main common technique that is usually used by the foreign language teacher is the introduction of conversation starters at the beginning of the conversation; and then the other students ask follow-up questions. In this manner, the speaker (or the first student) practises the

narrative starters and the rest of the class produces the appropriate feedbacks to encourage him to continue the narration. Hence, the classroom activity essentially consists of the students' training in asking and answering questions in pairs (J. Harmer, 2012: 121).

2. Transaction.

The second constituent of the speaking skill is the ability to make transactions through the talks of participants. The foreign language teacher can easily find materials which exemplify cross-cultural communication; in fact, a large variety of genuine writings and videos are available. These materials can be used to develop classroom activities such as role-play, information-gap and undertaking real-life transactions; the main objective is globally the obtainment and sharing of information. As a matter of fact, many scholars propose various other classroom activities that improve talk as transaction; for example Jack C. Richards (2006) introduces 'values classification' (controversial statement to be discussed), simulations and brainstorming or ranking.

However, learners tend to appreciate 'role-play activities' and are usually highly motivated to be involved in this type of activities which generally necessitate three distinct steps. The first one is the preparation which consists of reviewing the necessary vocabulary, the contextual knowledge related to the activity and the probable role-play of the participants. The second step is modelling and eliciting that requires the demonstration of the stages implied in the interaction, the proposition of manners in undertaking each stage and the practical language which should be used in each phase. The third step is practising and reviewing the assignment of different roles to students and the rehearsal of these roles with the help of relia or information or hint cards.

Indeed, the practice of such activities is quite useful to students but it poses at the same time the question of linguistic accuracy of these communicative tasks; since the assumption is that grammar is not the objective of the tasks but serves as only a mediator in the teaching process. The proponents of teaching the speaking skill (talk as transaction in particular) through communicative activities present a counterargument. It stipulates that the implied strategies like comprehension, confirmation and clarification checks would gradually improve on the students' language output until they would reach native-like forms.

In addition, there are several methods that the foreign language teacher can employ in order to tackle this problem of language accuracy. The tasks in communicative activities can be assigned

after a pre-teaching phase which consists of practising certain specific linguistic forms. However, the activity can be difficult to the extent that students' feedbacks are really rudimentary. Therefore, the foreign language teacher's role is to present learners with similar materials (like videos or dialogues) in order to familiarize them with such communicative interaction. Moreover, there is another possibility which is to allocate the necessary time to plan and ultimately execute the task and; lastly, the performance of the task should be rehearsed before actually presenting it to the rest of the class.

3. Performance.

Teaching performance in the speaking skill requires a completely different strategy, because the materials are prepared much like a written text. In fact, the foreign language teacher can effectively make use of the same teaching strategies which are employed in understanding written texts in order to develop formal practices of spoken discourse (V. Jones, 1996). Generally, the materials that are used take many forms in teaching speech performance like written texts and audio-visual recordings which represent models of stories, different kinds of speeches and oral presentations.

Indeed, all these elements are analysed and depicted to find out how they are linguistically constructed in addition to the communicative aims which they realize. Students' understanding of the materials can be simplified with the help of significant questions about the possible goals of the speaker and the nature of the audience. However, the expected information of the performance should be clarified and discussed along with the type of language which is used. Lastly, the main stages (or speaker's moves) should be discerned by students in order to distinguish the beginning, development and ending of the talk.

In addition, we think it is equally useful to discuss another interesting model that is proposed by S. Feez and H. Joyce (1998). This approach essentially involves the explicit teaching of the grammatical structures and characteristics of written and spoken texts. In fact, the other valuable proposal is to relate the spoken and written texts to the intercultural contexts in which they are used. Moreover, this procedure puts emphasis on the elaboration of units which enhance the development of skills in connection with the entire texts. The last recommendation of the authors is to provide students with practice under the supervision of the foreign language teacher (guided tasks); the work should be focused on the improvement of skills for significant communication through the utilization of whole texts.

On the other hand, the model suggested by S. Feez and H. Joyce (1998) displays an interesting procedure which describes how a text-based lesson can be used in teaching talk as performance; and we think it is worth analysis as follows:

Phase One: Context Building

In the first phase the authors propose that students should be introduced to the socio-cultural context of the type of text under study which should have been necessarily selected from authentic materials. The foreign language teacher should then present the characteristics of the cultural context in which the text takes place in addition to the social objectives that should be achieved. Moreover, the last step in this phase is the investigation and analysis of the register employed in the text; in fact, the model should be chosen in harmony with the aims of the lesson and learners' needs. Hence, the exploration of the register is quite significant because it consists of developing the knowledge of the topic discussed in the text in addition to the particular social activity or behaviour in which the study text is employed (for instance parties, sports, events, job applications and interviews etc...).

The second aspect of register is related to the participants; therefore, learners should understand the roles of the interlocutors, their relationships and maintenance of social interactions; for example the kind of relationship between a boss and his employee or a job applicant and the interviewer. Besides, the last element is represented by the channel used in the act of communication which can take many aspects such as the telephone, face-to-face interaction, members of a committee and interviewee or; lastly, an Internet connection.

Additionally, the kind of activities which is specifically interrelated to the process of context building is varied and may have many forms. These various types of tasks can take the form of the presentation of the context through audio-visual materials, field trips or excursions, pictures or relia and; possibly, a guest speaker who would precisely describe the context of the text. In contrast, the foreign language teacher can also assign activities requiring students to undertake surveys which aim essentially at establishing the social objective of the text. Moreover, learners can practise intercultural activities like the comparison of cultural contexts in the native and foreign language communities or even other cultures. Finally, the model text can be compared to other similar or different texts such as the interview of a patient by the family doctor or rather an unknown doctor in an institution. The aim is globally the discovery of the kind of register and the social attitudes developed in each context.

Phase Two: Text Modelling and Deconstruction

One can observe that this phase is closer to the traditional TEFL activities which generally put an emphasis on the linguistic aspects of the text. Hence, students' attention is attracted to the structural patterns of the utterances and the specific features of the model that is studied. Besides, other examples of the same type of text which is analysed can be presented to learners in order to contrast and compare the different linguistic manifestations of identical text-type; however, the level of comparison can move from the whole text to smaller units as the clauses or particular expressions.

Phase Three: Text Joint Construction

In this more complex phase, students start to build long units of the text and; following a gradual process, the foreign language teacher reduces the collective text construction until individual students become able to control (i.e. to master the relevant linguistic and socio-cultural features) the text-type. Indeed, joint construction implies the application of various tasks in the classroom. For instance, the foreign language teacher can organize a collective text construction through a collaborative work of questioning, then discussing and; lastly, editing the text either traditionally written on the board or rather a more practical, modern and time saving means like 'data show'.

Moreover, the building of the text can also take another form which is a much shorter task because it does not request the writing of the entire text. On the contrary, students gain through the construction of a 'skeleton text' which simply signifies the elaboration of just a 'sketch' or outline of the text.

On the other hand, the process allows the application of a wide range of classroom activities; namely, jigsaw and information gap tasks. In fact, each student can personally contribute by suggesting some elements of the text or fill certain gaps in the discourse. Eventually, it would be possible to combine all of the students' proposals which would possibly constitute the overall building of the text. Additionally, another procedure can be followed by the foreign language teacher which consists of working with small groups of learners instead of the whole class. In fact, each group would be assigned the task of constructing a part of the text and; ultimately, all the units would be put together in order to form the entire text. Finally, there is another possible activity which requests a good organization of the class. It mainly consists of the presentation of

an individual and personal work to the rest of the class in the form of self-assessment or; alternatively, a peer assessment task.

Phase Four: Text Independent Construction

The main principle in this phase is that students should work individually in order to build the whole text in a personal manner. Learners' idiosyncratic performances are assessed by the foreign language teacher in an attempt to measure each student's proficiency in the speaking skill. Indeed, the independent construction involves multiple activities which are often employed by the teacher. As a matter of fact, a quite interesting activity is 'collective listening tasks' and; despite its name, the activity requires that students' comprehension should be evaluated individually. Hence, the adequate materials are possibly presented live or recorded and; usually imply the performance of certain tasks.

The different assessments which are usually proposed by the foreign language teacher consist of sequencing pictures that request comments on each phase, underlying or ticking correct materials or questions answering. In addition, the teacher provides authentic materials like dialogues which can be modified by learners themselves and; ultimately, they would undertake role-play activities. In general, these tasks tend to manipulate listening and speaking tasks which aim at improving students' proficiency in those skills. Moreover, there are other speaking tasks which require students to present oral reports of a text to the class; however, in some situations learners are encouraged to present their spoken reports to another kind of audience out of the classroom such as community organizations or even workplaces.

On the other hand, there are equally many reading tasks which involve comprehension activities that should be necessarily delivered in spoken discourse. The written materials often describe the performance of a task, the sequencing of pictures and other activities similar to those in the listening skill like ticking or underlying materials, numbering or answering questions. The writing tasks should not be neglected; in fact, they can also be practised in some activities such as students can write drafts or entire texts; nevertheless, the presentations should be orally performed.

Phase Five: Text Linking Relations

This final phase represents in reality a global evaluation of the four preceding phases in terms of the students' investigations of the possible relations of text study and other aspects of the speaking skill. In other words, learners are offered the opportunity to interconnect various texts



(or spoken discourse) to the same or similar socio-cultural contexts. Additionally, the other perspective is the logical and smooth progression from past to future teaching and learning cycles. Indeed, the activities available to the foreign language teacher which particularly link the text-type to related texts include the comparison of the uses of the text-type across different domains. In fact, the ultimate objective is to have insights into various socio-cultural contexts and the necessary text-type that should be used accordingly.

In opposition, students may analyse or undertake research on the multiple text-types which can be used in the same field. That is to say, learners should be aware of the possibility of using different text-types in order to describe or refer to the same context. Moreover, the foreign language teacher incites students to practise role-play activities with the purpose to demonstrate that the same text-type can be utilized by people who have completely different roles and relationships. In addition, the two last elements which one can mention are firstly the comparison of spoken and written records in connection to the same text-type. The significance of this activity is in the form of students' discovery of the different manners of spoken and written discourse in dealing with the same text-type. The second element actually represents a crucial activity because it implies the research of significant and key linguistic as well as socio-cultural features that might be employed in multiple text-types. The principal goal assigned to this activity is the possibility of students' grasping and probably use of important language characteristics across various kinds of discourse.

4. Evaluation.

The evaluation of students' performance through the diverse activities proposed in the speaking skill depends on two major parameters. The first one is the expected level of performance on a speaking task that should be reached by the student and; the second is the application of the appropriate criteria that would be employed to assess students' achievements. In fact, it is rather a complex procedure since it is absolutely necessary to know precisely what conditions should be fulfilled for the successful completion of the activity whatever its kind (i.e. talk as interaction or transaction or performance).

The objectives which should be attained in the speaking skill in addition to the chosen area of focus and priorities that are targeted in the whole teaching process; should necessarily comply with various factors. Indeed, one can just cite the questions of accuracy of pronunciation and grammar; moreover, it is difficult to precisely define the allotted time of speaking to each student. In addition, there are many contradictory opinions about the negative or positive

attitudes to be adopted in respect with the students' use of long pauses and repetitions. In fact, the nature of learner's contribution itself is open to discussion; there are conflicting points of view around the components which should be evaluated in the speaking skill. As a matter of fact, there are basic disagreements in relationship to the significance and priority of the assessment in terms of the concentration on the topic of discussion or rather the spoken performance or both.

Generally, the evaluation is concerned with the type of talk (interaction, transaction or performance) which is adopted along with the kind of activities that are practised. Within this context, one interesting sample has been proposed by F. Green, E. Christopher and J. Lam (2002) in the form of an evaluation diagram which comprises elements like the total number of contributions made, supportive responses, aggressive or hostile reactions; in addition, there is the introduction of new relevant factors in the discussion and the possible digressions from the topic. Obviously, each constituent should be assessed following a scale which varies from the highest to the lowest scores (1-20 or A-F).

As far as the evaluation of a speaking activity which requires talk as performance is concerned, the criteria are largely different. Hence, it is possible to incorporate the clarity of presentation which involves the organization and presentation of information in an accessible and clear order. However, the additional elements should be the correct and appropriate use of discourse markers, repetitions and the right assignment of stress and intonation.

In short, the various speaking activities which can take so many forms like classroom discussions, conversation and speeches certainly require different speaking skills from the English language learners. As a matter of fact, the nature of the lesson preparation, supporting materials and assessing criteria represent vital tasks on the part of the foreign language teacher. Additionally, the question of the choice of the right pedagogical tools should be carefully studied and; obviously, realized in accordance with the objectives of the teaching programme and the entire influential components of the teaching operation.

On the other hand, a number of significant guiding elements have been suggested and; we think they are worth recapitulating. The first element concerns the focus that should be put on the type of activity (interaction, transaction or performance) and the second is related to the structure of the activity and the different stages in which the task should be divided. In addition, one should take into account the necessary language support that should be utilized along with the available resources.

On the whole, the teaching and learning processes evidently need specific arrangements related to the speaking skill; additionally, the levels of students' performance should be defined in advance. Lastly, the foreign language teacher should plan the time and aspects in which the students' feedbacks would be delivered and; possibly, the effective tools which should be used in order to assess the learners' speaking skills.

2.4.3. The Writing Skill

2.4.3.1. Theoretical Background

It is established that one important aspect of the relationship between language and culture is the interaction of 'cultural meaning and rhetorical style' (Y. Kachru, 1999). Indeed, the concept refers to the correlation that exists through a process of interdependency between the cultural constituents and the written code products in a speech community. Numerous studies and analyses in relation to this kind of interaction have been undertaken and the majority of the outcomes demonstrate and confirm that culture and writing co-evolve in the same environment. In fact, the acquisition of the language writing literacy can in no way be separated from the socio-cultural context in which it occurs.

However, the main focus of the present part is not actually to undertake an extensive analysis of issues like the interrelationships between culture and writing; or the role that is played by the socio-cultural parameters in the learning and construction of the individual's written products. The research domain which is really our main concern is precisely what has come to be known as 'contrastive rhetoric'. As a matter of fact, this area of culture studies has developed out of various pedagogical and anthropological research works that are generally interested in the process of writing by students who learn English as a second/foreign language.

In addition, the contrastive rhetoric hypothesis is mainly interested in two major areas in teaching English as a foreign language: writing across cultures and the teaching of writing in English to speakers of other languages. The basic hypothesis of a large number of these studies is that human speech communities arrange their ideas and construct their writings in very different manners. Therefore, a high proficiency in the writing skill necessitates on the part of the foreign language learner a precise awareness of the socio-cultural processes which are involved in the organization of written products.

Unfortunately, the absence of this awareness and the lack of information about the typical foreign language arrangements in writing usually result with the negative appreciation of native speakers of English who would qualify the foreign language learners' writings as 'rudimentary or inexperience'. Hence, it becomes necessary for the English language students to actually learn the writing skill in harmony with the cultural paradigms which exist in the native speakers' writings.

On the other hand, the principal concept that should form the foundation on which these teaching programmes are built is to regard culture as a dynamic phenomenon which evolves as people organize their daily lives. Moreover, the second concept is that culture also represents a corpus of shared socio-cultural knowledge that justifies people's actions and distinguishes their interpretations which are in turn reflected in their writings. Certainly, this shared knowledge is the sum of various social conventions that help readers understand and interpret the other's pieces of writing. However, one would notice that the linguistic aspects of the written products do not constitute a key element in the readers' comprehension because; supposedly, one would take it for granted that the written materials do not suffer from any kind of 'purely' linguistic distortions.

Indeed, the main reason which justifies the importance of the socio-cultural conventions is that a shared language (English in our case) between interlocutors who speak different native languages does not necessarily ensure successful communication. Consequently, the conventions of language use particularly in the written record are essential in the elaboration of teaching programmes in a TEFL situation; because the readers' evaluations and interpretations of written texts rest on the understanding of the situation and the cultural context.

Furthermore, in order to clarify this basic principle, we would discuss two main aspects which characterize the organization of the English writing. The first factor is that in academic writing, English language learners are extensively (at different stages) taught especially at the local level the various techniques to acquire and practise the principles of argumentative or persuasive writing. In fact, the rigid argumentation and the compulsive presentation of evidence originate from the socio-cultural conventions that govern the English speech society. In opposition, it is possible to find other speech communities whose people would be only satisfied with the writers' opinions and suggested solutions; because their cultural conventions allow such flexibility.

On the other hand, the second factor which may cause problems to foreign language learners concerns what is usually called 'factual writings'. It is evident that the cross-cultural conceptions of what should be considered as a fact or truth are completely different and sometimes contradictory from one culture to another. Indeed, the oral traditions in some countries have entirely dissimilar attitudes from those which exist in European nations (as in the case of Great Britain). In reality, factual writing in the English cultural context requires logical argumentation, empirical experiment and events occurring in real-life situations.

However, foreign language learners may not consider it necessary to refer to all these elements. For example, in some traditional communities, the 'words' of a venerable elderly person actually represent the fact or truth and; therefore, students of English do not feel the need to back these words with arguments or proofs. Consequently, since their writings in the English language are judged according to the English cultural norms; the learners' written products are believed not to fulfil the conditions of actual writing. Therefore, negative appreciations are delivered such as the students' writings indicate 'flawed logic', or they display 'idiosyncratic reasoning' and; lastly, 'non-native users of English are incapable of contributing to the growth of relevant knowledge' (Y. Kachru, 1999).

Therefore, the educational consequences that one may draw from the points discussed above demonstrate the need for foreign English users to learn the appropriate rhetorical modes of this language. Moreover, students' awareness of the wider perspective of the use of English is a determining factor for the attainment of high proficiency in the writing skill. Besides, we believe it is fruitful that the English educator should be equally conscious of the students' own rhetorical conventions. Indeed, it is evident that the socio-cultural structures produce the rhetorical styles and; consequently, the teaching of the writing skill in English within the intercultural perspective can be successfully realized only if those parameters occupy a central position in the conception of the syllabus with the suitable language activities.

It is probable that the task might become relatively simple to the foreign language teacher; because many studies have already demonstrated that certain rhetorical styles are supranational. In fact, the same rhetorical styles may be found in some languages which are in all respects hardly similar to each other. For instance, repetitions represent a constant trait of writing in Arabic and; in contrast, circularity typically characterizes the Indian writings. However, one can observe that curiously these two features equally exist in the English language.

Finally, in order to avoid exclusions and rigid formulas in the academic writing of English; one should develop students' creativity even if it based upon their own cultural dimensions. Indeed, similar interest and equal practice should not only be assigned to the comparison and contrast of the linguistic structures but the rhetorical patterns as well. In addition, the English language can be enriched by the innovations brought about by learners' rhetorical styles. In reality, cross-cultural understanding of written texts depends on the mutual appreciation of cultural identity and also differences.

2.4.3.2. The Writing Skill and the Target Culture

In the present days, it is undeniable that the representation of culture whether implicitly or explicitly does often constitute an important component of the majority of TEFL teaching programmes. Therefore, it has become necessary to elaborate procedures which provide typical tasks which deal with culture in classrooms; especially the elements which constitute inherent factors in students' lives. As a matter of fact, the writing skill offers an excellent area where it is possible to introduce target cultural constituents in EFL writing pedagogy. In fact, it is particularly interesting to research issues in relationship to the norms for writing; additionally, one would particularly analyse how the social conventions are manifest in the rhetorical characteristics of written texts.

On the other hand, many investigations have shown that prose structures are often disparate across cultures; particularly with regard to rhetorical styles, topics, tasks, objectives and audience. These elements are differently perceived from one culture to another, and they are naturally 'transposed' when students write in the foreign language. Consequently, the main task of EFL writing instruction within the intercultural dimension is essentially to deal with cultural issues much more overtly. The objective constitutes an attempt to accustom English learners to the cultural conventions which surely characterize the various academic texts in the foreign language.

In addition, the other perspective which is equally significant and worth analysis is the teaching and learning of the target cultural components within a framework that does not isolate them in any type of foreign language writing instruction. In other words, the teaching of the writing skill itself incidentally carries the cultural manifestations of the foreign community. It is generally known that English writing classes offer appropriate and rich contexts which involve numerous crucial factors such as the students' different cultural backgrounds that necessarily create intercultural communication.

Moreover, learners are usually highly interested in undertaking writing tasks which imply various norms and values associated with the target culture: in fact, these areas do represent significant topics of written products. Indeed, it is truly important to clarify the fact that teaching the target culture does not seem to be in itself a precisely stated goal of some of foreign language writing programmes. However, numerous cultural patterns of the foreign language community constitute a primordial part of the writing skill teaching contents.

One can observe that this point is strongly supported by L. Harklau (1999) who asserts that foreign language writing classrooms represent effective situations for cultural orientations and further opportunities for cross-cultural proficient writing. Indeed, the foreign language teacher's tasks are not only to provide writing instruction but also to explain and interconnect cultural values in the English speaking communities and the students' native societies. To be objective, one should point out that the foreign language teacher's role is quite complex because he is required to explain cultural phenomena which are constantly perceived and interpreted in different manners within the intercultural teaching of EFL.

Indeed, the enterprise is particularly complex since the implication of the cultural components in students' writings refers to wider socio-cultural contexts which are partially shaped by classroom interactions between students and foreign language teacher. Therefore, the different tasks which are used in teaching the writing skill should permanently represent the target culture components. In fact, these cultural elements have a positive impact in the development of learners' foreign language writings in academic situations. Certainly, one can notice that the cultural norms are continuously prescribed and enforced in and through written products.

On the other hand, the foreign language teacher of EFL writing is usually concerned with two major tasks: the inculcation of the linguistic devices which should be mastered (for instance cohesion and coherence) but; above all, he should permanently work as a mediator (source and target cultures) and promoter of basic cultural information and orientations. However, the writing courses should fulfil certain parameters in order to avoid real problems in addressing cultural issues to students. In fact, the principal difficulties are the students' obvious low levels of familiarity with the target culture and the possession of completely different socio-cultural adjustment devices in written products.

In addition, the procedures and presentations of the writing activities in many cases not only lower the students' motivation to be writers in the foreign language but also discourage them to discover the target cultural constituents. In fact, the main reason is closely related to the

debatable representation of the target culture in classrooms. Hence, the principal characteristic of these tasks is to describe the foreign culture as 'mainstream and travelogue' (C. Kramsh, 1993). In other words, the procedure followed in the explanation of the cultural components in the writing exercises tends to be reductive and mono-dimensional. In this respect, the image which is given of the target culture is unfortunately similar to the one which we can read in relias that promote tourism in any country (the term used by C. Kramsh is 'travelogue').

Within this perspective, we can observe some 'picturesque' views of culture and intercultural interactions which are widely spread in students' course books. For example, learners are required to read many 'travelogues' and; afterwards, they are asked to write about their own countries in order to describe the various cultural manifestations. Evidently, these simplistic depictions of cultures and the derived writing prompts do not encourage students to examine thoroughly and deeply the complexities and potential misunderstanding in cross-cultural communication.

Besides, the second negative aspect in these writing tasks or reading comprehension (followed by writing activities) is the conception of culture in a reduced framework or 'mainstream'. The view which is grasped by students about multiculturalism is rather static and artificial because it completely ignores contradictory or even conflicting cross-cultural behaviours. Hence, cultural mixing is always presented in an ideal picture of cordiality, and cultural boundaries are permanently safeguarded and inert. Regrettably, in these widely spread writing activities; contact among people from different cultures does not imply any influence, changes or even acculturation.

On the other hand, the sensitive but interesting cultural issues are nearly absent in the conception of intercultural writing skill developments. In opposition, simple cultural aspects such as manners of dressing, eating or sightseeing curiosities are excessively present. Nowadays, students' needs go beyond these folk manifestations; in fact, cross-cultural foreign language teaching can not ignore some other cultural interactions phenomena which are much more significant. Moreover, the influential theoretical background in designing writing activities with respect to socio-cultural thought and postmodernism; puts a particular focus on the multiplicity of culture and cultural identity and rejects any attempts to reduce and fix them to stereotypes. In fact, there are numerous but not necessarily conflicting differences between cultures which are usually manifested in literacy and educational levels in the native language socioeconomic status, family networks and attitudes towards foreign cultures.

On the whole, it is noticeable that throughout the various writing activities the explanations and discussions of cultural behaviours do not represent explicit instructional objectives in the majority of local EFL writing classrooms; nevertheless, their presence is substantial and unavoidable in target culture teaching programmes. The predefined and assumed aspects of culture are largely the causes of students' resistance to cultural adaptation and; consequently, the failure to attain the aims of the writing activities. Moreover, the foreign language teacher is confronted with the problem of the absence of correlation between the students' needs and experiences and the 'versions' of culture presented in the curriculum.

Additionally; we have observed that even when certain programmes actually incorporate mainstream courses; unfortunately, a large number of foreign language teachers do not possess the training and expertise necessary to enhance and develop students' academic writing abilities or to respond appropriately to their language specific learning needs. Therefore, the significant question which faces the effective instruction of the writing activities poses the dilemma of how EFL teachers might best simultaneously satisfy the students' needs and objectively define the cultural components that should be incorporated in the syllabus.

On the other hand, learners' motivation in improving their writing skills is remarkably increased when their social identities, cultural practices and experiences are integrated in the teaching programmes and 'concretely' represented in the writing skill activities. Hence, the involvement of students in the promotion and exploration of cultural behaviours and social identities in both the source and target cultures; certainly encourages learners to develop their cultural and writing skills. For instance, the foreign language teacher can propose activities which require group work in order to explore the students' cultural affiliations and; therefore, they are likely to find out how these affiliations are harmoniously interconnected by written language.

2.4.3.3. The Writing Activities within Cultural Contexts: Evaluation and Perspectives

Generally, the different approaches which are adopted in the development of the writing skill should necessarily avoid any kind of received presentation of cultures in the teaching programmes. In fact, the implication of students as active participants in interpreting and defining culture in the classroom should be the key issue that determines the success and effectiveness of any task. Certainly, the foreign language teacher's role as a leader and manager is by no means threatened; it is simply the nature of the writing activities which requires a

facilitative attitude instead of a directive one. Indeed, it is primordial to establish the function of the cultural contents in TEFL writing classrooms.

In fact, the determination of the function should be based upon the principle of students' complete involvement in the various activities in terms of topics selection that are directly linked to their personal life, culture, history and society. Obviously, the writing process should not be reduced to a comparative task of superfluous cultural elements, but rather it should reflect the domains where cultures meet or even struggle with each other.

On the other hand, students' writings should be actually determined by the goals that should be reached in undertaking the writing tasks. In general, these aims are likely to encourage the students' exploration and; eventually, understanding of the target culture particularly. In fact, the written products naturally originate from the learners' own individual backgrounds and experiences which serve as productive means of improving foreign language writing proficiency. We do believe that the issue is not principally to create totally new activities in TEFL writing classrooms; but rather to adapt the already existing tasks which have proved their efficiency to the intercultural teaching context. Indeed, the essence of the writing skill in cross-cultural perspective is essentially to engage students in a process of exploration and construction.

Hence, this enterprise consists of the employment of instructional practices in order to develop students' thoughts and open new horizons of cultural knowledge as creative prompts for foreign language writing. In this respect, the topic areas which are highly conducive to these objectives are inexhaustibly summarized in the following:

- * The racial and ethnic diversity and related issues like immigration and multiculturalism: learners may be requested to read and respond (i.e. write a complete report) to different or even contradictory view on immigration in newspapers or online documents.
- * Students can be asked to write an essay addressing the topic of racism: these assignments mainly facilitate learners' awareness of negative attitudes and intolerance towards foreign cultures which they may actually experiment or unconsciously feel.
- * The cultural values of English speaking societies and their manifestations in current events: the subjects in this domain enable students to link their own personal experiences to larger socio-cultural issues in the world. For example, the local Algerian students are often called upon by E-mail journals and television channels which continuously extol the virtues of different religions but at the expense of other religions and rituals. However, these materials can serve for the students' explorations of various manifestations and religious values in different societies.

Moreover, learners' essays that pertain to cultural values and perceptions; can represent a conducive basis to engage them in classrooms dialogues or general debates.

On the other hand, an objective evaluation of these topics in connection with the writing skill indicates that students are encouraged to treat cultural issues that challenge all human communities. In fact, they are offered opportunities to weigh in these universal cultural views and attitudes with their own opinions and ideas. Moreover, the students' feedbacks are quite positive because the majority of learners have confirmed the importance of researching these topics. Indeed, nearly all the informants (students and foreign language teachers alike) have pointed out that discussing and writing their personal opinions in relationship to cultural components of various human societies constitute useful and interesting writing assignments.

Consequently, the main advantage of these writing activities and choice of topics resides in the fact that they are motivated by and originated in students' perceptions and needs. Indeed, it can be easily observed that the incorporation of students' own cultural behaviours and identities definitely enhances cross-cultural adjustments. Evidently, the writing activities do not necessarily aim at equipping the students in order to change culturally or develop new references but; most significantly, they intend to facilitate learners' evolving understanding of various cultures while they are improving their foreign language writing skills.

In addition, we have noticed with great satisfaction that throughout the practice of these writing activities, students have not maintained self-evident and static views not only of the target culture but also of their own source cultures. One must acknowledge that these topics generate powerful emotions in the classroom; nevertheless, they are positively captured and explored by learners in order to express their feelings in EFL writings. Moreover, there is another advantage of the writing activities within the cultural contexts; it is the fact that students' need for expression is sometimes so great that it urges them to improve on their writing proficiency in the foreign language. Obviously, their principal goal is to clearly and faithfully express and describe their points of view in relation to the challenging cultural topics.

On the other hand, teachers of English as a foreign language generally recommend that the writing activities should be treated with sensitivity and caution because of the personal implications of the students which are usually reflected in their writings. However, it is doubtless that explorations of learners' native cultures and the comparisons of different cultural behaviours and identities can certainly serve as forceful generative questions in the language classroom. Hence, writing classroom tasks should be conceived in such a manner that students are definitely

not driven to display emotions or personal thoughts through their written products. However, the students' expressions of their sentiments and attitudes should be considered by the foreign language teacher to be legitimate and; accordingly, should be encouraged through the integration of appropriate techniques in the writing activities. Indeed, these tasks and assignments have proved that the best experiences and excellent written products are elaborated by students who have cross-cultural boundaries.

In sum, the incorporation of the cultural components in writing activities have proved through the students' written language features that numerous positive developments have occurred in their command of the English language. As a matter of fact, many writing teachers sincerely think that their students can be regarded as proficient and functional bilinguals even if their writings exhibit fossilized expressions or negative stereotypes. These distortions should be expected and tolerated in intercultural foreign language teaching. Of course, it would be naive to believe that this kind of activities would transform learners into writers with such proficiency that they cannot be distinguished from literate native writers of English. However, foreign language teachers can legitimately and logically envisage that the appropriate and effective applications of such activities would enable students to acquire writing skills which are fully functional in communicative contexts.

On the other hand, it is worth reminding that the success of these writings largely depends on the collaboration of both the foreign language teacher and students in addition to the permanent illustration of the relationship between the target and source cultures. In fact, these factors should be explicitly represented in the writing instructional process through the rhetorical and aesthetic features of written study texts. In addition, these elements should be continuously present not only in the writing activities that are involved in the course contents, homework and assignments but also the general classroom discussions in which learners are engaged. It is important that students' resistance, negative attitudes and stereotypes with respect to foreign cultural behaviours should be lessened by a careful cultural inquiry which identifies and facilitates diversity in cultural representations. Moreover, these factors encourage students to suggest target culture components which they particularly appreciate. Hence, these topics stimulate their curiosity and; probably, contribute in enhancing the foreign language writing skills.

Additionally, it is evident that dealing with significant cultural issues may be a useful and eventually enriching experience for both foreign language teachers and students who willingly and enthusiastically want to cross cultural boundaries. The intercultural norms and values are

necessarily part of the socio-cultural and political contexts which are conveyed by teaching practices. Obviously, these cultural issues should be explored within explicit and precise instructional objectives of developing not only the students' writing skills but also their abilities to function in the foreign language academic and socio-conventional contexts.

Indeed, the integration of the target culture components in EFL writing instruction allows positive combinations of the students' individual endeavours to explore foreign cultural behaviours along with the attainment of the syllabus major objectives. We think it is not exaggerated or over ambitious to assert that a broad social context certainly shapes the foreign cultural representations in the classroom. In fact, the foreign language teacher with the help of such activities would be able to transform the classroom into a space where students can construct, evaluate and adopt the target culture constituents.

On the other hand, it is necessary to point out that academic writing is interpreted differently and its requirements may vary from one culture to another. Indeed, in English speaking communities especially at college and university levels; students are expected to follow a number and specific steps that are summarized as follows:

- * The objective representation of one's point of view.
- * The analysis of a topic should be undertaken from a balanced perspective.
- * The presentation of arguments and suitable information in order to support the writer's opinions that would provide more credibility to his suggestions.
- * The main task of the writer is to convince the reader of the validity and importance of the position that has been taken or the ideas which are defended.
- * It is essential that balanced argumentation should be absolutely based upon the devices of justification, credibility, persuasion and reasoning.
- * It is also important that students' writings should avoid historical allusions and direct assertions.
- *The extensive and appropriate employment of devices and markers of rhetoric objectivity.

On the whole, this brief presentation of the pre-requisites in English academic writing puts an emphasis on a major principle that is the use of objective writing conventions. Accordingly, students should necessarily master the English rhetorical devices and syntactic and referential markers in their compositions. However, one can notice that students' writings in the local context lack these features to a great extent; despite the fact that they have reached an advanced

level of proficiency in writing skills. In fact, numerous analyses of learners' writings have generally recorded the following most common 'distortions':

- 1. The majority of students' writings are characterized by a low level of credible argumentation; in addition, learners are inclined to present simple generalizations that openly display a high extent of subjectivity.
- 2. There is often a lack of precision of one's ideas and also many vague references.
- 3. The writings of non-native speakers of English (at the local university situation) are usually highly personalized unlike the Anglo-American writing traditions. In reality, the concept and understanding of truth is the result of everyday experience.
- 4. The students' tendency to adopt one-sided presentation instead of an objective or neutral position might be due to different cultural discursive traditions, conventions and rhetorical value systems. (E. Hinkel, 1999).
- 5. It is equally noticeable that foreign language learners often tend to transfer their first language rhetorical and discursive patterns and socio-cultural conventions to their English language writings.

On the other hand, the socio-cultural conventions and the linguistic structures which characterize English academic writing should be necessarily reflected in the learners' compositions. In fact, the first perspective in studying academic writing is the sum of socio-rhetorical features which intervene inside a framework of conventions, communicative goals and processes that enhance socialization. The second factor is connected with the notion of scientific objectivity which refers to the manner in which a writer approaches and develops a subject. This procedure mainly consists of following written record patterns and employing syntactic and referential indicators like the use of the passive form and appropriate pronouns.

However, the cultural dimension is permanently present in English writings along with the correct linguistic combinations; hence, writing should be in conformity with the discourse community norms and the socio-conventional expectations. Therefore, English academic writing is generally a two-faced product. Indeed, there is the influential factor of credibility which is represented by the writer's experiments, knowledge of the topic and awareness of the readers' values and beliefs. Moreover, the second significant factor is in the form of rhetorical argumentation which should necessarily be founded upon stylistic criteria such as examples, analogies, metaphors and; lastly, illustrations.

We believe it is equally important to indicate that differences in students' first and foreign language writings in terms of credibility, objectivity and power persuasion partly originate from inadequate training. However, numerous studies show that many differences in native and target language written products are essentially caused by divergent uses of writing strategies which are cross-culturally determined. We think that the norms of a speech community clearly underlie the writings of individuals; particularly in relationship to the choice and elaboration of effective structures and the appropriate presentation of information. Therefore, it becomes evident that a core of discursive strategies is necessarily shared by people who belong to the same speech community and use the same linguistic medium.

Besides, one can observe that written communicative patterns are featured by the sum of different stylistic, cultural, religious and social concepts. Consequently, it is logically possible to assert that speaking societies with different languages have necessarily developed their proper conventions of writing. For instance, in the English and American communities; the rhetoric of objective facts or events is of a paramount concern in their academic writings whereas in some traditional societies the credibility and objectivity in the written products are simply determined by the identity and social status of the person who has elaborated them.

As a result, many local English language learners are reluctant to learn and put into application the foreign language norms of writing because of their different socio-cultural backgrounds. In fact, some students sincerely believe that these parameters in English writing are superfluous, awkward and artificial. The unfortunate consequence is that in view of the English socio-cultural and linguistic criteria; the written products of this category of students are of a noticeably low level. Indeed, the reason which can be traced back is evidently not due to lack of training or language mastery, but rather it is the influence of completely different socio-cultural norms of judgements with regard to the constituents of objective and acceptable writings.

Indeed, in some traditional communities, the cultural components which are embedded in historical allusions, the references to shared wisdom, personal situations and the writer's charisma greatly affect the degree of sincerity and objectivity of any writing. Consequently, these cross-cultural disparities (or even contradictions in some cases) in relationship to the norms of the evaluation of written products have a negative impact on the teaching of English writing skills. In this situation, the foreign language teacher's task is very delicate because the English rhetorical objectivity and justifications are totally absent in the cultural constituents of students.

In fact, learners are faced with a different reality which they should take into consideration in their English writings.

Therefore, the foreign language teacher's immense challenge is not only to convince his students of the importance and value of these conventions but also foster and encourage their appropriate use in learners' written products. Moreover, these socio-cultural norms in English writing should be part of the writing skills that should be effectively taught to students. In fact, these strategies for conveying the criteria and features of English 'good' writing represent an inherent element of foreign language instructional methodologies. In turn, these procedures are realized through the mastery of writing techniques such as proof in persuasion in addition to the collection, arrangement and presentation of irrefutable proofs.

On the other hand, the writing skill activities should develop the students' appropriate use of demonstrations, analogies in explanations and generalizations. Moreover, it is necessary to learn the effective use of reference to eminent and recognized authority or experts on the subject. Indeed, the principal aim of students' writings is to convince the reader of their objectivity and their logical judgements. However, the achievement of this task depends on the justifications of claims, meaningful generalizations and acceptable qualifications. Certainly, these aspects of coherence which are linked to the cultural norms and logical reasoning are consolidated by the correct use of structural markers, precise terminology and other cohesive devices.

Additionally, the writing activities should incorporate different techniques of presenting descriptive and factual information; because they support the writers' objectivity and add more credibility to students' writings. The other important factor in these tasks is represented by the necessity to develop the suitable tools for convincing argumentation which should promote the writers' impartial judgements and balanced positions. However, the mastery of these techniques requires the correct and appropriate manipulation of linguistic items like the use of passive constructions, right and efficient utilization of relevant citations, various kinds of sentence connectors and; finally, the suitable hedging schemes.

On the whole, it appears that advanced level students who are highly trained in the foreign language are; nevertheless, influenced by the precepts which exist in their native culture. Therefore, the written products of these students do not exactly reflect the writing traditions which are expected in English academic compositions. In fact, learners interpret the notions and principles of English writing skills within the framework of their own cultures. As a matter of fact, the logical conclusion we can draw; is that the relatively developed linguistic proficiency

and lengthy practice in foreign language writing composition do not necessarily assure the right and appropriate use of the English rhetorical devices and referential markers.

Within this context, the most obvious cause of such difficulties is that the writing devices are unconsciously travestied in the students' minds in order to make them fit the writing norms which exist in their native cultures. Indeed, the probability that students willingly adopt negative attitudes with regard to the English writing norms is extremely low. The justification we can advance is that there are much more logical and practical factors which may influence students' writings such as the ignorance of the appropriate English parameters or the inability to put them into practice because of limited or inadequate training. Most importantly, students are generally inclined to accept or even appreciate these linguistic and cultural components which specifically characterize English written products.

Furthermore, the most significant objective of the extensive practice of writing skills is the students' comprehension and application through their compositions of some crucial English writing conventions. Indeed, the writing requirements take many aspects such as the rational argumentation, the objectivity in the writers' positions and views and; lastly, the presentation of concrete facts in justification and evidence. The foreign language teacher's task is primarily to convince students of the necessity and efficiency of these elements. Moreover, he can associate his students in finding 'common groups' between cultural norms of writing in the target and source cultures. Learners can also study some universally accepted conventions like individuality of style, rationality of arguments and autonomy of opinions.

However, the question of differences and similarities between the cross-cultural writing conventions is still open to debate owing to the controversial results of numerous studies. In fact, the outcomes of some analyses indicate that a very limited number of differences exist between the English and other cultural writing conventions; nevertheless, other research works have clearly established that the dissimilarities in some cases are actually numerous and significant.

In general, these disparities are not necessarily indicators of extremely well-defined discourse and social conventions in intercultural writing composition. Therefore, an awareness of these limited specific features which exist in the English writing norms can simply suffice to improve on students' writings. Indeed, the learners' writing abilities are not entirely and uniquely evaluated from the conventional perspectives; in fact, there are other criteria which are taken into account. As a matter of fact, the students' scores are also determined by the institutional conventions, the nature of the task, the socio-cultural context and; lastly, the literacy norms that

are found in a specific academic environment (E. Hinkel, 1999). In addition, it is equally possible to ameliorate the writings of non-native students by focusing on the logical bases and the fundamental reasons which are common to the source and target cultures. The other factor is that learners should fairly accept the contrasts that certainly exist in the socially determined discourses and writing traditions.

As far as the methods of teaching the writing skill are concerned; they mainly put an emphasis on pedagogical procedures which combine the acquisition of formal techniques and encourage the individually distinct skills. Within the context of intercultural instruction, E. Hinkel (1994) puts forward a significant principle which is the necessity to convince students of the value and utility of the English writing norms. As a matter of fact, the foreign language teacher's role can not be confined within the limits of explaining the readers' expectations and the writers' responsibilities. In addition, the author states that in teaching foreign language composition; priority should be assigned to the explanation of the English rhetorical norms namely objectivity, factuality and textual support. Indeed, these socio-linguistic parameters would eventually conduct to the teaching of more practical aspects like specific skills, activities and particular techniques for writing.

2.4.3.4. Sample Activities in the Writing Skill

It is interesting to make a close connection between teaching the writing skill and the intercultural parameters which undoubtedly affect any kind of written production. Therefore, the main objective of any activity in developing writing within the cross-cultural dimension is to put a special emphasis on the target culture components.

Activity One: Online Writing.

Obviously, the name of the activity necessarily involves the use of Internet and exchange of written products. It is significant to point out that the present activity is absolutely not limited to e-mails correspondence between e-partners. The main concern of the foreign language teacher is to promote cross-cultural interactions; through the engagement of students in extensive writing with the use of particularly motivating modern means of communication. The activity is based upon the simple idea that two native speakers of different languages (for example Arabic and English in our case) help each other to learn one's e-partner language through the use of e-mails. Of course, the technical aspects should be sorted out before the beginning of the activity like the

easy access to electronic connection, the availability of computer sets and the classroom arrangements.

Indeed, students introduce themselves (we take it for granted that learners have already agreed on the principle of working in this way) and; they are requested to engage in a written dialogue which should be devoted to debate a cultural issue or project. Concerning the in-class activities, students are required to bring into the class the printed copies of all the e-mails which they have exchanged with the e-partner. The main goal is to elaborate a short report in which they summarize the e-mail conversations; evidently, the emphasis should be on the clear presentation of the topic discussed and how it is perceived in the partner's culture.

The foreign language teacher may suggest and also encourage students to follow a practical and effective procedure in writing their e-mails. For instance, it is possible to apply B. Kroll's procedure (1998) which suggests a sequence of precise steps from the setting of an assignment to the final phase that is the submission of the complete text. We can briefly synthesize the different steps in the following:

- * The necessary preparation of the selected task which implies the re-reading of all e-mail exchanges.
- * The careful drafting and then the analysis of the feedback. The operation may be repeated as many times as needed in order to improve the final written product before its presentation and evaluation.
- * Additional written assignments can be further undertaken with the employment of all these printed e-mail conversations; certainly, the foreign language teacher should previously arrange and store the materials.

Activity Two: Story Elaboration.

Students' cultural imagination can be enhanced with the help of this activity in writing. The preparations are simple; the foreign language teacher collects some magazines or newspapers published in English speaking communities. Then, he chooses a number of pictures which show persons who are seemingly in strange situations in the target culture. Students are requested to constitute small groups in order to undertake the task; afterwards, each group is asked to describe the event and people in a particular picture. After a short discussion which normally should enable students to have an idea about what is exactly happening in the picture; the members of

the same group should then write a written account of the story and read it to the rest of the class. Obviously, the task is collectively achieved and requests the collaboration of all the members of the group; in addition, the foreign language teacher assures that the written product is necessarily characterized by the appropriate and effective use of coherent and cohesive devices.

Activity Three: Intercultural Misunderstanding.

The present task is an interesting version of the second activity; its goal is equally to promote cultural imagination. What is really unusual but attractive in the activity is the selection of entire texts or passages from written works in the target culture which necessarily involve cultural misunderstanding. It is important that the passages should be in the form of narrative texts with many different paragraphs and; if it is possible each paragraph should end up with an intercultural misunderstanding. The foreign language teacher's task is quite significant because the different steps of the task should be clearly explained to students. Hence, the teacher reads only the first paragraph of the text to each group of students and the situation is presented to the learners of the same group. Then, they are required to continue the story and try to imagine and think about the most likely misunderstanding which would probably occur at the end of the story.

Indeed, the rest of the story or text is written with the contribution of each student in the group. In fact, this type of activity implies many useful techniques in the writing process namely planning, drafting and revising as many times as necessary before the final written product is submitted to the rest of the class. Moreover, the other positive aspect which is involved in this task is the improvement of students' awareness with regard to the possible misunderstanding or even conflict due to people's ignorance of each other cultural behaviours. In fact, cross-cultural social behaviours can represent various occasions of misunderstanding; for instance the foreign language teacher can read the first passage of a short text describing a student of English who has been suffering from digestive problems for a week and who meets a British friend. The friend greets the student using the usual formulaic expression 'How are you'; the foreign language student replies by counting in details his health problem.

At this level, the teacher stops the narration and asks the group of students to complete the story with a written paragraph describing the possible negative results of the interaction. Certainly, students should explain why the outcomes of the conversation are expected to be negative and; the precise reason which would probably lead to misunderstanding. Obviously, the problem is provoked by the student's wrong interpretation of the English expression 'How are

you' in social behaviour. In fact, the expression is only a greeting (i.e. it is certainly not a question seeking information) which simply requires a neutral answer like 'Fine' or 'Very well, thanks'; obviously the interlocutor is absolutely not expected to start talking about his health problems.

Activity Four: Project Report.

This activity engages students in field work or outside classroom investigations. In fact, learners are asked to research a particular topic which involves intercultural miscommunication. The task certainly requires the collection of various aural, visual and reading materials; students can also collaborate with an e-partner from an English speaking society. Evidently, data collection serves as the basis for the preparatory activities that precede the students' drafting of a written report. The activity aims at attaining two objectives: the first is the discovery of different cultural behaviours in the foreign and native communities which may result with misunderstanding. The second obvious goal is the students' mastery of the essential writing skills.

At the end of the implementation stage, the groups of students present (of course the class session should be previously programmed) their written reports and; lastly, at the end of the lesson learners discuss their experiences and exchange points of view about the topics which they have treated in their projects. The foreign language main aim is to encourage students to present oral and written evaluations along with the exposition of critical attitudes with respect to cross-cultural awareness activities.

On the other hand, we can notice that students whether at the University or in daily-life situations face diverse events and circumstances which necessarily request numerous and varied writing skills. For example, learners need to practise different types of writing and the foreign language teacher's role is not only to present general guidelines about nearly all types of writing; but he should also give importance to some particular written products such as poems or essays which may necessitate the planning of specific lessons.

As we have indicated in the present activity, students can benefit from the different tasks they perform in writing; in fact, the outcomes of their personal research (and involvement) would certainly develop their written products.

In addition, the activity represents an opportunity which enables students to express (especially through written products) their own feelings and experiences about the various intercultural behaviours. The foreign language teacher should be aware that the implied writing strategies in each form of writing usually require explicit cross-cultural teaching. Indeed, frequent practice through multiple classroom activities and a large amount of information are necessary; especially in relationship to the socio-conventional components of the target culture and the effective techniques of their written descriptions.

Besides, the writing skills activities are often concluded with better results if they are undertaken collectively. It is known that collaboration with classmates fosters communicative competence; in this manner students can share with one another knowledge and ideas that not only help in solving cross-cultural problems but also improve on the abilities of individual students. On many occasions, experience has shown that small groups of students working together in the classroom (especially in developing their writing skills); obviously, helps learners communicate meaningful ideas to each other. In fact, this fruitful exchange of views is reflected in the students' collective written products.

Indeed, it is actually useful to allow students within a group to conduct a personal research work on intercultural issues; nevertheless, the group is always requested to make use of all the individually gathered elements and present a report that is conceived with the contribution of each student. We think these activities are very useful to learners because they can be simultaneously taught the different writing techniques, research and presentation skills and; most importantly, they would probably enjoy collaborating with each other.

Moreover, writing activities which need group work in twos, threes or even larger groups actually facilitate more frequently meaningful communications. Consequently, we can easily notice that significant developments in students' writing skills have taken place; we think they are essentially due to group work activities. As a matter of fact, these classroom tasks in group work enable students to discover unexpected but valuable relations between varied aspects of intercultural manifestations. However, the foreign language teacher's role in the realization of such activities is primordial; in fact, the improvement of the writing skills requires a very active role and frequent interventions in explaining what is expected from students in addition to the continuous indications of the correct and incorrect examples.

On the other hand, the development of learners' writing skills in intercultural teaching activities is certainly a complex process which involves the combination of numerous isolated acts that should; ultimately, result with the writing of the final product. Hence, it is apparent that any kind of writing should constitute the outcome of multiple foregoing tasks like note-taking, identifying a central idea, outlining, drafting and finally editing. Unfortunately, all these activities can cause to the students what is usually known as the 'writer's block'; especially if they are not gradually achieved and orderly sequenced.

For example, in the previous activity, we have indicated how it is difficult to start writing a report without a chief idea and notes to support it. Additionally, the topics which are analysed in intercultural teaching of the writing skill are particularly delicate. The cause is that learners' different discussions can become very tense and display views that are extremely opposed to the extent that breakdowns of communication may occur. As a matter of fact, students often recognize that writing becomes relatively easier and the written product is achieved more rapidly if the first draft is realized at an early stage. Therefore, the editing and revising operations of the draft are facilitated and the final writing product is of a higher quality.

Concerning the tools that one can use in the achievement of the writing tasks, we think that modern means of communication are particularly useful. Indeed, computers for example play a positive role in enhancing the learning of the writing process. The effectiveness of this particular tool may take many aspects especially with regard to homework tasks which become easier to realize and writing reports are more elaborated. The principal reason, as it is generally known, there are numerous and sophisticated programmes of computers nowadays which are capable of correcting students' grammatical and stylistic errors. Moreover, computers are able to make the necessary rearrangements of words, sentences and even paragraphs. In fact, the students' written products are greatly facilitated because nearly all computing programmes can spot spelling and grammatical errors, suggest corrections and; provide the essential rectifications in the punctuation of the text.

Activity Five: Planning of Essay.

As far as the fifth and the two remaining activities are concerned, we believe it is interesting and useful to analyse and; eventually adapt to the local situation, the tasks which have been proposed by K. Cow and D. Hill (2004). Indeed, in order to undertake this activity, the foreign language teacher would probably suggest a reading text which deals with a controversial topic

that is often discussed within a cross-cultural framework. Students are often organized in pairs and they are required to realize a number of tasks as follows:

- * In the first task, students should ask each other questions which are related to issues discussed in the text; the answers are normally concerned with the students' own countries of origin. The objective of the activity is to introduce essays planning. However, the necessary organization of the essay planning operation should be explained within the learners' native rhetorical requirements. Indeed, it is much more efficient to- firstly present the different ways of explaining a phenomenon and the suitable structures that should be used- in the students' native language. Ultimately, it would be possible and easier to deal with the same operation (essay planning) in accordance to the target culture procedures.
- * After the oral discussion of the topic in pairs, students can move on to the second task which consists of choosing among a number of possible definitions the one that they believe best explains the word 'essay'. The foreign language teacher may suggest principal definitions which emphasize different aspects of essay writing. Altogether, students and the teacher would select the most appropriate explanation; nevertheless, the process requires two major strategies that should be followed. The first one is to understand the question being asked or the issue to be discussed then; the student should plan his answer. The second strategy is actually to learn (before drafting) the structures of various essays in the English language.
- * The third task is the learners' initiation to the different types of essay questions. Students are requested to analyse three dissimilar questions; of course, the study of any question involves the making of judgements. The foreign language teacher should clarify the notion of 'judgement' to students with a focus on the process of forming an opinion, evaluation and conclusion. The research that is related to the topic of the essay necessitates extensive reading which would be followed by making a decision and; then, forming an opinion.
- * The fourth task aims at explaining how key phrases should be understood in the topic question. The foreign language teacher emphasizes the elements which require learners to 'do something' like: explain, analyse and discuss. Afterwards, students write a brief answer to the sample question used in the third task. Certainly, this task is better achieved in group work because students discuss each other's answers and try to find out if they have really realized the activity.

Concerning the teacher's role, it is just limited to the supervision of classroom interactions and the evaluation of the students' tentative answers.

* The fifth task is quite significant because it instructs students about the steps that should be followed in order to conceive an outline. At the beginning, it should be pointed out that the outline is largely determined by the type of essay which the learner wants to write. One can remark that the kind of essay should respect certain methods of development and is characterized by specific features. The foreign language teacher can suggest three main types of outlines: the first one is called 'the sequences/numbered outline' which is essentially the presentation of the elements in a linear process. It is a relatively simple plan because each point is discussed following a numerical or alphabetical order and; the element which is explained is usually specifically supported by further arguments. The sequence which should be respected consists of the presentation of the main idea and then the consolidating arguments. Additionally, the most important ideas are tackled in this order until the student arrives to the conclusion which normally comprises the summary of the principal elements and the recommendations.

The second kind of plan is 'the map type essay plan' which is concerned with the presentation of a major key concept or thesis that is related to various general and main ideas. The logical and close connection between the concept and the implied area of influence should be clearly demonstrated by the student with the help of specific supporting arguments. Hence, the steps are presented in a cyclical process with lines from key ideas to subsequent ideas.

The third type of plan is named 'circles connected with areas', the principle consists of putting the key concept or thesis in a central circle which should be surrounded by the mutually influencing points; and each point should be in turn inside a particular circle. The interconnections which normally exist between the principal thesis and other elements are presented and explained by the student. However, this latter is not specifically required to respect a sequential organization. In other words, the suggested structure is the explanation of a point (thesis, topic etc...) that displays certain factors and features in addition to the possible causes of the phenomenon and; lastly, its expected effects.

On the other hand, students should be able to decide which type of essay is the most appropriate to the question; of course the decision depends on the nature of the issue in itself. Learners should be guided by logical reasoning, for example if they are requested to explain something; it follows that the essay should be explanatory. The second possibility is that learners

are required to argue and prove a point; therefore, this is necessarily an argumentative essay. In the last case, students are asked to write an exposition which includes explanations, discussions and arguments; obviously, this type of question necessitates the writing of an expository essay.

Activity Six: Methods of Paragraph Development.

In this activity we think that the foreign language teacher should give much importance to the preliminary preparations and explanation. The process can be briefly described in terms of topic sentence expansion and the provision of further information. Generally, the teacher's role consists of the introduction and; eventually, the detailed explanation of the three main methods of developing sentences into paragraphs.

* The first task is concerned with the presentation of the methods: the initial method is simply entitled 'description'. In fact, students are expected to describe everything they can in terms of shape, colour, function, behaviour and many other aspects which depend on the described object, event or person. The second method involves the explanation of the causes of the issue or phenomenon; hence, students should 'give reasons' which are logical and acceptable. The third method includes the provision of precise explanations and representations which should be exposed by students; in short, the development of the paragraph is a process of 'giving definitions and examples'.

* The second task is logically performed after the organization and planning of the elements that students have decided to write. In addition, the foreign language teacher presents further examples of methods which are usually used to develop ideas and information. For instance, he can propose the four principal types of paragraph elaboration namely: cause and effect, listing of details, analogy and; finally, comparison and contrast. In fact, each model is actually represented in a selected paragraph which is thoroughly analysed by students. Lastly, learners are asked to write a similar kind of paragraphs that are eventually discussed and evaluated in classroom interactions.

Activity Seven: Compiling Bibliographies.

At the end of the research work and the conception of their essays, students should necessarily compile a bibliography of the sources that they have used in their written products. The main goal of the activity is to make learners aware of the present day huge problem (especially at the local university level) of plagiarism. It is evident that students should acknowledge all the source

materials; indeed, this process involves many steps as they are presented by K. Cox and D. Hill (2004) in the following:

- 1. Understanding bibliographies: indications of page number, abbreviations, italics, positions of names, dates of publications and many other aspects of bibliography elaboration.
- 2. Analysing references in body texts: mainly in terms of circling the names, using quotations and appropriate punctuation.
- 3. Referencing from the World Wide Web: generally the process concerns the use of reference information in the document particularly the author's name, year of publication, title of web page, title of website, web address and the date of visiting the website.

In summation, the writing skills in cross-cultural contexts do not simply require the acquisition and suitable utilizations of a certain number of techniques; as a matter of fact, the implications are much more complex. Indeed, students can possess personal high level writing abilities; however, they should be necessarily consolidated by a number of other important factors that we can briefly summarize as follows:

- * A strong motivation to know the cultural components of the foreign society.
- * The collaboration with competent and inspiring foreign language teachers.
- * The use of informative literature.
- * The students' direct and real experiences of the foreign cultural components.
- * The continuous encouragement of students' manipulation of authentic cultural materials.
- *The organization of direct discussions or, through the available modern means of communication with particularly (whenever possible) gifted writers from the target culture society.

Additionally, in the present days numerous and varied resources are accessible to students particularly in relationship to diverse cross-cultural documents in libraries such as magazines, books and other stimulating materials which can be purchased or consulted. As far as the classroom situation is concerned, the foreign language teacher may not only conduct effective lessons but also stimulate his students through the employment of intercultural materials which give special significance to the cultural constituents of both the target and source cultures.

On the whole, students may equally self-improve their writing skills through a process of continuous reading of qualitative foreign target literature which can implicitly and efficiently serve as a model to their own writings. Indeed, it is difficult to deny the positive effects of reading the foreign literary products of eminent writers; as a matter of fact, the talents of these

authors and their particular styles of writing certainly enhance the students' writing skills. Moreover, modern technologies of information and communication may as well have a positive impact on the learners' written products; especially through the provision of concrete cultural materials from the foreign speech community.

In fact, one positive aspect of globalization; is the possibility to organize direct contacts with professional writers in English such as novelists or news reporters who are likely to inspire local foreign language students at university level. The last contributing factor is represented by the topics themselves which should be definitely intercultural. We think that the nature of the topics in the writing process can raise students' motivation in the conception of valuable written products and; incidentally contribute in developing the learners' positive attitudes towards the target culture.

2.4.4. The Reading Skill

2.4.4.1. Theoretical Background

It is generally admitted that the written text is constant and the implication is that one can refer back to the written product because it is considered to be a permanent storage. Moreover, the written text offers the possibility to 'jump forward' in order to discover beforehand the rest of the events. Indeed, we notice that eye gaze moves forward because we tend not to read everything; nevertheless, this does not apply to very complex writing; in fact we use a heuristic strategy. The process is quite complicated since the reader converts the written symbols into sounds (phonological symbols data processing); however, the question of recalling the data in non-phonological ways is still open to debate.

Generally, with the foreign language learner, there is definitely a conversion into a phonological data of the written symbols. Indeed, it is clear that in 'look and say' exercises; the process consists of relating certain sounds in addition to the possibility to notice how they would combine with other different sounds. Therefore, the reader does not proceed with a constituent analysis of individual symbols but he would rather recognize whole words. On the other hand, there is always a relation between reading and speaking (articulation); nevertheless, this operation tends to slow down the reading activity. Accordingly, in language teaching we try to break the link between reading and articulating because the process of the production of speech sounds stops the ability to predict. Consequently, fluent reading requires matching, since at a later stage we do not proceed with a phonological conversion of all the items. Indeed, readers

progressively become able to recognize redundancy and develop predictability in order to accelerate the reading activity. However, in some situations students do not move to prediction, probably because they are provided with short texts. As a matter of fact, it is agreed that the comprehension process occurs at text level not word level; consequently, long written products should be proposed by the foreign language teacher.

2.4.4.2. Basic Stages in Reading

Basically, the reading activity takes place in a regular and organized process which involves the following stages that are briefly presented.

- 1. To take the visual information and convert it into phonological representation.
- 2. To store the phonological representation in memory and; probably, store the visual information at the same time.
- 3. To organize this phonological representation into constituent parts.
- 4. To use constituents in order to construct propositions and try to understand them.
- 5. To retain the semantic representation and purge form (focus on meaning); hence, this process is related in its turn to the following operations:
- * It involves the recognition of letters and words in order to define the whole pattern instead of a detailed analysis. However, there is an important factor which is the inability to move from graphology to phonological representation; in fact, the problem is mainly the conversion of the different graphs.
- * It is also proved that the reader is able to record visual information in his memory.
- * In the reading activity, the constituent parts are easier to grasp because the writer has already achieved the process. Thus, it is difficult to separate the constituent elements because they become recognizable.
- * The operation is relatively simple since the material is available and it is possible for the reader to move backward and forward.
- *Besides, we can retain a lot of phonological manifestations like the repetition of the words of another speaker. However, we comprehend when we read through the application of a heuristic strategy, and in this situation if the item corresponds to our stored knowledge; we will not analyse it completely. Therefore, the reading process consists of a linguistic analysis together with a socio-pragmatic analysis like in the case of interpreting the social conventions in a speech community.

On the whole, we think it is interesting to consider how we can construct language in our mind. Indeed, the question of the manner in which we express ourselves is usually concerned with social factors; however, these elements only indicate what language we choose not how it is produced in the mind. Possibly, the process does not require a return to phonological items even if we are obliged to construct them and to select appropriate forms and meaning because there are limits and constraints. However, it is generally admitted that the learner at early stages is unable to construct a long speech in the foreign language. In fact, the significant question is how we build language psychologically and whether this operation is important in language teaching. The second aspect of the problem is represented by the difficulty to have access to the human mind because of the linguistic barriers.

Generally, the psychological operations that occur in the reading process are believed to follow the following phases:

Discourse Plan: the discourse plan may take many forms like monologue, dialogue, storytelling or a telephone conversation, etc. The reader incidentally accepts the discourse plan which determines the choice of words, syntactic constructions and implicit intonation patterns.

Sentence Plan: we select a syntactic form to realize a discourse plan; in reality it is not only metrics, but we also determine information focus (for example subordination or topic-localization).

Constituents Plan: once we construct the framework, we select the appropriate constituents.

Auditory Plan: it implies the phonological constructions when the learner listens to someone else (foreign language teacher or a classmate) reading a text.

Articulate or 'Articulatory' Plan: it consists of converting the phonological representations into sounds when the student reads a text loudly.

On the other hand, in the past little attention was given to discourse plan especially in relationship to foreign language reading activities. However, if the foreign language teacher can understand the manner in which the process takes place in the mind of the learner; this would certainly facilitate the teaching of the reading skills. In addition, students also face many difficulties in text conception exercises (written production) that usually follow the reading phase because the skill in itself requires analysis and practice. Indeed, the problem of production (reading comprehension oral questions or requested written products) is very complex; as a



matter of fact, even some native speakers of a language do not acquire these skills; in reality they are not able to produce a coherent speech or a piece of writing.

2.4.4.3. Strategies of the Reading Skill

2.4.4.3.1. Understanding Patterns of Organization

Information in the English language is often organized into various patterns. In fact, each pattern reflects a certain purpose, or a way of thinking about the subject. A single pattern can be used to organize information into a paragraph, an essay, or even an entire book. However, it is often observed that in longer readings, a variety of patterns are mixed. At this point, we believe it is useful to present the most common patterns and the purpose which they aim to realize:

Problem/Solution (Question/Answer): to offer answers to a problem or question.

- 1-Process: to explain a method or the way that something has happened or is made by breaking it down into steps, stages, or a sequence of events.
- 2-Comparison: to show how alike two or more things are.
- 3-Contrast: to show how different two or more things are.
- 4- Definition: to give the precise meaning or significance of a concept or thing.
- 5-Persuasion: to make readers believe something or do something.
- 6-Narration: to give the sequence of events or tell a story.
- 7-Description: to give information about the physical appearance of an object or details about the nature of a concept.
- 8-Cause: to give reasons why some event happens or why some condition exists.
- 9-Effect: to explain the results of some event.
- 10-Examples: to identify some thing that illustrates a type of thing or concept.
- 11-Analysis: to separate a system or a concept into parts and examine each part individually.
- 12-Classification: to show how a person, place, thing or idea fits into a category or group of similar persons, places, things, or ideas. In fact, classification often includes definitions.

2.4.4.3.2. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing (rewriting someone else's ideas in one's own words) is a useful skill because the student may need to paraphrase if he is summarizing an article, a book, or doing research of any kind. Moreover, recognizing paraphrasing is also important for standardized tests and; lastly, it is

an excellent way to help the student understand a difficult idea. Indeed, there are many ways the student can paraphrase material:

- 1*Use synonyms for some of the words in the original.
- 2*Rearrange the parts of the sentence.
- 3*Use different grammatical structures from the ones in the original.

Certainly, it is advisable to thoroughly read the material before the students attempts to rewrite it; in addition, it is useful not to look back at the passage as the learner rewrites.

2.4.4.3.3. Understanding Prefixes

Knowing the meaning of common prefixes helps the student in two important ways. First, it assists the student in building his vocabulary and quickly guesses the meaning of unknown words in a reading, especially if the learner is familiar with the root. Second, knowing how prefixes are used with words can also make the student's writing clearer and more precise. For instance, the prefix 'dis'- means 'not' as in 'disagree'; 'over'- means 'too much' as in 'overrated'; 'multi'- means 'many' as in 'multinational', etc.

2.4.4.3.4. Reading Procedure

This is an important strategy because it proposes a particular procedure which helps the student in understanding the reading material.

- 1- Organizing ideas: a representative classroom activity can be the completion of a diagram chart. For example, the foreign language teacher can ask students to draw two circles that are entwined with one another. In the left circle, students are asked to list facts, features, advantages of an element cited in the text; and in the right circle they are required to cite the opposite facts, features, drawbacks (a contrastive comparative task). Then, in the area where the two circles overlap, the students should list facts that apply to the elements or persons that are compared. Certainly, students may refer to the article (text) for help; hence, the completion of this kind of diagram helps learners to realize useful reading-comprehension tasks. At the end of the activity, the foreign language teacher may ask the students to write down (writing skill) more sentences to suggest other ways in order to organize the information in the text.
- 2- Comprehension skills: the major aim of this activity is to make the student think about the different ways to find answers in the reading text. It is obvious that the information is in the text,

but students may have to look in several sentences to find it. Within this respect, we propose two interesting activities:

- * Recalling facts: this classroom activity consists of presenting incomplete sentences that paraphrase the presentation of certain facts in the text; and the student is provided with three or more propositions in order to complete the sentence. The main objective of this task is to check the student's reading-comprehension abilities with regard to factual information.
- * Understanding ideas: the same steps are also followed in this activity (sentence completion with multiple-choice); however, the aim is different. The reason is that in this task the foreign language teacher verifies the student's reading-comprehension of abstract aspects in the text like the author's ideas or presentation of certain notions and concepts.

1. Reading techniques.

- * Recognizing Words in Context: the foreign language teacher selects a word from the text and proposes to students three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the word. One definition has the opposite or nearly the opposite meaning. The remaining definition has a meaning that has nothing to do with the word. Students should label the definitions C for closest, O for opposite or nearly opposite, and U for unrelated. For example the word *vote* can be assigned three choices: vote for; vote against; refuse to vote.
- * Distinguishing Fact from Opinion: the foreign language teacher suggests two statements from the text that present *facts* which can be proved. Then, another statement is an *opinion*, which expresses someone's thoughts or beliefs. Students are asked to label the statements F for fact and O for opinion.
- * Making Correct Inferences: the teacher presents two statements which are correct *inferences*, or reasonable guesses, that are based on information in the article. The other statement (a third one) is incorrect, or faulty, inference. Students are required to label the statements C for correct inference and I for incorrect inference.
- * Understanding Main Ideas: the foreign language teacher proposes three (or more) statements but only one of them expresses the main idea of the article (or reading text). Another statement is too general, or too broad. The other explains only part of the article, it is too narrow. Students should label the statements M for main idea, B for too broad, and N for too narrow.
- * Responding to the Article (or text): for instance, students are required to complete some sentences in their own words.

- 1/* Expanding Vocabulary.
- * Content-Area Words: students are asked to complete a number of sentences with a word from a list or box; they should write the missing word on the line in the sentence or fill a gap.
- * Academic English: the foreign language teacher presents and explains an academic English word. Students are required to complete a sentence in which the word is used; then they are asked to use the same word in a sentence of their own. However, we should point out that before the reading of the text, the teacher selects the most difficult content-area and academic English words; and presents the definitions and the example sentences of the chosen words (R. Spack, 2007: 6-12).

2.4.4.4. Techniques for Teaching Reading

It is generally recognized that reading is a complex skill, in fact it can be divided into two elements: the first is Low Order Skills like manual or mechanical skills, letter shape and linguistic elements. The second is High Order Skills such as intellectual skills, comprehension, phonetic elements, lexical, grammatical, rhetorical, understanding, significance, logical thread, attitude of the writer and the reader's reaction. These factors are all important and they determine the act of reading which can be described through three major phases:

* Recognition of Shapes: the information can be found in two different ways; the first is to find groups of letters which have little difference and expand them. The second is to discover words which are known in the foreign language. The teacher should give practice in recognizing words that are not familiar in terms of spelling and pronunciation; in fact, the better practice in writing, the better will be reading.

*Correlation of shapes with language (and pronunciation): this is a phonetic approach which simply consists of recognizing individual letters and sounds in order to define the patterns of words; therefore, in this situation visual clues are important.

* Intellectual Skills: this factor represents the relationship between sound and meaning. It consists of correlating the pronunciation of a word with its meaning; the reader has to apply his knowledge of the word and make predictions through a process of scanning. However, in this situation reading aloud is not a useful skill; on the contrary, the role of the teacher is to practise with students Silent Reading. This skill mainly implies various types of activities like rapid

reading of a short story for pleasure; in reality, it does not require extensive understanding or looking for all meanings, in fact superficial comprehension is sufficient.

On the other hand, we should make the distinction between the above techniques which represent very early stages of the reading process at simple levels of learning the foreign language (beginner learners). However, at advanced stages of the reading process; we believe that an interesting technique (among many others) can be put into application by the foreign language teacher; which consists of activities of Intensive and Extensive reading. Within this context, it would be useful to analyse the distinction that has been suggested by J. Harmer (2015) who states that students should be involved in both extensive and intensive reading in order to gain full benefit of the reading skill.

1. Intensive Reading: the author believes that intensive reading is often selected and supervised by the foreign language teacher. In addition, intensive reading is elaborated for the realization of specific objectives; however, the most important task is to grasp the general significance of a text which is usually referred to as the gist or skimming. Besides, the process requires two principal tasks: the first is to find particular details which should be discovered by the reader (scanning); the second is to understand the true significance behind the words (inference). On the other hand, the general goal of providing students with a variety of numerous texts is not only to improve on their linguistic proficiency but above all to acquire new experiences.

In addition, J. Harmer (2015) proposes some modern activities (apart from the usual comprehension questions) which are summarized in the following:

- * Encouraging students' responses: the students' engagement with a text is quite important; consequently, the foreign language teacher should continuously ask the students' opinions and feelings about a particular text. The reading of a text with both 'head' and 'heart' along with the learners' argumentation can serve as useful indicators of the students' comprehension of the text.
- * Transferring information: the foreign language teacher can check (or evaluate) the students' degrees of grasping the true meaning of a text through activities that require transfer of information to other media like graphs, pie charts, or tables.
- * Interrogating the text: this type of activity encourages students' critical thinking; in fact, they should debate the evidence, arguments, intercultural differences, conciseness and clarity of the written product.

- * Using reading as a springboard: it is clear that the reading skill can enhance other classroom activities that usually follow the specific reading tasks such as debates, letter writing, role-play or information transfer.
- 1. Extensive Reading: J. Harmer (2015) states that extensive reading has a different focus which implies a great amount of reading which should occur outside the classroom context. It is believed that extensive reading enhances students' vocabulary, spelling, writing and even speaking skills (reading aloud). Moreover, the author suggests numerous classroom activities (with regard to the importance of extensive reading) that we can summarize in the following:
- * Reading to confirm expectation: the prediction of the content of a text from a number of clues such as phrases or passages.
- * Filling in blanks in a text: the writer points out that this kind of activity is suitable for large classes; in fact, students are required to build up the text like in the 'guess missing words' tasks.
- * Scanning, reading for gist: students are requested to read a text and summarize the necessary information to complete a specific task which might be proposed by the teacher.
- * Reading as a prelude to writing: students are asked to read the text and try to grasp the relevant information and; eventually, use this information in order to write a report or a piece of writing which is closely related to the reading text.
- 1. Tips about the type of questions in reading comprehension activities:
- * Avoid free prediction.
- * Dictation might be useful but words should be known.
- * The texts should be graded in order to increase the reading speed.
- * Reading aloud might be useful at an early stage.
- * Developing comprehension: for instance to present a text with different difficulties (grammar, lexis) and ask students some questions. There are usually two types of questions, the first type is the teaching questions which are usually oral, numerous and constructed in logical sequences. The second type is the testing questions that are often asked in an examination. Reading can not be taught in isolation; therefore, the other skills such as writing and speaking should necessarily accompany the reading activities. Indeed, the foreign language teacher should try to develop spoken and written discourse in the English language. For example, oral questions should not require precise answers because the goal is the development of the students' proficiency in speaking and not the exact information which is laid down in the text. Moreover, in the testing questions that can follow a reading task; the emphasis is put on vocabulary and not to ask

students to inform about meaning. Lastly, the main concern of the language teacher is to elicit responses which are not mechanical.

- 1/* Tips about the formulation of the questions in reading tasks:
- * To read the article (or text) and complete a chart which summarizes the contents.
- * To talk about one or two points in the text with a partner or partners (talking points).
- * To use pictures which illustrate the different stages of two consecutive activities or language processes. To look at them and, with a partner, work out what is going on in each picture.
- * To look at a list of words and expressions from the passage. Explain the meaning of each one to a partner and discuss the different (or similar) interpretations.
- * To read a number of texts (short articles) which deal with the same topic and try to find out at least one thing that they have in common (what is it?).
- * To specify examples or opinions in the text and put a tick next to those the students would be interested in. Then, learners are asked to compare these elements with partners.
- * To select words and expressions from the reading text, read them and put a tick next to those whose meanings the student knows. Ask a partner or partners the meaning of the other words; the learner should keep on asking until he can put a tick against each one.
- * To look at an article or a short comment, then read the headline or captions below the photographs, if any. Lastly, the student should indicate what he thinks the article is about (M. Spratt, 1994).

2.4.4.5. Choice of Text.

Generally, there are four basic criteria which are used to classify the reading text: subject, rhetorical patterns, sources and form (Champeau de Lopez, Marchi B and Arreaza-Coyle, 1997).

First, the basic category Subject is further divided into three main groups: Humanities and Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Biological Sciences and; each group is broken down into particular disciplines. On the other hand, due to the increasing interdependence of many fields nowadays; a reading may be classified as belonging to more than one subject. Indeed, this situation is reflected in many of the reading texts; for example a text describing the use of computers in education would be classified under engineering (computers) as well as education.

Second, the text is also classified according to the predominating Rhetorical Pattern. Usually, the selected pattern depends on the type of class or the subject under study. For instance, in an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) class, the reading course is naturally organized around the

patterns most commonly found in scientific and technical writing. As a matter of fact, the patterns selected to classify the reading text closely follow those which are emphasized in class: definition, static description, classification, comparison-contrast, chronology, process, cause-effect, hypothesis, argumentation, and exemplification.

Third, the category Source is identified according to the style in which the text is written and the type of information which appears. For example, a textbook would be written in an objective style and contain explanations of basic concepts, well-known and generally accepted information, whereas a journal would describe recent investigations or discoveries and be written in technical language for specialists and researchers.

Fourth, the category Form refers to the graphic appearance of the text. In fact, it may be an extract from an article or book, a list of sentences to be placed in the correct order, a table or graph, a page from a dictionary, an abstract, etc.

2.4.4.6. Reading Principles

The foreign language teacher is certainly aware of the importance of the reading skills as major requirements for the attainment of a high proficiency in the English language. Within this context, we believe it is useful to discuss the reading principles which have been suggested by J. Harmer (2008).

Principle1. Encourage students to read as often and as much as possible. Indeed, we deeply adhere to this principle; as a matter of fact, we have observed that at the local level, students read a very limited number of written products. In fact, some of them achieve their graduation in the English studies (three years) without having read a single book in the English language! Thus, if the foreign language teacher is convinced that extensive reading is not undertaken by students; it would become necessary to introduce additional reading materials in intensive reading.

Principle2. Students need to be engaged with what they are reading.

The positive implications of the term 'engaged' are that students would be motivated and enjoy the reading activity. In other words, the foreign language teacher should convince students of the pleasure they would probably feel in reading interesting and pleasant materials. In fact, students should never feel or think that the act of reading is 'a duty, a homework or even punishment'. Accordingly, students would be more motivated and would probably perform the different reading classroom activities with enthusiasm.

Principle3. Encourage students to respond to the content of a text (and explore their feelings about it), not just concentrate on its construction.

The author points out that despite the importance of the 'technical' reading activities in terms of grammatical devices and writing requirements, a special emphasis should be put on the meaning and message of the text. As a matter of fact, this point is particularly important within the context of foreign language intercultural teaching. In reality, students should be constantly encouraged to reveal their feelings and give their opinions with regard to the target cultural behaviours that are implicitly or explicitly displayed in the reading material. The main objective of the foreign language teacher is essentially to increase students' awareness of the target culture and; eventually, they would develop positive attitudes in relationship to the foreign speech community. Indeed, we have observed (even if it is not within a scientific investigation context) that local Master Two students who are usually highly motivated in learning the foreign language and have developed positive attitudes with respect to the target cultural behaviours; are those who regularly practise extensive reading in the English language.

Principle4. Prediction is a major factor in reading.

J. Harmer (2008) believes that the 'Before Reading' activities should be given more importance; because certain elements (features of the reading text) like headlines, book cover or picture and title work as prompts or incentives. Indeed, these factors can raise the students' curiosity and interest to actually read the material since the predictive process can enhance students' motivation in order to discover the content of the reading texts.

Principle5. Match the task to the topic when using intensive reading texts.

This principle is closely related to the type of activities that should be practised in each phase of the reading process ('Before', 'While', and 'After' reading). The author recommends that the foreign language teacher should ensure that each classroom activity is not only appropriate (linked to the reading material) but also 'imaginative and challenging'. In fact, the reading process can be undermined (boring, not motivating) to a great extent if the tasks are out of the reading (material) context or if they are not really interesting (too easy) or putting off (too difficult).

Principle6. Good teachers exploit reading to the full.

The author thinks that the most significant benefit which we can realize from the reading text is to integrate it into other lessons or sequences of the teaching programmes. In other words, the positive linguistic elements (words, descriptions, etc.) or socio-cultural components (beliefs, attitudes, ideas, etc.) that are embedded in the reading text should be utilized in other subsequent teaching activities. The aim is mainly to use all the information (knowledge, benefits) that has been grasped from the reading text and incorporate it into the overall foreign language intercultural teaching process.

The foreign language teacher is generally expected to specify the requirements for a particular reading activity regarding text subject, objectives and difficulty levels. Moreover, the choice of the reading text is equally useful to teachers because it helps them to focus on specific learners' needs and; eventually, realize many positive outcomes through the practice of reading tasks. Besides, the reading text can guide the teacher in the preparation and presentation (teaching) of new items (of the foreign language) which can be incorporated into future teaching programmes. Therefore, reading texts should be graded and varied; because certain specific reading materials such as advertising, brochures or mnemonics are particularly useful and motivating in an intercultural foreign language teaching perspective.

As a matter of fact, in presenting any language skill the foreign language teacher should be imaginative; in reality, the practice of any classroom activity is not just a question of a text, picture or a film; it is rather an information transfer task of the foreign language linguistic and socio-cultural constituents. Besides, the different classroom activities should be constructive and tied to subjects that are interesting to students; because the most significant objective of each task is to manipulate and learn creative foreign language.

Finally, within the context of local university studies and; especially with advanced level students; the foreign language teaching activities should inculcate complex intellectual exercises. Indeed, the focus should be put on the relationship between language and meaning, discourse associations, grammatical constructions and combinations, intercultural awareness, and the links that exist between structure and knowledge of the world.

Conclusion

In summary, the procedure that we have adopted in the second chapter is to analyze each language skills within an intercultural perspective. Besides, we have studied the interconnections that exist between the language skills (receptive and productive) and the various socio-cultural norms which are embedded in the acts of communication. Indeed, we have carefully selected and evaluated in-depth a great number of classroom activities and tasks that are employed with respect to each skill. On the whole, the teaching and learning processes of the language skills within the intercultural dimension necessitates specific arrangements in connection with the selection of classroom activities, the objectives assigned to students' performance and the effective tools which should be used in order to assess the learners' foreign language proficiency.

3. The Culture Skill

3.1. Theoretical Background

It is commonly agreed that social and cultural anthropology research is mainly interested in the study and description of the manners of living of human communities; which incidentally implies the analysis of human cultures. As a matter of fact, sociologists and anthropologists are particularly challenged by the complex and interrelated factors which exist between the fundamental components of human nature and social life namely thought, language and abstract concepts. Obviously, these major three elements are continuously embedded in the culture of any human community; therefore, any attempt to better understand a specific society requires the study of its culture.

Indeed, at the beginning of the last century, the prominent American Edward Sapir reached a profound conviction that the language and culture of any speech community cannot be studied in separation. In fact, E. Sapir was among the first pioneers who advocated the simple and logical idea that language is the most important means which represents and describes the humans' experiences and beliefs of the world. He equally puts forward that any society is necessarily organized and 'regulated' by common beliefs and assumptions with regard to the speakers' conceptions of the world.

Consequently, numerous studies of culture and social norms were undertaken by anthropologists and sociolinguists. As a matter of fact, in the 1960's and the 1970's a large number of analyses and investigations were particularly focussed on the interrelationships between language and culture. In fact, significant studies were achieved particularly by D. Hymes (1964) in relation to language and culture connections, K. Kapplan (1966) around the styles of writing in human communities and their cultural rhetorical patterns and; lastly, J. J. Gumperz (1972) about interactional sociolinguistics.

However, it is generally admitted that D. Hymes has largely contributed in the development of the notions of communicative competence along with speech acts and speech events theories (it is certainly evident that such concepts have been initially analysed much earlier by scholars like J. L. Austin and John R. Searle). Indeed, the founding principle of the theory is that any interpretation or understanding of speech and behaviour should be realized with respect to the norms and social conventions of the speech community.

In the 1980's, new perspectives were developed with regard to the tremendous influence of culture on second/foreign language teaching. In reality, the majority of researchers have suggested that the foreign language teaching process should take place within the cultural dimension and; therefore, foreign language teaching programmes should necessarily give importance to elements such as body language, eye contact and many other communicative and behavioural cultural patterns. Hence, numerous analyses have attempted to demonstrate the influence of culture on human acts of communication and interactions. However, these studies have beforehand necessitated the elaboration of precise definitions of cultural beliefs and values.

In the present situation, it has become evident that the teaching of the cultural components-whether they occur explicitly or implicitly- presupposes the teaching of not only spoken and written foreign language records but also the different social interactions. Indeed, C. Kramsch (1993) in particular states that any foreign language can not be effectively learnt without the incorporation in the syllabus of elements that analyse the cultural behaviours of its speech society. The reason is that foreign language acts of communication would not be clearly understood without the knowledge of the cultural contexts in which they occur.

However, learning the target culture does not definitely imply the ignorance of the learners' native cultures which define to a great extent their learning strategies (Byram and Morgan, 1994). The proponents of this strategy share two general principles: the first is that it is not really possible for learners to completely master the foreign language if they do not have insights into or hopefully knowledge of the various cultural contexts which encompass any speech act. The second broad principle is the adoption of a multilingual approach in the teaching operation.

Indeed, the procedure is based upon the idea that the individual's experiences of language in its cultural contexts extends from the language at home to that of the entire society. This 'prior cultural context' also expands to the languages of other people; because communicative competence in the foreign language represents the sum of all knowledge and experiences of both the native and foreign languages which undoubtedly interrelate and interact.

3.2. The Culture Skill: General Sources and Techniques

No one would deny that nowadays the tremendous technological developments allow the foreign language teacher to have an easy and rapid access to a large variety of available sources. The possibilities of using appropriate and efficient cultural contents have become quite simple since the indispensible materials exist and; they may be eventually employed with great facility. As a matter of fact, a very large amount of authentic materials are on the Internet in electronic forms; therefore, the foreign language teacher as well as learners can search almost any issues at any time they choose.

Generally, a broad range of sources can be used for teaching culture along with the existence of practical and effective techniques. In fact, what is significant is the choice of the appropriate procedure that should be applied. Within this respect, the selection of the procedure generally depends on three principal parameters. Indeed, these determinants are information sources, activity types and selling-points. As far as the information sources are concerned, the cultural information is often derived from various origins as suggested by R. R. Jordan (1997) who has placed a special emphasis on the practical and pedagogical utilization of newspapers.

In fact, newspapers represent an interesting source of cultural information; especially local or regional papers which are more inclined to deal with daily life and events particular to home towns and nearby surrounding areas. Additionally, the other means that is equally useful is the video which constitutes an effective visual source in the form of many ELT videotapes or more modern means like CDs and DVDs that represent better quality teaching aids.

Concerning the techniques of teaching the cultural contents, one can refer to the usual simple tasks like talks and classroom activities. In reality, they are suitable and practical means that are used to provide students with fruitful information during classroom interactions. Additionally, discussion and introspection are usually initiated with the help of activities such as role play and dramatizations. Lastly, students' awareness of the social conventions of the foreign society is generally assessed through the organization of culture quizzes and tests.

On the other hand, the general objectives which are assigned to these techniques take into account a number of factors that are closely linked to teaching the target culture. The focusing point is that the foreign language teacher and learners clearly understand the cultural differences and; consequently, they would probably develop positive attitudes with regard to these dissimilarities which can serve the teaching/learning processes. As a matter of fact, the foreign



language teacher through the practice of these techniques; should convey the impressions and acts of the foreign culture. Indeed, students should realize that foreign language learning involves both the linguistic and cultural phenomena which can not be separated. This reality in speech communities is apparent in many manifestations like native speakers' utterances, authentic texts or pictures; therefore, all these aspects of natural activities certainly introduce various cultural elements in the classroom.

Besides, the different tasks and activities should assure that the students' native languages and the foreign language are necessarily learnt along with the actions, ways and attitudes of the society. In fact, the aspects of these social activities and beliefs are deeply embedded in the language; therefore, any technique should enable students to understand the foreign culture. This awareness of the cultural components helps learners to reach an acceptable or even a high level proficiency in various important elements of the foreign language. One can mention the skilful and authentic employment of words and expressions, the comprehension of levels of language and the appropriate situations in which they can be used.

In addition, students would be able to act naturally with persons who belong to the target culture. Consequently, these positive attitudes imply the recognition and acceptance of their different reactions and; gradually, learners become more and more accustomed to them. Indeed, the significant achievement would be the mutual comprehension and eventually appreciation of each other's cultures.

On the other hand, we notice that the majority of students find cross-cultural learning experiences quite positive and stimulating. In fact, they actually grasp many benefits from this king of learning; however, some students can experience some psychological blocks and inhibitions in relationship to the target culture. The main reasons are probably due to factors like negative attitudes, the existence of stereotypes and subjective or prejudicial evaluations of the target culture with respect to the source cultures.

Actually, in this kind of situation the foreign language teacher's role is important. Hence, he can help this category of learners through the use of various and effective activities that would probably transform such negative experience into a sentiment of self-awareness and enrichment of one's own culture. Certainly, some students feel totally alienated in the foreign language learning process not only in relation to the target culture but they amazingly have the same feeling about the sources cultures as well. As a result, the foreign language teacher should face

this type of problems and other intricate or ticklish situations with much sensitivity in order not to definitely de-motivate the foreign language students.

It is evident that care should be taken because this category of learners is psychologically fragile; therefore, the use of any particular techniques should continuously aim at promoting the students' cultural understanding. Indeed, the right application of these techniques is certainly very useful to the teaching of the target culture; however, the foreign language teacher's role can also take various aspects. In fact, one significant task is to adopt a therapeutic strategy which accompanies students through the different stages of acculturation. Obviously, this delicate situation necessitates the adoption by the foreign language teacher of a perceptive and sensitive attitude which would surely enhance the smooth progression and higher learners' proficiency in the foreign language and culture.

In addition, the other aspect of intercultural techniques of teaching the foreign language is the prior assignment of certain precise and primordial goals. Obviously, the main task of the foreign language teacher is the development of students' communicative competence which should imply-as it is commonly known- the triple components: grammatical, discursive and sociolinguistic competence. In other words, the key principle in foreign language intercultural teaching is the attainment of communicative competence which in turn requests the improvement of the sociolinguistic ability in communication that should precisely target the pragmatic, social and cultural elements. For example, the linguistic manifestations in the target culture (or any other culture) of making apologies or requests are certainly determined by factors like age, sex, social status and social relations. These factors are significant because their role is to provide the sociolinguistic forms of such speech acts. Moreover, the foreign language learner should be conscious of the fact that there are disparities in people's speech acts in relationship to the contextual pragmatic conditions which are cross-culturally different.

Furthermore, the techniques in teaching the foreign culture should deal with a less prominent but important factor which consists of breaking down cultural barriers. The task is in reality quite complex; because it should precede any kind of teaching/learning activities which involve the notions of acquiring other cultural components apart from those of English speaking societies. In fact, students may show willingness in learning specifically the target culture but remain relatively reluctant to learn the cultural constituents of other communities. This problem is directly related to the learners' personal conceptions of their priorities, needs and objectives of foreign language learning.

Accordingly, the foreign language teacher's practice of these techniques should follow a gradual process from an emphasis on the similarities across cultures to the discussion of the differences which possibly exist in the various cultures. However, cross-cultural differences should not constitute a factor of animosity; as a matter of fact, dissimilarities are present even within the same culture.

Besides, the other perspective which is involved in intercultural techniques of teaching is the permanent incorporation of the source culture manifestations. In other words, the teaching of a specific topic in the target culture can be accompanied by its equivalent-if it exits- in the students' own cultures. Indeed, this process of contrast and compare (as it has been indicated previously) would efficiently and largely contribute in the teaching operation. Certainly, the extensive employment of culture-based activities would make students more and more familiar with the target culture. Obviously, the level of difficulty of these activities should be gradual, since the cultural values embodied in these materials and their degrees of alienation and complexity are normally developed in accordance with the students' readiness and openmindedness to adopt these foreign cultural behaviours.

On the other hand, a simple representation of this progressive practice of cultural tasks logically begins at elementary stages. For example, it would be logical to start with the discussions of daily life activities like living conditions, relations with families and friends, leisure time, celebrations of ceremonies and festivals. However, more complex phenomena may be dealt with ultimately such as historical events, social organizations, the history of arts and music and; lastly, the various socio-economic issues. On the whole, the fulfilment of the teaching programme logically depends on the achievements and feedbacks of learners' understanding and degree of acculturation.

However, we think that it is essential to point out that the distinction of certain significant components in the target culture which are commonly shared by nearly all members of the speech community; does not imply the deviations which are sometimes the product of individuals or very small groups of persons in the foreign society. These particular elements can be manifested through certain habits, beliefs or cultural conventions. Additionally, students should be able to converse fluently and appropriately with native speakers of English and; ideally, interactions should take place in genuine experiential situations.

Indeed, learners should be given the opportunity to use their knowledge of the foreign language; however, the operation is better developed in what is called 'parallel streams'. The process consists of discussing or just referring to the same cultural phenomenon; nevertheless, it should be presented in the native and target cultures at the same time. Likewise, students would be able to compare the two processes and; eventually, they would improve on their communicative competence. In reality, the outcomes of the use of such intercultural activities would be probably relative because there are often discrepancies in students' performances; nonetheless, the foreign language teacher and learners should be ambitious in order to possibly reach native-like linguistic and cultural behaviours.

3.3. Practical Framework of Teaching the Culture Skill

Teaching the culture skill in the EFL classroom requires a clearly defined and precise framework in addition to the use of practical teaching techniques. In fact, it is necessary to maintain within this scope only the techniques which have been proved to be successful and efficient in culture-based programmes. The principal objective that one can assign is to encourage the use of tools of culture communication transmissions in English classroom teaching. However, we should keep up a constant view that these tips and techniques should always fit the Algerian context of English teaching/learning.

Indeed, it is quite obvious that the cultural background knowledge is actually primordial in foreign language teaching; however, in many countries it has remained occasional and restrained. In fact, this principle is generally agreed on and shared by the majority of syllabus designers and its real application requires newly conceived methods of teaching the foreign language culture. Within this perspective, the principal aim of the foreign language teacher is to assist students in facing the various difficulties in foreign language learning especially the acquisition of broad competence in the target culture.

It is clear that the foreign language teacher's role should not only be focussed on the provision of cultural information; but also the rapid development of learners' abilities to express themselves correctly and appropriately in various contexts. Certainly, the main challenges that defy the language teacher are the application of various methods and the performance of novel actions in teaching different cultures. Of course, the main objective is to make the teaching process highly useful and it should constitute a pleasant experience for both teachers and learners. Within this respect, we believe it would be interesting to analyse some influential factors that would largely contribute in the successful realization of this framework.



3.3.1. The English Language Classroom and the Cultural Contexts

It is clear that the ideal situation would be the 'integration' of students in the cultural contexts of English native speaking communities and not the introduction of the target culture contexts in the language classroom in a TEFL situation. However, many experiences have proved that it is possible to learn a foreign culture in the classroom even within the source cultural environment. In fact, the case under investigation essentially does concern the Algerian learners at university level and; consequently, the significant but complex English language teacher's task is to create an intercultural context that satisfies the economic and organizational requirements of the local conditions.

Additionally, the process of foreign culture teaching obviously involves the spoken and written records of the English language as in traditional language teaching operation. In contrast, we believe that the development of new and adapted methodologies is greatly needed; especially with regard to the local (i.e. the students of the English language at Mohamed Kheider, University of Biskra) Algerian higher educational contexts.

Unfortunately, in the case of our sample study, the approaches which have been put into application through the contents of such courses as 'General Culture' or 'Teaching Study Texts' have been strongly characterized by their inclination towards the use of structural approaches in foreign language teaching. Indeed, the local ELT programmes of culture instruction have solely focussed on traditional elements like correctness in grammar, manipulations of syntactic structures and a limited range of vocabulary.

Moreover, in some cases the foreign language teacher uses, perhaps unconsciously and due to what can be called 'professional distortions', hybrid approaches but from a negative perspective. In other words, the foreign language teacher's intention and actual belief are the employment of communicative approaches in teaching; nevertheless, the developed activities and tasks in the classroom are in essence structural. Consequently, it becomes apparent that the teaching of the target culture, at least with the Second Year Master students of English, obviously requires some improvements; because we do believe that the teaching process lacks a consistent and effective intercultural methodology.

In an attempt to apply the appropriate procedures in teaching the target culture, the foreign language teacher needs to combine three major parameters: the source of information, the types of activity and the effective interactions (Lili Dai, 2011).



3.3.2. Multiple Sources of Information

The main characteristic of modern foreign culture teaching in a communicative approach is the direct implication of learners and their active contributions in the teaching/learning process. Consequently, students should be constantly encouraged to gather information; chiefly because materials are largely available through various sources such as multimedia tools, Internet and written 'traditional' dictionaries or encyclopaedias. Indeed, students should use the different suitable means in order to discover or obtain the information by themselves; instead of adopting a passive attitude which makes them entirely depend on the foreign language teacher.

However, the collection of information represents only the first step in the research investigation. In fact, students are required in a second phase to analyse the gathered data and choose the most effective and suitable materials which 'appropriately' fit the cultural topic under study. A comprehensive and thorough image of the target culture needs the analysis of the foreign cultural behaviours from many angles and dimensions; therefore, the foreign language teacher's main task is to present students with diverse types of information.

For instance, Lili Dai (2011) proposes some possible sources of information from which materials can be derived in order to teach the target culture. It is possible to mention very briefly materials such as: extracts from literary works, Internet, fieldwork, multimedia software, DVD's and CDs, illustrations, newspapers and magazines, photographs, plays, songs etc, Indeed, the tremendous developments that have occurred in new media technologies; particularly what is usually alluded to as ICT, are rapidly conducting to new approaches in classroom management and in general intercultural teaching. Locally, in the present situation, some foreign language teachers have not yet adopted these modern means which can be of a great help and usefulness in the design and; eventually, teaching courses within an intercultural perspective.

3.3.3. Diverse Types of Activity

Generally, the conception of classroom activities is determined in accordance with specific parameters; in fact, the norms which are used represent different approaches in terms of foreign language teaching methodology. The elaboration of activities which are particularly designed for the development of the culture skill is usually based upon two principal criteria. The first one is the reliance on the topic; nevertheless, the emphasis is necessarily put on the transmission of information with regard to that particular issue. In contrast, the vehicle (or language) in itself is of secondary importance and; therefore, students are requested to concentrate on the subject

which is often known to them. In short, the knowledge of a particular topic generally implies the seeking and presentation of precise and pertinent information.

On the other hand, the second parameter rather emphasizes the classroom activities. Hence, students are taught how to exchange talks with the other participants in order to create and maintain social relationships such as greeting or thanking. Moreover, there is another possibility which is the accomplishment of certain tasks which are basically organized around the knowledge and practice of foreign social activities. In fact, the activity is probably already known by students and what is really important is how to act or practise in the same manner as natives would do.

However, inappropriate actions certainly lead to confusion and misunderstanding. As a consequence, and this is the least we can notice, is the deep embarrassment of the foreign language speaker; sometimes to the extent that it causes a total breakdown of communication because what is really important is the transmission of information. In fact, one would globally remark that a great number of these activities focus on the type of information which is required with respect to a specific topic; in addition to the appropriate actions (or reactions) that are concerned by the subject discussed. Within this context, we think it is useful to analyse some sample activities which have been suggested by Lili Dai (2011) that would probably fit into the framework discussed above.

3.3.3.1. Topic-Oriented Activity

In this type of activities, the foreign language teacher presents an issue or topic which should be discussed by students; however, the main and primary parameter in the selection of the subject is that it involves an element of the real world around the learners. Usually, the classroom discussion takes place between teacher and students in a cooperative process and often focuses solely on one issue or connected topic. The organization of the discussion or activity obeys to the learners' cultural conventions of turn-taking. However, the significant foreign language teacher's task in this situation is to make students aware of the target culture norms; which are gradually discovered by the learners in order to realize a successful intercultural communication.

Certainly, a tremendous number of topics can be chosen and discussed; but what is actually important is the students' awareness of the variations of such topics across cultures. Accordingly, students would be able to move through the topic from their own cultural backgrounds to the one

which belongs to the target culture. The principal objective of this activity is to allow students to find out the foreign social obligations and conventions which the subject requires in the debate. The foreign language teacher can often intervene in order to introduce comments related to the topic or he could attract the students' attention to a specific point in the activity.

3.3.3.2. Activity Logs

It is evident that the reference in this activity is related to the 'log-box' which involves the permanent dairy record of events or registration of observations. Therefore, in this activity students are asked to use a notebook in order to report their experiences in the classroom or; even a broader environment such as the University, home, town, etc,. They can equally write down about their own or other's reactions or responses to intercultural learning and the classroom activities they undertake in particular.

The principal goal of this kind of activity is to offer the students an opportunity to evaluate the learning of the target culture and; probably, discuss with the foreign language teacher their needs and expectations of the cultural teaching operation. In this manner, the language teacher is regularly informed of the learners' progression in acquiring the target culture components, the kind of attitudes they develop and; lastly, the most effective tasks that permit the practice of the writing skill.

Moreover, the use of 'activity logs' represents another advantage in teaching culture classes which is the creation of an interactive dialogue between the foreign language teacher and students. Hence, learners may discuss their reports in terms of comments, reactions or questions about particular components of the target culture. In addition, students are continuously encouraged to evaluate the various classroom activities proposed by their teacher. Besides, one can observe that the process of evaluation of cultural learning is a type of review exercise through which learners call back the information learnt previously.

In this manner, students are able to record their achievements in target culture learning and; consequently, the foreign language teacher would probably use these records as indicators in order to introduce the necessary readjustments in the different tasks. Indeed, the foreign language teacher is likewise provided with effective feedbacks which can help him not only evaluate the classroom activities (i.e. choice, efficiency and practice) but regularly assess students' progression as well. The organization of the 'activity logs' should certainly be clearly defined by the teacher because of its complexity. As a matter of fact, this kind of activities necessitates the

undertaking of research not only in the classroom but also in the students' external environment. Hence, the chief issue of these tasks is that they involve the following of specific steps or procedures in relationship to the topics and themes analysed.

3.3.3.3. Authentic Materials

The selection and effective use of authentic materials represent in reality a valuable and crucial teaching aid in intercultural instruction. Authentic materials are largely useful in various and numerous aspects which we have partly discussed in the present study. Concerning the teaching of the target culture in particular; they surely represent practical and efficient tools in order to develop students' comprehension abilities. As a matter of fact, the specific use of dialogues is extremely interesting because they convey authentic interactions in addition to the reflection of native speakers' cultural behaviours.

Moreover, we think that it is necessary to remind that the foreign language teacher's task in relation to the selection of authentic materials is absolutely vital. In fact, this is not an exaggerated comment because there is a real and high risk that inappropriate, ambiguous or complex authentic materials can definitely frustrate or even de-motivate certain categories of learners. The reason is that such type of students lack the necessary socio-cultural knowledge to understand and; perhaps, positively react to the proposed materials. For instance, the use of audio-visual aids like films or videos in the class should necessarily be preceded by the teacher's thorough explanation of the cultural components embodied in the materials.

Indeed, it is commonly accepted that cultural acquisition is best achieved through the regular presentation of authentic target cultural backgrounds. Actually, we believe that genuine dialogues can perfectly fulfil this task. The reason is that they not only represent interesting listening materials but they also provide a broad range of English and Western cultural manifestations like life styles, beliefs, habits and customs. However, it is not exaggerated to strongly insist once again on the foreign language teacher's preliminary explanation and clarifications in order to help students understand and be better prepared to accept the cultural behaviours of native speakers.

As far as the practical means that are nowadays utilized by the foreign language teacher are concerned; it is undeniable that multimedia and network technology do offer useful and rich sources of authentic materials. However, we should recognize that in the local Algerian situation; there is obviously a lack of authentic language environment due to historical and geographical

factors. Consequently, authentic dialogues or; whenever possible chat-rooms through Internet with native speakers of English in the class can create attractive, pleasant and friendly interactions.

Additionally, in the present days it has become quite simple (due to the modern technological developments) to have access to numerous videos and texts which present various English cultural behaviours along with many cultural artefacts. In fact, these tools are not only financially accessible to the majority of learners for the different activities and research outside the classroom; but also their conception is pleasant and enjoyable for target culture learning. At the local level, we can just signal the existence of many classical books which are accompanied with videos and audio recordings from the English and American literary works. We believe that such materials equally constitute useful and motivating tools in order to learn foreign cultural constituents.

3.3.3.4. Predictive Activity

The principle of predictive activities is to offer occasions to students to compare their knowledge of a particular topic to the elements that are found in the lesson. Evidently, the comparison occurs at the end of the lecture; because students have previously noted all the information they know about the subject. The comparative work allows the foreign language learners to confirm or readjust their predictions; in reality, the aim is to develop actualized and deeper understanding of the foreign cultural components. Hence, predictions as foreign language learning activities are certainly not wild guesses games; in fact, they should be based upon particular foundations.

In other words, sufficient and appropriate background information about the topic can be derived from various origins like geography, history and politics. These elements would serve as indicators of cultural differences between the native and foreign languages and; probably, help students in making acceptable predictions. Indeed, these sources represent effective and credible means which should be used by learners; because the human languages are deemed to take place in socio-cultural contexts. In addition, the possible predictions or interpretations are usually constituted in accordance with the situations in which the acts of communication occur.

On the other hand, the principal role of the foreign language teacher is to encourage students in their attempts to constitute their predictions. This procedure would certainly prop the students' recalling of already known concepts and past experiences. In fact, comprehension is often

influenced and even determined by the amount of cultural knowledge. The quality of the foreign cultural knowledge should be specifically connected to the real features of the target cultural contexts along with the assumptions made by the students. In other words, the background information which concerns the characteristics of the contexts play an important role in enabling learners to construct their personal 'working schema' about the target culture. In this way, the students' predictive skills are more accurate and topical.

Additionally, the predictive tasks provide opportunities to foresee or imagine the important parts of the lesson. We believe it is a useful tool especially in the practice of quizzes; nevertheless, they can be incorporated in other various teaching materials. In fact, students are actively involved in the teaching process on two main levels: prediction is a means of 'refreshing' one's memory of already acquired knowledge; in addition, it represents a useful research work seeking further information about foreign cultural situations.

On the other hand, as a classroom activity, prediction can take many aspects. For instance, the foreign language teacher plays sequences of a video or film with the sound off and asks students to 'guess' what the actors are saying. The other possibility is that the teacher would directly stop the movie and incite students to predict the actions or events that would probably occur next. Moreover, there is another activity that is related to prediction: it consists of giving the title of the reading materials which would be used in the next sessions and to ask students to write down notes of all what they know about the topic. Hence, the aim is to encourage students to review their information in relationship to the subject; in fact, this task represents a motivating manner in testing the precision and exactness of learners' predictions.

3.3.3.5. Research-Based Activity

Obviously, the task in this activity consists of the undertaking of a research investigation, or project work by the students. The foreign language teacher (especially at university level) should ensure that the analysis of any event, issue or phenomenon in the target culture obeys to the scientific requirements of systematization and objectivity. In fact, the development of interests, the building of credible theories and broad understanding depend on the degree of seriousness and organization consecrated to the research work. Certainly, the work of this nature requests the choice of an appropriate and interesting topic which can take the form of a question or a study or a specific area which deserves investigation. As it is known in any scientific enterprise, the objectives of the students should be to find out additional information, confirm or invalidate already existing knowledge.

On the other hand, the level of difficulty of the research investigation determines the time which should be devoted to the work. Moreover, the number of activities in the search and the organization of students in small groups or individual investigation constitute a question which is mutually decided between the foreign language teacher and learners. The number of constituents in the research and their degrees of interest can be determined by a combination of students' preferences and the general tendencies of the class. In fact, the student should ensure that the selected topic is equally appreciated and attractive (raises curiosity) not only to the 'researcher' himself but also to the majority of his classmates.

Additionally, the useful procedure which is logically expected to be followed by the student is in the first place the collection of materials through usually the multimedia sources (of course materials can take various forms), library or any other 'external' document. Evidently, the main feature of the materials is that they should contain interesting and useful information that benefit to the entire class.

Furthermore, the research-based activity obviously requires the compilation of materials, the writing of a concise report and the presentation of the research work to the class. Consequently, one can observe that many skills are developed at the same time through the application of the different tasks. In addition to the proper work of investigation, the student improves his writing skill (the report is corrected and discussed with the foreign language teacher) and; lastly, the oral presentation of the outcomes to fellow classmates would certainly ameliorate the speaking skills of the learner.

However, the other students are equally involved because the main purpose is surely not to transform them into passive listeners or 'spectators'. On the contrary, they are incited to actively participate in the general classroom discussion which follows the oral presentation. The student (or sometimes small group of students) who has undertaken the investigation explains to the teacher and classmates the kind of knowledge he has probably grasped, the difficulties he has faced and; eventually, the benefits he has gained. Certainly, the learner should be prepared to answer any questions or provide the necessary clarifications. Hence, the long-term result of this kind of research project can be the organization of poster-sessions or the extension of the research work into further related cultural components.

On the whole, there are many other types of activities which imply the involvement of students in a research work such as the suggestion of interesting games to the class, the selection and practice of role play or field trips. Most importantly, the general observation is that these

activities- either directly or indirectly- involve the performance of reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. In addition, they should ensure that the target culture is the focus point and that students are actively engaged in the teaching/learning process.

3.3.4. Classroom Interactions

The implication of the socio-cultural components in foreign language teaching, should take into account the complexity of the phenomenon and the numerous variables which are involved in cross-cultural contexts. It is primordial that the nature and value of target culture teaching should be assured through the application of an interactional approach. Indeed, this kind of approach should definitely aspire to develop the foreign language proficiency and to frame the instructional process always within a socio-cultural perspective. The immediate benefits which one would possibly draw are the enhancement of students' autonomy in learning, the increase of their motivation and; ultimately, the creation of positive variation in the teaching/learning enterprise.

Likewise, the effective and enjoyable cultural learning environment is necessarily built up with the employment of methodologies that intensely encourage classroom interactions. This procedure enables the foreign language teacher to create a broad range of diverse opinions, values and landmarks. As a matter of fact, the cultural background fosters numerous different experiences; indeed, the elaboration of selling points in target culture teaching largely depends on the introduction of classroom activities which are attractive to students.

Therefore, the most important factors which greatly contribute in the creation of such interest are essentially the portrayal of the target culture in all its diversity and; even the implication of probably unpleasant aspects of the foreign culture. The foreign language teacher's duty and objectivity necessitate the presentation of different views of the target culture which can be 'exposed' through contrastive forms. Within this context, it is interesting to briefly refer to B. Cullen's table (2004) which comprises contradictory teaching activities such as: attractive versus shocking, similarities versus differences, dark aspects of culture versus bright aspects of culture, facts versus behaviours, stated beliefs versus actual beliefs and many other controversial dichotomies.

The main advantage of B. Cullen's work is that the opposed elements can be analysed within the target culture itself or the comparison of these points cross-culturally. This kind of activities which involves interactions actually creates an atmosphere of competition and challenges because students' attitudes are either positive or negative with regard to those cultural contrasts. Hence, the foreign language teacher's pedagogy and techniques are continuously readjusted and adapted to students' needs, demands and interests. It is as well worth mentioning that classroom interactions offer a large scale of tools that permit the evaluation of learners' receptive and productive skills in the foreign language and culture.

3.4. Intercultural Teaching Practices

The general observation which we usually make is that cross-cultural teaching necessarily requires the satisfaction of learners' interests. Indeed, an effective approach in target culture instruction involves the encouragement of extensive classroom interactions in addition to the acquisition of culture skills through real life experiences. In other words, the appropriate skills with respect to students' comprehension and appreciation of the target culture need the undergoing of some specific classroom practices. In fact, some of them have been suggested by Lili Dai (2004) and; we think it would be fruitful to shed light on those which can be useful in the Algerian local situation.

3.4.1. Personalization

It is commonly agreed that the ultimate aims of teaching the target culture are to enable students to increase their cultural awareness, the possibility of adopting positive attitudes, and the better understanding of foreign cultural behaviours. In fact, a classroom practice which can help in the realization of such noble objectives is the personalization of the contents and activities of the teaching process.

The first step which is usually taken by the foreign language teacher is to introduce some general target culture issues in relationship to the source or even other cultures. This preliminary discussion serves in the discovery and; eventually, the correction of the probable stereotypes the students may have about different cultures. However, this can be achieved only by permitting the learners to interconnect the debated issues to their own former experiences. Indeed, the implication of students' personal skills functions as a motivating factor. As a matter of fact, it is known to teachers that learners prefer to present their idiosyncratic points of view which are inspired by their daily life practices.

Besides, the presentation of a new topic or text requires in the first place the participation of students through the evocation and making parallels with similar events of their real experiences. In fact, texts that describe and explain cultures of the world should always incite learners to

compare the described events and situations to those which they have either personally lived or in which they have been indirectly involved. In addition, the classroom situation certainly improves on the students' speaking skills; nonetheless, learners can also practise the writing skill if they are asked by the foreign language teacher to write a report (or essay) of similar imaginary perspectives in order to describe their probable reactions and attitudes.

Hence, the task can be pleasant and enjoyable to students because even if the events and situations have not really happened to them; it is known that adventures and heroism always appeal to youngsters. The reading of the learners' personal reports may reveal to the foreign language teacher their various reactions, attitudes and understanding of the target culture components. In this way, the language teacher would be able to make the appropriate readjustments and clarifications if necessary.

Additionally, the elaboration of the tasks in connection with the students' actual experiences surely enables them to discover the true significance of personal and also text-world interpretations. In fact, the process of creating links between the private and inter-textual experiences would provide opportunities to students (as readers) to find out new beliefs and attitudes which are not necessarily in harmony with those which effectively exist in other cultures. In short, this activity develops the students' learning of the target culture in depth and makes them aware of the possible different interpretations of the same events or texts crossculturally.

3.4.2. Autonomy

The teaching of the cultural skills often implies and also encourages group work activities. This situation does not necessarily signify that the individual student is 'melted' within the group and; consequently, any initiative or autonomy is rare or even absent. It should be clear that autonomy in this context is more related to the foreign language teacher's interventions which should be kept to a minimum.

In contrast, the learner's personal involvement and contribution within the group should be continuously encouraged in order to create a collaborative and supportive atmosphere in performing the different activities. Indeed, group work autonomy implies many factors which concern the choice of the partner, the selected topic of study, the necessary materials to be used, the manner of presentations and; probably, the strategies of audience participation. Evidently, all

these various activities occur within the group through specifically close cooperation, exchange of influence and mutual stimulation.

Moreover, we observe that interactions continuously take place in the group because students assume different roles but certainly share responsibilities. In fact, each member of the group is normally liable for the others since they belong to the same 'team' and they want to reach shared goals. However, the competition between groups is permanently present in the classroom; indeed, all groups wish to communicate their opinions in the best and effective manners to other classmates. Therefore, the foreign language teacher should size the opportunity to involve in the discussions as many students as possible.

On the other hand, learners independently decide which forms should be adopted in order to present their work since a wide range of means are available such as debate, conference, lecture and short play. Certainly, in the present days it is possible to make use of audio-visual aids through picture charts or maps; as a matter of fact, this procedure allows students to learn the ways in which they can conceive fundamental interaction. In addition, the group's self-evaluation occurs through a process of comparing the entire work and assigned expectations to their actual classroom performance. The general classroom discussion takes place immediately after the group has finished the presentation; likewise, a rapid external evaluation shaped around advantages and drawbacks of the students' performance is provided by their classmates.

Additionally, one can notice that during this particular activity learners are completely autonomous simply because all the tasks, interventions and discussions are organized by the students themselves. The foreign language teacher intervenes only at the end of the debate in order to summarize the key points of the research work presented by the group. In fact, the teacher's task here serves as an immediate feedback not only to the students concerned by the activity (to see their difficulties if any); but also the rest of the class benefits because students would probably avoid similar errors in their future presentations.

3.4.3. Cultural Reading

We can notice that the author makes a very pertinent and sensitive suggestion in the form of the foreign language teacher's necessary introduction and production of cultural readers. In other words, the actual acquisition of the target culture cannot be confined within the classroom and limited to the teacher's offerings. Nowadays, the general ascertainment that can be put forward is the fact that students do not read sufficiently. The tremendous developments of the technologies of information and communication have largely restrained the role of the paper book.

However, no one would deny the numerous benefits; especially with respect to target culture learning, which are usually grasped from reading not only the literary works but also the various available newspapers, magazines and journals. In addition, the foreign language teacher's role is crucial; because in the process of lesson preparation he should always try to incorporate reading materials in cultural information. In fact, the application of language and culture teaching strategies which enhance in particular reading, is an indispensible pre-requisite in foreign culture skill learning. We can briefly mention, for example, the verification of one's reading comprehension with the help of a fellow student and the practice of what is usually called 'flow readings of words' instead of intermittent reading.

The principal objectives of the activity are firstly the student's self-assessment of his reading performance and; secondly, the acquisition of efficient skills in order to become an active reader both during and after the lesson. Indeed, it is a fact that reading should be complementary to the other language skills. Therefore, there is a need to conceive and put into application interesting and challenging activities. For example, the foreign language teacher suggests some reading activities which involve three phases: before, while and after reading. Students can respectively perform different tasks such as: discuss the topic, match pictures with texts and; then, react to the cultural background or review what they know about a subject.

In addition, learners may research evidence in relationship to a specific topic in order to support their opinions and; lastly, identify the facts that are opposed to their views. In fact, these activities enable students to discern the significant parts of their readings; moreover, these various key points may be used to thoroughly discuss not only global contemporary questions but also intercultural issues in particular.

Besides, reading involves active classroom interactions through pair work or group work. Even if the task is undertaken individually, the other classmates can possibly participate in the activity by the provision of feedbacks and evaluations. Thus, it is apparent that reading activities in culture teaching provide various opportunities to develop intercultural communication.

3.4.4. Literary Texts and Culture Teaching

The relevance of literary texts in foreign language and culture teaching has been proved and actually realized through various courses in TEFL. In fact, the simple argument which one puts forward is that literature is naturally impregnated by cultural manifestations. Indeed, literary texts represent an interesting framework where students' native cultures and foreign cultural behaviours can interact. Moreover, it has been already demonstrated in the present study that literature among many other means constitutes an effective tool in target culture teaching; however, the utility of the interactive process depends on learners' experiences and familiarity of the described cultural components.

It is manifest that literature is one important constituent of foreign culture; therefore, the students' understanding and acceptance of foreign cultural behaviours are determined by a high level awareness of the assumptions upon which they are based. This question equally faces the foreign language teacher and learners. On one hand, students should know the cultural implications and assumptions conveyed through the literary texts; on the other the foreign language teacher needs to develop the students' abilities in reading comprehension especially the literary materials.

Indeed, this task can be quite complex because the foreign language teacher should definitely higher learners' interests in an operation which does not usually provoke great enthusiasm. Hence, students are reluctant (probably because of their low levels of foreign language proficiency) to make the necessary efforts in order to understand and interpret the ideas and assumptions conveyed through the literary texts. Additionally, learners are constantly required to connect the selected literary work to their personal experiences; in fact, this operation represents a complex task to analyse the cultural foundations of the foreign literary work. However, this problem can be overcome through the foreign language teacher's careful choice of materials and the appropriate training of learners. In reality, students should develop their competence in terms of reading comprehension; in addition, they should be introduced to the cultural information before the utilization of this kind of materials.

3.4.5. Course Objectives

The development of culture skills induces the foreign language teacher to take into consideration the students' own identities and cultural backgrounds. In fact, the intercultural process of comparison and contrast cannot operate without 'an inner return' to one's native culture. Certainly, there are other forms of presenting the target culture; nevertheless, the placement of literary texts in their natural social environments opens new horizons of interactional perspectives in foreign cultural awareness.

As a matter of fact, various intercultural types of writings not only encode, transmit and debate the cultural values of the foreign language in particular; but also help students to understand other cultural behaviours and; eventually, appreciate them. In order to reach this major aim, the foreign language teacher needs to put into application effective procedures and techniques in teaching the culture class. Certainly, the most significant methods are those which contribute in creating enjoyable and continuous classroom interactions along with the development of learners' motivations and curiosity in relationship to the target culture. Additionally, we should insist on the fact that the involvement of students' own experiences, cultural behaviours and attitudes are primordial. The main reason is that there are many benefits that can be grasped from research in cross-cultural texts; namely and principally, the improvement of other skills such as writing and speaking.

In short, the organization, development and realization of the effective teaching of the culture skills are the necessary requirements especially in improving learners' communicative competence in EFL. We think it is essential to point out that linguistic instruction is simply a component of culture teaching due to the nature of human language itself and the socio-conventional organization of speech communities. Hence, learners are 'exposed' to various information in relationship to many essential constituents of human communication particularly the linguistic manifestations, the foreign cultural behaviours and ethics.

3.5. Some Integrated Instructional Models of Teaching Culture Skills

It is generally agreed that the teaching of culture skills can be effectively achieved within an integrated framework which implies the interconnection of the five language skills (namely reading, writing, listening, speaking and culture). In fact, the process is defined in terms of the complementary links of each skill in relation to the others. Indeed, the integration of the five skills can be obtained through the students' active involvement and concrete participation in

communicative language and culture activities. Consequently, we believe it is important to insist on the fact that the participation of learners in such activities obviously enhances the global and interdependent process of learning the foreign language constituents. Moreover, students' intercultural communicative skills are certainly developed through classroom interactions with regard to significant foreign socio-cultural phenomena. In short, the combinatory approach of language and communication surely improves the students' proficiency in target culture mastery.

On the other hand, the teaching programmes of integrated skills instruction should be conceived in a structured and reliable procedure which gives priority to extensive reading, writing and undertaking topic-oriented discussions within an intercultural environment. The continuous and effective implication of the foreign language teacher in such activities is essential along with students' meaningful interactions and the use of suitable printed materials. In addition, it is equally worth pointing out that the question of language skills integration is advocated by numerous professionals in the domain of foreign language teaching and learning.

In fact, the approach has not been newly developed because as early as the 1980's, many scholars particularly Wagner who has already demonstrated that the integration of the five language skills provides natural learning contexts which present opportunities for practical communication objectives and real audiences. More recently, D. Nunan (2004) states that foreign language teaching has gradually moved toward a holistic approach; which advocates the interdependence of all language skills. Moreover, Jing (2006) suggests that integrated instruction in foreign language teaching undoubtedly improves on students' communicative competence.

Consequently, a large variety of foreign language teaching models have been elaborated and they clearly share the main common principle of integrated instruction; nevertheless, priorities and focus points vary from one programme to another. Within this context, we think it would be useful to present a brief review of some of these models; however, the discussion is by no means exhaustive because we would solely focus on the samples that are suitable to the local case study. As a matter of fact, the analytical procedure is simple because it would concentrate on the advantages and drawbacks of each model in terms of the possibilities of its application on the local level (with Algerian university students).

3.5.1. Model One: Oral Literature

3.5.1.1. Description and Analysis of the Model

It is evident that a great number of research works and papers have already demonstrated the effectiveness of oral literature. However, a special emphasis has been put on storytelling which represents a particular vehicle of teaching integrated language skills. Indeed, storytelling allows the development of various foreign language abilities which enable students to talk, write, listen to authentic materials and; lastly, perform different tasks. In addition, we can notice that all these activities share a common principal objective which is the realization of successful acts of communication on the part of foreign language students.

Generally, oral literature through the storytelling process focuses on the creation of a learning context of the English language which would be necessarily described as being collaborative, enjoyable and liable. Indeed, it should essentially decrease students' inhibitions of the target culture and encourage the acceptance of foreign cultural behaviours. Additionally, language learning activities which are based on storytelling should improve in particular learners' communicative skills; namely, fairy tales as samples of oral literature, holding discussions and developing a high level of foreign cultural awareness.

Hence, there are numerous advantages in the use of storytelling especially with regard to the five language skills. The intercultural features of this means of communication are apparent because it represents inherent heritage of human speech communities. Indeed, the understanding of the history of any society in addition to the transmission of socio-cultural norms and values depend to a large extent on storytelling. Moreover, the sociolinguistic process of hearing or reading stories really contributes in the creation of one's identity through the comparison of ideas and behaviours. Therefore, this phenomenon in people's oral interactions which is in reality universal represents a useful pedagogical teaching activity in cross-cultural foreign language learning.

Generally, storytelling is an accessible and effective teaching tool that can be used by the majority of foreign language teachers; particularly in foreign culture instruction. It is a kind of classroom activity which can satisfy the needs of different categories of learners and; also permits the attainment of many pedagogical objectives in target culture proficiency. Additionally, in EFL contexts various teaching programmes are founded upon storytelling which is obviously useful in the development of the four traditional language skills but; most

importantly, it plays a major role in raising students' foreign cultural awareness. Therefore, a tremendous number of studies and field investigations have been undertaken in order to demonstrate the utility and efficiency of storytelling in intercultural foreign language teaching. Indeed, the majority of these analyses have put forward multiple advantages which can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Storytelling represents an appropriate framework where the five language skills can be easily integrated together.
- 2. The activities which involve storytelling have significantly improved students' listening and reading comprehension.
- 3. These tasks have also helped the students build a much richer vocabulary in the foreign language.
- 4. They have equally enhanced grammar learning.
- 5. The learners' oral language skills have been noticeably developed.
- 6. Students' classroom inhibitions have decreased and learners have shown more predispositions to express their ideas and feelings.
- 7. Learners have also ameliorated their writing skills.
- 8. Storytelling has helped students develop their communicative competence not only in oral folk literature but also in print literature works.
- 9. This type of activities has empowered students' critical and visual thinking with respect to the source and target cultures.
- 10. Storytelling has clearly encouraged learners' social interactions; namely, the organization of numerous classroom discussions in relationship to foreign cultural behaviours in multiple speech communities.

In general, the use of storytelling in TEFL contexts within the intercultural dimension is particularly useful; because it fosters diversity in the language classroom through the introduction of materials that originate from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Obviously, the reinforcement of global networking increases students' awareness and understanding of cultural differences. In fact, students at university level in particular can greatly benefit from the incorporation of storytelling in foreign language and culture teaching as long as the stories are socio-culturally significant and are necessarily put in their inherent contexts. Accordingly, these stories represent genuine sources of the English language that constitute a useful input which is characterized by a high degree of comprehensibility.

On the other hand, the foreign language teacher's role in selecting, arranging and; lastly, using the materials is crucial. Hence, he should adjust and adopt the story in order to meet the learners' interests, needs and levels of foreign language proficiency. This important task can be successfully achieved through the foreign language teacher's careful and appropriate selection of books. The following significant steps are the creation of upmost positive conditions for telling the stories orally or instead reading them directly from books. Moreover, the explanation and ultimately comprehension of the vocabulary are facilitated; because such stories are usually accompanied by beautiful and attractive pictures which introduce additional visual aids in order to enrich the contexts of the stories.

Besides, storytelling activities can be particularly useful to the local Algerian students because the art of orally sharing a story or experience with an audience is a cultural trait of the Algerian traditional oral interaction. Certainly, storytelling as a popular cultural manifestation has become more and more rare in the present days especially in urban areas; however, there are some exceptions in certain rural and Saharan regions of Algeria where storytellers (or what is called in Algerian spoken Arabic 'meddah') still exist. Moreover, the religious vulgarization inside the mosques is usually organized with the help of this socio-cultural manifestation. Indeed, the Imam presents to the worshippers significant religious events or the life stories of eminent religious scholars through a process of storytelling or what is nearly referred to in Arabic as 'halka'.

Unfortunately, storytelling is not anymore the most used means in order to inculcate the values, beliefs and socio-cultural norms to the present generation. However, this cultural manifestation is certainly familiar to the local Algerian students of English because storytelling is part of their social 'collective consciousness'; moreover, it represents an important component of the Algerian cultural inheritance. Consequently, we do believe that storytelling can be a valuable foreign language teaching technique which would improve the language and cultural proficiency of the local students. However, we remind that such activity should necessarily integrate the five complementary language skills in the proposed different tasks.

3.5.1.2. Applications and Evaluation of the Model

The possible implementation of the oral culture model requires the foreign language teacher's careful planning. In fact, the organization of the course should take into account many important aspects in the foreign language teaching operation. Indeed, it should be focussed in the first place on the centrality of language and culture as complementary constituents of the course. Moreover,



it is necessary to adopt a clear definition of the contents and also the conception of classroom activities which aim to develop the five language skills simultaneously. Besides, the ultimate outcomes which should be attained are the enhancement of intercommunication in the classroom and; the consolidation of students' creative abilities. Additionally, the language teacher would in a second phase work for the development of the language skills that mostly cause difficulties to learners. This task would be possibly realized with the students' engagement in activities that request both cooperative work and individual contributions.

On the other hand, the model should normally comprise a limited number of stories that are particularly adapted for the classroom utilization; but not to the extent that they would lose their authentic features. The types of stories which are usually incorporated in the programmes should inevitably satisfy and reflect the linguistic and cultural dimensions of the English language. In other words, the foreign language teacher can either use spoken stories from oral literature like folk tales or; rather, written stories which can be read by students. Ultimately, learners would either retell the stories or; if they are relatively long, they would present an oral gist to the class. Moreover, students can equally use picture book stories which present the advantage of not only telling a story but also the illustrations (with pictures) of the different characters and situations.

Concerning the organization of the classroom activities, it obviously varies in relationship to the objectives of the lesson which are assigned by the foreign language teacher. In fact, he can adopt an active role through his personal telling of the story and students would normally listen or; he can decide to involve the students directly in the lesson and; therefore, asks them to tell the story while the other classmates would listen. However, there is another and last option which consists of the selection of a particular student who would solely tell the story whereas the foreign language teacher and the rest of the students would take notes.

In addition, we can signal that through the application of these techniques; the foreign language teacher should encourage students to not only recall, retell and act the stories out but; they should also revise and rewrite each story that has been counted in the classroom. Of course, if the foreign language teacher decides to tell the story himself, he can make use of techniques such as total physical response, mime, into-through-beyond storytelling and; lastly, picture book stories.

As far as the practical application of this kind of activity in the foreign language class is concerned, it has been mentioned above that the storytelling process occurs in three distinct phases: before, during and after telling the story. In each phase, students should be involved in



communicative language learning activities which should ensure that learners actively participate in the lesson and develop the five language skills. As a matter of fact, the different types of activities and the various techniques which should be used have been extensively described and discussed by many scholars like R. B. Cooter (1991), De Ramirez (1996), J. Bruner (2002) and K. Bishop and M. A. Kimbal (2006). However, at this point of our work, we would just briefly summarize them as follows:

- -The classification of activities:
- * Oral activities (listening and speaking);
- * Writing activities;
- * Reading activities;
- * Visual activities;
- * Drama activities.
- -The eliciting techniques that may be used:
- * Imitation of the models presented by the foreign language teacher as a storyteller;
- * The development of the stories in connection with the students' own experiences;
- * The elaboration and oral presentation of stories based upon illustrations or pictures;
- * Reading stories in the learners' native languages and translating them into English;
- * The modification of stories in such a way that they fit the socio-cultural backgrounds of the students.

In short, the performance of the different activities can be achieved in individual, pair or group work. Whatever the selected type in performing the activities; the foreign language teacher should not only work as facilitator, monitor or simply supervisor, but also he should ensure that classroom interactions and communications occur.

Furthermore, an objective evaluation of oral literature model confirms the existence of the advantages which we have mentioned in its description and analysis. Hence, the use of storytelling in the language classroom does promote foreign language developments, consolidates the intercultural teaching of the target language and culture and; finally, improves on the students' mastery of the five language skills. Indeed, we can advance that the language teaching operation is often successfully realized within the oral literature model. In short, it is evident that the use of storytelling as a teaching technique certainly provides learners with numerous occasions to have access to real communicative contexts.

On the other hand, the students' feedbacks indicate that storytelling can serve as a means to higher learners' motivation in practising the foreign language. Indeed, the different classroom activities make students eager to work with peers; especially in telling one's story and listening to the others counting their stories. The reason is that this task gives them the opportunity to actively communicate in English with their teacher and classmates; as a matter of fact, the classroom interactions are often realized with great success.

Therefore, during the activities, students show a lot of enthusiasm in seeking and providing information which reflects English real life dialogue activities such as checking for understanding, appropriate interruption for further clarifications and longer turns in using the English language. Moreover, students are usually excited to undertake research work out of the classroom, in particular the selection of an interesting story to tell and the various preparations in connection with the classroom performance.

Besides, students can also learn numerous new concepts that they may encounter in the stories and; consequently, they would be able to enrich their vocabulary in the foreign language. Additionally, storytelling equally presents opportunities to become more familiar with technical terms which are used in the analysis of the story like the narration, plot, characters and setting. Students are also incited to translate into English stories which belong to the Algerian oral literature in order to incorporate the source cultural components in the teaching process. In this manner, they would be able to compare some behaviours and manifestations in both the British and Algerian cultures. Hence, this kind of tasks certainly contributes in the development of learners' cultural awareness and; eventually, the possible adoption of positive attitudes.

3.5.2. Model Two: Information and Communication Technology

3.5.2.1. Description and Analysis of the Model

At the beginning, we believe it would be beneficial to recall the most important constituents of students' intercultural communicative competence. Indeed, it is generally agreed that learners should acquire skills in interpreting and connecting cultural behaviours along with the ability to find out and discuss new types of information and; finally, the development of positive attitudes and awareness of foreign cultural differences. In addition, intercultural instruction implies the presence in the teaching process of not only the source and target cultures; but also the necessary integration and analysis of other universal cultural manifestations.



Therefore, the role of the foreign language teacher should not be limited to the provision of knowledge about the target culture but; most importantly, the great challenge of the foreign language teacher is essentially to integrate in a harmonious manner the target culture with the students' native cultures. On the other hand, the culture skills should enable students to develop the principles of diversity and equality between cultures at the same time. Indeed, students would undeniably establish that the interaction of completely different people without stereotypes or subjectivity is possible and; therefore, it would be highly probable to nurture feelings of mutual respect and even empathy towards each other.

Nowadays, what is significant in intercultural communication is the enterprise of many investigations and analyses; which attempt to understand the process of communication that inevitably implies persons from completely different cultural backgrounds. We believe that the important aspect in the improvement of students' culture skills is definitely to rid oneself of prejudices which go beyond the classroom; especially the establishment of intercultural relationships within political contexts and socio-cultural discrimination.

On the other hand, the realization of these objectives can be attained through the use in foreign language classes of activities with the efficient contribution of ICT. As a matter of fact, within the intercultural approach of foreign language teaching; students at the present era show a perfect command of the available modern tools which facilitate the whole process of crosscultural teaching. However, in the Algerian context (especially at the local university level); the English language teacher should be prepared to face actual difficulties which hinder the implementation of ICT in the intercultural approach.

Indeed, the first problem is the existence of disparities in the students' command of English; therefore, the foreign language teacher should expect to deal with heterogeneous levels in foreign language proficiency. The main reason is that students originally have been enrolled in different streams (literary, scientific and mathematical) at secondary level studies. The second difficulty is that sometimes certain students adopt negative attitudes towards the target culture. Hence, some learners have already pre-conceived negative ideas and perceptions of the English cultural manifestations; unfortunately, this situation obviously affects their knowledge of the target culture and can become a discouraging factor. The third obstacle is represented by the students' different levels of communicative competence in English. Therefore, the communicative instructional context does not offer the same opportunities to learners and the



probable result would be the significant unequal developments of students' abilities in proper and efficient cross-cultural communication.

In addition, we think that the most appropriate methodology which should be adopted especially at the local level is cooperative learning. In fact, the classroom activities can be organized and adapted to various content subjects. Moreover, the educational context in the class encourages the interactional approach of teaching the foreign culture skills through ICT. Indeed, students from different cultural backgrounds are offered the appropriate frame to constantly practise interactive activities. Therefore, the main objective would be to enhance the learners' abilities and higher their motivation in making intercultural exchanges. Nevertheless, the teaching of intercultural values and behaviours requires from the foreign language teacher the provision of consistent feedback and continuous support. The language teacher should be able to create the necessary coherence between the teaching practices and the planned goals of the educational process.

Concerning the issues which face the foreign language teacher; the first task is the implementation of the suitable teaching practices which are not always adapted to cross-cultural teaching. As we have already indicated in other parts of the present section; we think that the methods used in cooperative learning ensure the introduction in the foreign language classes of elements that manifestly provide intercultural components. Additionally, the other question is related to the developments of students' social and communicative abilities. Indeed, the creation and maintenance of positive social relations which are naturally learnt and extended to human acts of communication, represents an important task of the foreign language teacher. However, what is really important is the natural transposition of such social relations from a mono-cultural context to multiple-cultural contexts.

In other words, students should acquire skills from the cultural components of the foreign community. In fact, these skills involve a large range of greetings, sorting out conflicts and the variations of tone voice in accordance to the topic and participants. In addition, there are other elements which are socio-culturally significant and should be necessarily mastered by foreign language students; hence, they should know how to adopt the socially appropriate attitudes along with the body movements and facial expressions when they speak, listen or interrupt.

Evidently, cooperative learning is not specifically designed as a tool for the intercultural foreign language teacher; nevertheless, it can be utilized with great efficiency in teaching culture



skills through the extensive use of ICT. As a matter of fact, we believe that cooperative learning methods would be very successful if we put into practice the following simple techniques:

- 1. The constitution of small groups of students with different levels and abilities in order to create a sense of cooperation and solidarity among the members of the same team.
- 2. The foreign language teacher's employment of various teaching activities which aim at improving students' understanding of foreign cultural issues.
- 3. The collective achievements are really important because each student of the group is not only responsible for his own learning but he should also assist his team mates in the various tasks.
- 4. The understanding and completion of tasks represent; therefore, a shared enterprise which should be necessarily concluded with the success of all members of the group.
- 5. The activities that are developed through a cooperative learning approach using ICT have been proved to decrease the prejudices with respect to foreign cultural behaviours and; consequently, enhance positive interactions between students.
- 6. It is easily noticeable that ICT tools like chat-rooms or e-mails highly motivate learners; because such means widen the scope of students' intercommunications and social interrelations, particularly with native speakers of English.

3.5.2.2. Applications and Evaluation of the Model

A simple and practical procedure that can be adopted for the effective use of ICT in intercultural foreign language teaching is the incorporation of e-mail activities in the classroom. Hence, this kind of tasks is usually employed to develop students' intercultural behaviours with a special emphasis on the social and communicative abilities. The objectives that the foreign language teacher should assign in the application of e-mail activities are numerous; however, the development of students' verbal skills (through the interpretation and discussion of the messages themselves in classroom activities) represents a principal concern.

As a matter of fact, e-mail activities can provide insights into 'real life' behaviours of the English society; namely, the use of colloquial expressions that should be learnt and eventually practised by students. Additionally, the linguistic aspects like the correct use of contractions and the writing of full sentences instead of exaggerated verb ellipsis are also explained and exercised. Moreover, the discursive constituents of oral and written interactions are particularly analysed such as the appropriate linguistic contexts of using expressions of surprise, pleasure and anger. We can as well incorporate other significant elements which play a major role in the social



organizations of spoken and written records; namely, the starting and ending of turns in speech and the text structure in writing an e-mail. Lastly, students can also improve their general writing skills like the use of simple, clear and short sentences along with the avoidance of multiple adverbs and adjectives; of course, each piece of writing should be realized with the appropriate punctuation.

On the other hand, the intercultural goals which are specifically related to e-mail activities in order to enhance culture skills are very important and they may take various forms. In the first place, the foreign language teacher should be able to anticipate certain specific problems; for example he should face the impact or consequences of learners' negative emotions in cross-cultural communication. Indeed, students must learn to discern the differences (between at least the source and target cultures) and try to adopt positive attitudes in this respect.

Hence, it is important that students feel enthusiastic and have pleasure in discovering and probably grasping cultural variety. The foreign language teacher- through the use of these activities- should continuously attempt to develop students' interest in and study of other cultures. We think that the most significant aim is certainly to increase learners' awareness of the great influence of foreign cultural behaviours. The reason is evident since these cultural behaviours actually determine the social interactions of people, the manners in which they achieve their tasks and; the degree of emphasis or importance that they assign to events or things.

Furthermore, the materials which are necessary in the use of ICT are normally available especially the rapid access to Internet in the classroom. However, the size of the class should be relatively small (a maximum of 22 students) because each student should work with an individual computer set; in addition to other tools which are equally important like a printer and a webcam. In fact, the utility of chat-rooms and e-mails have already been demonstrated with regard to the organization of virtual intercultural meetings or real-time videoconferences. Fortunately, these tools that are provided by the technologies of communication and information and they offer the students opportunities to talk about their own cultures; particularly how tasks are achieved in their speech communities. Moreover, learners compare the intercultural behaviours in various societies and; eventually, these differences would become rather factors which would hopefully develop students' appreciations and positive attitudes.

Within this context, the techniques which are followed by the foreign language teacher are quite simple but they should be also precise. We think it is important to start with a brainstorming activity in order to make students identify the significance of the target culture or

specific cultural behaviours. Indeed, this task necessitates the introduction of certain cultural components such as: the focus on some particular areas (social life, routines, food etc...), the language used (spoken, written, official, casual etc...) and; probably, politics (political systems, parties, symbols etc...). After the identification of some of these areas in the proper cultures of the students and the presentation of one's critical appreciations; the foreign language teacher would suggest a cross-cultural comparative activity of such elements. Obviously, information about cultural behaviours of other communities may not be known or available; consequently, small groups of learners are constituted in order to gather the necessary information.

Besides, we believe that the most common and available means to have access to the cultural information is usually through the exchange of e-mails with other people from different cultures; especially the target culture speech communities. Needless to point out that the informants should have been already selected by both learners and the foreign language teacher; however, these persons can simply be the e-mail pen pals of the students. In contrast, the structures of e-mails should be clearly and precisely defined and explained to the students. For example, the foreign language teacher can propose a simple method which consists of a brief introduction, then the stating of the objectives and the cultural questions and; lastly, thanking and salutations.

In addition, students should be polite and free from any equivocal attitudes in order to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings. After the necessary preparations and redaction of the e-mails; the following session can serve to present reports about the achieved tasks and to designate the types of information which are sought and; finally, the sending of the corrected e-mails. The third session is normally devoted to writing reports about the information which has been probably received. Nevertheless, students who have not received answers can present materials related to the areas of study which they would have probably gathered from the university library or Internet. Lastly, students in each small group present their reports and compare the information to their cultural expectations or stereotypes.

On the whole, one can observe that ICT activities in teaching the culture skills offer effective opportunities for the incorporation of intercultural teaching. As a matter of fact, it is crucial to be convinced that foreign language teaching (English in our situation) is not solely a question of contents (which is certainly important) but also the instruction and enhancement of intercultural communications. Evidently, the foreign language teacher is the first person who should cope with this situation where modern tools of foreign language teaching are necessary and very effective. Therefore, the initial training of teachers in the manipulation of these sophisticated

tools is actually primordial. Indeed, we have been advocating throughout the present work the necessary introduction (especially with respect to the local university context) of in-service teachers' training programmes in order to improve on foreign language teachers' performance.

3.5.3. Model Three: Newspapers

3.5.3.1.Description and Analysis of the Model

In the local situation where English is taught as a foreign language, more and more teachers incorporate newspapers as a tool in intercultural teaching. Indeed, the newspaper is considered to be a valuable resource for diversity along with the interesting discussions and pertinent views of modern and interesting issues. Nevertheless, the inconvenience of the employment of foreign language newspapers is that the foreign language teacher has to proceed with an extensive brainstorming. The main reason is that students are often puzzled by the various cultural allusions and numerous facets of foreign cultural behaviours. Consequently, the newspaper can be effectively used in TEFL situations under the condition that the focus should change from the sole aspects of language teaching to the acknowledgement and interest in the target culture.

The implication of the foreign culture in the newspapers may take many aspects as long as it is permanently conveyed through the different acts of communication. Hence, significant socio-cultural elements such as customs, laws, beliefs and habits of the foreign speech community are displayed in multiple events and behaviours. In fact, we think that the immediate and spontaneous result of the introduction of activities with the help of newspapers would be the students' positive reactions. Indeed, we expect them to show curiosity and interest in relationship to the new cultural aspects of the foreign speech community which would be reflected in newspapers.

Consequently, students would enthusiastically take part in the different activities and perform tasks which are provided in this type of language class teaching. The benefits which would be drawn by students are quite valuable; for instance they would discover suitable information and facts about the existence and way of life of the British and other foreign societies. In addition, the students' levels of inhibition and anxiety in classroom interactions would noticeably decrease; and acts of communication among learners or with the foreign language teacher would occur more easily and smoothly due to the nature of the topics discussed.

On the other hand, the goals which necessarily should be reached depend on the appropriate manipulation in terms of the right choice and the kinds of tasks that are practised with respect to newspapers. For instance, the different articles and investigations should principally display the natural cultural behaviours of native English speakers in their own contexts; in addition to the provision of hints and items which can consolidate students' understanding of the target culture. As a matter of fact, the process of acculturation is often long and complex; however, newspapers can partly contribute in revealing diverse aspects of the foreign culture. In fact, newspapers would mostly provide useful information to throw light on the cultural patterns of behaviour which may require elucidation.

Within this context, we are convinced that the work that has been undertaken by C.H. Blatchford (1996) represents a useful pioneering experiment. Indeed, the procedure and techniques which he has used in a series of workshops are worth analysis. As a matter of fact, a concise description of the situation indicates that the workshops have been organized in a serial interrelated programme and they have concerned foreign and second language students of English. In addition, the suggested activities have been grasped from different newspapers that have been adapted to classroom situation. In fact, C. H. Blatchford has divided the activities in accordance with the number of columns which constitute the offerings of the selected newspaper. Accordingly, the foreign language teacher suggests tasks which are directly connected to a specific type of column as follows:

1. Letter to the editor: usually it consists of a letter which is sent by a reader to the editor of the newspaper. In fact, the topic of the letter is often a social problem or comment on a particular socio-political event. The foreign language teacher uses this feature to propose a particular issue to the students who are required to provide solutions. The students' answers are ultimately compared to those suggested by the editor. Certainly, the emphasis is put on a cultural question or topic which the readers have submitted. In reality, what is interesting in this activity is the possibility to compare the learners' conceptions of the solutions which they suggest in relationship to their own cultural backgrounds and those proposed by native speakers of English. The debate in the classroom which usually follows the comparative task is quite useful and interesting; because it tries to answer a number of questions such as: the necessity and usefulness to openly discuss certain problems, the reasons that make some topics taboos and the possibility of having a similar column in the newspapers of the students' countries. Obviously, the issues discussed in the classroom are directly linked to the socio-cultural behaviours of the foreign society.

- 2. The horoscope: this column can be related by the foreign language teacher to questions which involve religion, spirituality or beliefs. For example, the reasons that drive persons to read the horoscope; especially people who are very pious and how does such behaviour question their faith. Indeed, students would debate the problem of the prediction of future and; whether it is a matter related to the same or different aspects cross-culturally. We think it is interesting to compare patterns of beliefs in the supernatural across cultures. Obviously, students are encouraged to reveal their opinions and to discover the target culture beliefs in relation to such questions.
- 3. The front page: the front page is supposed to introduce the most important events and persons. It is also very significant to discuss the criteria that make a specific person or happening worthy of the front page. In fact, marketing and cultural reasons determine the choice of the editor; students are certainly eager to discover the cross-cultural similarities and differences of these causes. Additionally, students may debate the events which constitute the readers' concerns; indeed, they may want to find out whether these concerns are universal or typical to each nation. Through the classroom discussion, students are probably better informed about the factors which make events related to crime, war, danger or various natural or human threats almost common to all human communities.
- 4. Commentators and columnists: generally the articles written by commentators and columnists attract a large number of persons. Readers of the newspaper often appreciate such comments and analyses. Students through the practice of specific activities should try to discover the features or styles; particularly those which make an article interesting and appealing to them. Besides, they can try to determine whether these criteria are shared by all cultures or they are specific to individual cultures. The values and parameters which are used to build up these writings should constitute an inherent part of the target culture conventions. Hence, a comparative work can be carried out by learners in order to find out the common and different traits of the values and criteria of writing in the foreign and native speech communities. In other words, students are requested to have insights into the target culture norms in evaluating and commenting on persons and events.
- 5. Classified: at first sight the classified column may not seem to be quite 'attractive' or interesting; nevertheless, a close analysis of the classified announcements can reveal numerous cultural components. In fact, valuable information can be derived from for instance the Lost and

Found part. Students may discover who and what people do really value in addition to the parameters which members of the speech community use in order to determine the financial or affective importance of something or someone. For example, a local Algerian student would find it difficult to understand (even if a free announcement would be much more tolerated) why English people would pay expensive advertisements or offer important rewards for matters which they believe to be actually unimportant or even trivial. Hence, the role of the foreign language teacher is to enable students to discover the target culture norms in determining the social life and affective relations.

Moreover, the classified announcements constitute reliable indicators of the various belongings which people want to sell and the multiple objects they seek to buy. Students would try to understand what urges persons so much to the extent they would 'pay' relatively large amounts of money in order to inform readers about the selling and purchasing they want to realize. Indeed, the needs of the native speaker of English can be social, financial or personal; therefore, students are asked to compare these needs to those that exist in their own societies. Additionally, the 'personals' (or personal announcements) are equally of a great significance because they indicate the social or spiritual problems which exist in the cultural schema of the foreign community. These types of problems are respectively reflected in the advertisements like 'Alcoholics Anonymous' or 'Find help in the Lord Jesus Christ'. Such social organizations may be very familiar to a native reader of English; however, the local students of English would be completely unacquainted with such associations. As a matter of fact, students are offered opportunities to discuss these social and spiritual problems in the foreign community; hence, they may evaluate the importance of the impact of this kind of problems on the individual and collective levels. Furthermore, learners would compare and contrast those issues to their equivalents (if any) in the students' own speech communities. In fact, students would analyse the possible reactions and attitudes of people in relationship to these problems cross-culturally.

6. Miss or Mister Fix it: in this column the readers' writings pose various administrative and legislative questions. Indeed, the different letters expose these kinds of problems to a professional or specialist who works for the newspaper in order to provide pieces of advice or indicate the appropriate and necessary measures to be taken by the citizens. The main goals of this activity are to enable students to discover the nature of the administrative problems which face people; in addition to the reasons that resort them to ask for help in newspapers instead of consulting official institutions or agencies. Students are particularly encouraged to bring to view

why people are afraid or unable to deal with governmental organizations. Moreover, it is also interesting to understand the cultural fears (e.g. the police) people show in the foreign speech society and whether they are typical or common to other cultures. In fact, the complainants may indicate a violation of their own cultural patterns because of the implication of a third party since they think these institutions are unable to fulfil their duties. Learners would be probably curious to know the identities and social classes of these persons who can not find the answers themselves along with the reasons which make them choose to remain anonymous. Therefore, students would be asked to perform some activities in order to look for the similarities and differences of such problems with respect to their own communities. Moreover, they would analyse the suggested solutions or procedures in terms of their applicability in their native societies.

7. Caricature: caricatures in newspapers are highly appreciated by the readers. Students may study the reasons why people like caricatures or disapprove them in different speech communities. This kind of column is pleasantly tolerated or completely forbidden in some countries; therefore, students would try to find out the reasons behind its acceptance or refusal. Certainly, they would have keen interests in knowing the nature of such causes in terms of sociocultural, religious or political factors. For instance, in the Algerian modern society, a greedy and/or stingy person is usually caricatured through an octopus whereas in the British or other communities it can be another animal or something else. In fact, what is important in these activities is the discovery of the socio-cultural reasons of the choice of specific animals or things which are used in caricatures. In addition, it is also significant to analyse why certain symbols are found in some societies and they are, in contrast absent or different in other communities.

8. Advertising: one can perceive the roles and perspectives of advertising through three principal aspects namely social, financial (marketing) and cultural. It is known that the amount of display of advertisements may serve as indicator of the importance and level of consumerism in a society. The nature of information which is conveyed by the public announcements usually originates from the socio-cultural factors or behaviours of people. Certainly, advertisements are founded upon economic and financial studies; however, what really affects the consumers and incites them to buy the products are the symbols and images which are transmitted through publicity. In fact, the usefulness of the teaching of cultural skills through the advertisements in newspapers has two main aspects: the first one is related to economic factors which indicate the degree and type of consumerism in addition to the quality and level of life in a society. Hence, students would gather information about these elements in the foreign community; especially in terms of types of goods, quality, availability and prices. In contrast, the second factor is much

more linked to parameters such as tastes, colours, health care and socio-cultural values in general.

In addition, the information presented in publicity or a particular slogan can be analysed by students from the linguistic (or structural) aspects; in fact, the syntactic constructions and the choice of words are extremely important. Hence, these traits are compared to their parallels in the students' native languages; however, the other aspects are more related to the cultural and psychological dimensions. For example, the social events or particular dates (e.g. Christmas in the Western societies) which make certain products on sale or the symbols that are connected to an item and the image which it vehicles.

3.5.3.2. Applications and Evaluation of the Model

It is evident that newspapers display a large variety of styles. Hence, students should be fully aware of the correlation which exists between a particular style and the socio-cultural implications that require one style of writing instead of another. In fact, styles are often determined by the topics or events which are in turn connected with the social or cultural manifestations in the foreign speech community. Indeed, students become more conscious of the fact that an editorial requests formal and rigorous style of writing along with the analysis of news or behaviours which definitely needs argumentation.

Moreover, a reader who sends a letter of protest to the editor may be sarcastic or use slang; in addition, it is sometimes necessary to shorten the headlines. In certain situations, the use of dialects in some articles becomes appropriate and; often journalists make allusions to literature or some particular literary works or; lastly, they may refer to mass culture. Indeed, all these elements that are represented may serve as pedagogical tools which would inform students about the various cultural constituents of the target culture. In short, the style of writing of any journalist or editorial is always characterized by the interconnection of linguistic and cultural parameters.

On the whole, we observe that the five skills can be developed through the use of newspapers in the foreign language class. In fact, various registers of English are present in newspapers because of the diversity in topics and styles. Indeed, the main goal is to enable learners to use them appropriately; because newspapers offer the possibility to concentrate on a cultural topic but at the same time the foreign language teacher and students proceed with the language practice. In addition, the speaking skill is enhanced through activities like classroom discussions.

Hence, the technique is quite simple: the foreign language teacher selects a particular item that has been dealt with or has been mentioned in an article and; then, he asks students to look for the similar and different features of this element in the source and target cultures.

From another perspective, it is logical that the reading comprehension skill is also developed, because the understanding of the ideas and information laid out in an article certainly depend on the students' careful reading of the materials. Besides, the foreign language teacher may equally incorporate in the lesson listening activities. For instance, students would be requested to listen to the teacher or a classmate reading a chosen article for study; however, it is necessary beforehand that the foreign language teacher initiates the students to the techniques of note-taking. Consequently, the pedagogical gains are important since learners need to fully concentrate while listening in order to write down all the striking elements or salient ideas that would be; eventually, debated in classroom interactions.

Additionally, a wide range of activities and assignments involve the improvement of students' writing skills. Hence, the foreign language teacher can suggest an interesting task like 'letter-writing. Indeed, the teacher asks the students to write a letter to the editor in which they complain about any social problem or; comment on an event they have read about in the newspaper. In fact, learners are expected to explain their own views or criticize the culture line followed in the newspaper. Moreover, concise and precise writing is enhanced through a task like 'advertisement writing'. Concerning this particular activity, the foreign language teacher should emphasize the fact that each word costs money and; therefore, the announcement should be short but at the same time it should comprise all the information or elements one would like to mention.

Evidently, many writing techniques can be taught to students in order to reach a high level proficiency in the writing skill. Indeed, for instance 'Application letter' writing is also useful because students are asked to answer 'a job offering advertisement' or 'Help wanted'; in their letters students should describe themselves and their skills. Another possibility is to write a 'report' about the historical development of a newspaper from many perspectives such as culture change, social history, photographs or formats. However, the foreign language teacher should incite students to use the Internet as a research tool which offers limitless access to the information; especially with respect to the foreign cultural components.

An additional advantage of the use of newspapers as an intercultural teaching tool is the treatment of the news by students in the classroom. In other words, the cultural dimension which characterizes any kind of news emanating from the foreign speech community is normally depicted and discussed through classroom activities. As a matter of fact, the following example may provide further clarifications: the anodyne news about the social ceremonies of a date like the thirty-first of October. Hence, in the American context it is simply the celebration of Halloween with its socio-cultural manifestations whereas in the Algerian situation it is rather the official commemoration of the outbreak of the Algerian independence revolution!

On the other hand, the treatment of the kind of news also represents a topic of cultural dimension about what does really make the event and whether it is worth publication. Consequently, the foreign language teacher as well as students; are confronted with the issue of freedom of press which arises many questions in relation to what should be published or what constitutes a social, religious or political taboo. However, we should signal the fact that compared to the Western societies; the situation of the press in some countries is much more circumscribed. Therefore, the type of news and the possibility to write about it constitute a sociocultural and political issue which is open to debate in the foreign language class.

3.6. The Development of Culture Skills in the Algerian University English Instructional Context

It is evidently not possible to undertake a thorough analysis of the necessary adaptations and applications of classroom culture activities in the different situations and levels of English language teaching within the limited scope of this chapter. Therefore, our suggestions are limited (for practical reasons) to University level which is the focus point of the present study and; the introduction of the proposed activities is deliberately limited to the 'General Culture' course of the English teaching programmes.

We are fully aware that each level of the educational system with regard to target culture teaching (Intermediary, Secondary and University) represents a vast field of investigation and research from numerous different perspectives such as syllabus design, practical applications and assessment of culture skills. Consequently, we would like to clarify that our intentions are simply to make some recommendations and suggestions founded on our personal experience and limited to a specific course which is closely related- because of its contents- to foreign culture skills.

Our selection of the areas of culture teaching activities is certainly open to debate in relationship to the objectives, effectiveness and practicability of the teaching process. Nevertheless, we believe that domains like sport, politics and religion can be of interest to learners and represent challenging yet motivating components of target culture teaching.

3.6.1. Sport

One cannot deny the usefulness and value of the work undertaken by J. Corbett (2010) in connection with the concept of sport which represents an excellent area where cultural boundaries easily meet. In fact, people's participation in sport either as spectators or as performers is a global phenomenon. What is interesting about sports is that some of them are nearly universal whereas others are socially and geographically limited. The second positive aspect is that people's interest and passion with respect to sports as players or supporters can be regarded as a universal socio-cultural issue.

Concerning the practical classroom activities, students are introduced to sports which are unusual to them and are mainly practised in specific regions of the world. The procedure is of course to encourage learners to reflect on their own knowledge of these sports and; in a second phase they would be introduced and informed in details about those rare sports. Through mime or role-play activities, learners write the rules and information about the described sport, afterwards the language teacher uses a reading text obviously related to the same sport. The reading comprehension task implies the country in which the sport is practised, the number of players, the specific materials they use, the description of the activity and the process and rules about how to win the game.

Then, the whole class goes through the answers and possibly students are shown photographs of the studied sport. The general classroom discussion should realize specific teaching objectives namely the provision of the following tips in addition to those that have been mentioned above:

- * The language teacher with the whole class brainstorms a vocabulary list of useful terms for describing sports.
- * The teacher also asks the class to describe a sport they choose which can be either internationally practised or that is famous locally in their own cultures.
- * As we have indicated earlier, it is very fruitful to use an online intercultural exchange to send and receive descriptions of sports with the students' e-partners.

* The descriptions and information provided by e-partners is brought to the class in a form of a written report which is read and discussed in classroom interactions.

The following focus points in these activities are the theme of 'Team Sports' and the cultural associations which exist in the foreign community. In fact, the activity is a project-based task in order to check students' knowledge of some familiar or usual sports along with less known physical activities. The research tools available to students are mainly the library or online sources, for example the information can be summarized in a table. The procedure which is followed to undertake this activity is represented in the following points:

- 1. The language teacher informs students about the nature of the activity namely the research concerns the topic of team sports which are universally practised. Learners can be directly involved (warm-up through the description of a sport they personally play or just like to watch.
- 2. After the suggestions of the students (team games), the language teacher writes all these propositions on the board or if possible projects them on a screen. Students are then asked to provide further information which may concern the duration, the wearing and the origin of the sport.
- 3. Afterwards the language teacher proceeds with the following task which consists of the distribution of a table box that is used by learners to elicit fundamental information about a particular famous sport (for instance football).
- 4. The language teacher and the class designate some possible other sources of information but which should be related to other sports in the table that are usually less known or do not belong to students' cultures. Of course, the information is grasped from Internet sites, e-partners in chatrooms or encyclopaedias in University library.
- 5. Another useful classroom activity (related to the topic of sport) is to divide the class into small groups. Each group is required to provide information about a particular team sport; this can be done as an assessment or a home-work.
- 6. The following session should be devoted to the groups' presentations of their findings after the completion of the research. It is advisable to organize a collective presentation in each group (in this manner all members of the group actively participate); students use the table as a basis

materials and they can as well illustrate the information with pictures, props or even data show facilities.

- 7. Classroom interaction can be further enhanced through the application of group discussions and argumentations. For instance, students can choose a popular sport but which is not an Olympic one. After the identification and description of the selected sport, learners are divided into groups that either agree or disagree about its inclusion in the Olympic Games. The arguments should be linked to all aspects in connection with this sport such as the socio-cultural, practical and financial factors.
- 8. This activity is quite effective because it implies the linguistic aspects required in the argumentation and the socio-cultural implications of a particular sport. Hence, students explore the language used to support their own team and criticize opponent teams. What is particularly interesting is that learners not only study the qualified language for praise and criticism; but they can also observe the socio-cultural and non –linguistic behaviours of fans of opposed teams.

The activity is often realized with the help of role plays tasks; nevertheless, the preparation of the activity is essential and students gain much information especially if they have access to sports discussions sites on Internet. The procedure which the language teacher might use in the practice of the activity is summarized in the following steps:

- * The identification of two rival sports teams, for instance it is often the case with football teams from the same town. It is necessary to brainstorm students about the appropriate expressions to praise or criticize the players of one's own team; then learners study expressions to praise (fair play spirit) or criticize the players of the rival team.
- * The language teacher uses a work sheet in the second phase; hence, students are asked to fill the columns with the appropriate expressions of praise or criticism. Learners may decide whether the arguments are qualified or unqualified. Evidently, the expressions can not be completely correct; however, they are significant because they have been originally and contextually used by native speakers of English.
- * Lastly, after the achievement of the work sheet activity (which is mainly written but it also involves group interactions); students can role play many situations like opposed fans debate, a broadcaster in a radio or television sports programmes.

- 1. The following activity is equally very interesting since it enables students to have insights into the socio-cultural behaviours of fans in relation to sports as a social phenomenon. The activity is called 'Cheer leading' by Corbett (2010) and it consists of encouraging students to analyse the audience's participation in sports. The preparation of the task requires a computer and projector in order to display the photographs and watch the clips of cheerleaders especially how they organize the fans' movements and chants. This particularly motivating intercultural activity is realized through the following procedure:
- * The language teacher shows pictures to the learners and then plays an Internet video about cheerleaders.
- * The second step is to brainstorm students about the cheerleaders like the kind of persons, their usual routines, the games they propose and the style of clothes they wear.
- * The use of a written text is equally efficient: students read a text on cheerleading and then they are asked questions.
- * A classroom discussion of the different answers is organized by the language teacher.
- * Lastly, pairs of students are required to write a dialogue in which they present the positive and negative aspects of cheerleading through a cross-cultural evaluation.
- 2. The other important situation connected to sports activities which should be tackled is the attendance of sports events as a socio-cultural behaviour that nearly exists in all human communities. Students are required to observe and describe the spectators in a sport event in terms of their physical activities and the surroundings. The task is usually performed through an online intercultural exchange; hence, digital photographs and short videos can be shared with the students' e-partners. The organization of the activity generally follows a simple procedure as it is indicated below:
- * A warming-up step is to ask students whether they have attended a live sports event; the goal is to discuss questions like the kind and place of the event, the admission cost, the number of spectators and their behaviours, the commodities available and lastly if there are entertainments during the breaks.
- * The class should be arranged into groups with at least one student who has attended a live sports event; the other students can share their experiences and describe the events in an interactive task.

- * Learners can undertake a field work such as attending varied sports events. The principal objective is to write a report (attendance is more enjoyable in groups than individually) because the task is better achieved collectively; afterwards students discuss the report in classroom interactions. However, emphasis should put on the comparison of sports events and the spectators' cultural behaviours throughout different cultures.
- * Lastly, learners present a general evaluation of sports events especially in connection with questions like the behaviours of spectators in the source and target cultures (or even other cultures). The aim is to enable them to give their points of view with respect to the positive and negative aspects of sports events attendance.
- 3. Additionally, this activity introduces an ethical issue which is the debate on blood sports. Learners are required to undertake research and discuss the question whether society should or should not permit blood sports. The objective is to develop learners' persuasive skills around the abolition or maintenance of blood sports. Students should seek information (particularly on Internet and in libraries) about certain blood sports and gather as much available tips as possible in relationship to the question. Of course, it is more practical to take notes and use photographs. In the following session, the language teacher can organize the classroom activities in the practical manner proposed below:
- * Discussion of learners' knowledge of blood sports such as bull-fighting, cock fighting or even boxing.
- * Division of the class into small groups and the presentation of the reasons that are in support or against blood sports. Each group of students should advance arguments in order to try to convince the others.
- * Students may be given an assessment about the issue of blood sports abolition which would be discussed in the following session. The aim is to organize a research investigation and the writing of a report in order to check the students' abilities to make a case.
- * Obviously, the language teacher should beforehand (previous lesson) explain the conventions and procedures of a debate (formal debate or a casual discussion). In addition, it is more practical and convenient that students choose two speakers (for and against) to represent them in the discussion.

- * After class, learners can consolidate their knowledge of the question especially its intercultural aspects with the aid of e-partners (from different cultures), online research or in a library.
- * In the next lesson, the language teacher asks students to discuss their findings along with the additional arguments they want to put forward and the possible questions which may be posed to the other groups. In this activity, learners are offered opportunities to advise each other and share information about how to make a convincing case.
- * Many gains are grasped from the classroom debate (i.e. the question of abolition or preservation of blood sports) chiefly the arguments put forward by students in order to adopt or reject opinions. The language teacher can possibly hand out copies of a score card in view of judging the performances of the opponents and proponents.
- * The ultimate step is to debate and review in the classroom the learnt linguistic and sociocultural parameters that probably consolidate the students' abilities to present and argument in the foreign language within the cultural dimension.

3.6.2. Religion

It is necessary to recognize that intercultural language teaching implies the discussion of some controversial issues which are implicitly and/or overtly present in the behaviours, values and beliefs of different communities. Until quite recently, topics in relationship to sex, religion or politics are believed to be taboo questions and; therefore, they have been systematically avoided in the language class. As a matter of fact, the issue of religious debate has been deterred from its objectives by some people who perhaps sincerely believe that youngsters' commitment to religious beliefs may be affected by such discussions.

However, it is crucial to point out the introduction of religion as an important component of intercultural language teaching does definitely not intend to 'evaluate' any religion and does not constitute an attempt to 'proselytize' students. On the contrary, the interreligious dialogues may effectively serve the mutual understanding and tolerance of different religions. Needless to mention even briefly the fabricated controversies that exist nowadays and which are universally spread in relationship to Islam and their psychological negative repercussions on the Muslim students of English as a foreign language.

As far as the pedagogical implications are concerned, we do believe that language classes especially at University level are positively prepared to discuss religious ideas; indeed, the actual educational context encourages such discussions. The language teacher and students likewise can obtain numerous benefits because religion represents a rich resource for cross-cultural language

teaching. A great number of various topics in religion constitute interesting issues of analysis like beliefs, ritual behaviours and attitudes in different societies particularly the English speaking nations. Students are usually motivated and curious to have insights into religious observances and rites especially in ceremonies such as birth, marriage and death.

In contrast, no one can deny the great potential of sensitivity in dealing with such topics; therefore, the language teacher should really focus on activities which are thoroughly non-judgemental. The main task is simply to put into application a process of observation, description and comparison of beliefs and religious practices. Moreover, the language teacher should enhance non-evaluative reactions on the part of learners. Within this context and following the spirit, the language teacher can propose some interesting activities which we think are worth presentation and analysis.

- 1. The first activity suggested is related to religious cultural associations which may serve in encouraging students to compare significant features of various universal or just local religious beliefs. It is obvious that this first type of activities aims at developing a sense of exploration and discovery; nevertheless, comparison and discussion of religious beliefs in the classroom can lead to disagreements or they are even perceived as criticisms. Therefore, the language teacher's role is extremely important in developing arguments with a great care and sensitivity when these subjects are dealt with in the classroom. The principal goal of the activity is to elaborate a kind of chart which compares the key features across groups of influential and universally spread religions. Certainly, students would be exposed to basic aspects of English language characterized by rituals and beliefs which imply the development of generalizations and qualifications. Within this context, Corbett (2006) proposes a practical procedure which can summarized and briefly analysed in the following.
- * The first step is certainly the explanation to learners that the activity consists of comparing the most important features of the major religions of the world like Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism. Students should bear in mind that the task is only comparative (the recording and noting of the meeting characteristics in religions) and as such any digressions about positive and negative evaluations are to be avoided.
- * The use of a simple 'comparative chart' facilitates the activity. The language teacher starts with a brainstorm of the key features of the stated religions which are known to the majority of students. The learners' knowledge is easily checked through questions such as: the exact name of the religion, the main figures like prophets and deities, sacred text, the particular days of

worship, the rituals that worshippers perform, the religious festivals ant finally the religious institutions if they exist.

- * Tasks outside or in the classroom can be organized, for example to constitute small groups of students in order to undertake research in the form of interviews of fellow learners. Students can equally be asked to do a homework which may consist of writing a report of possible information provided by their e-partners (possibly from different religions) on Internet. The language teacher necessarily ensures that each group of learners chose a dissimilar religion to investigate.
- * In the following session a classroom discussion is held, principally each group of students presents an oral and short summary of their findings (or simply a selected student may read the group's report). The audience (or the rest of students) alternatively take notes and prepare questions or needed clarifications which may be required by other groups of students.
- * The next step consists of a general classroom discussion of the spotted similarities and differences between religions with a special emphasis on the fact that religions, beliefs and practices broadly vary and; therefore, generalizations should avoided.
- 2. The second possible activity deals with the ritual ceremonies of conversion to religions. In other words, students explore the various manners in which persons are accepted and welcomed into specific religious faiths. The activity normally involves the interesting descriptions of socioreligious behaviours and ceremonies like the 'Chahada' in Islam or 'Baptism' in Christianity. The involvement of the class in an online cultural exchange is really very motivating because it implies asking questions to other people and also be prepared to answer questions about their own religious faith. The possible procedure which may be followed by the language teacher comprises the steps stated below:
- * The language teacher needs to clarify that different religions have various ways of accepting and welcoming new members to a particular religion. It is important to indicate the timing of the ceremonies; some faiths have their rituals after birth and others at a more advanced age. Moreover, students are also informed about the social encounters which are organized to perform the implied rituals and the required socio-linguistic interactions during the ceremonies.

- * The undertaking of interviews is equally useful: students are asked to interview people (if possible) who belong to those faiths. The interview can be directly held with a person or through an online connection like chat-rooms or 'Skype'. It is necessary to brainstorm the types of questions which would appropriately serve the task; hence, it is significant to enquire about the existence of special ceremony for new members, the age of the person, the place of the ceremony and who performs it. In addition, learners should note the words which are used, the necessity or not to wear special clothes, the possibility of involving the audience or not and; lastly, the different phases of the ceremony (before, during and after).
- * The language teacher can actively take part in the activity through the organization of the interview: he may wish to be the interviewee (of course brainstorming and preparation are necessary) and students are the interviewers who would enquire about the teacher's proper faith or a different one. Certainly, learners are requested to take notes and write a report at home (a kind of assessment) and should be presented in the following session.
- * Ideally, it is very useful to make arrangements so that the interview is held in the classroom with religious representatives such as priests or imams if they accept to collaborate. The contribution of these persons who are in reality professionals is of a great interest and significance because they represent a reliable, instructive and precise source of information with regard to specific religions.
- * The last step consists of a general classroom discussion which is devoted to the description and presentation of information or even 'discoveries' which the groups of students can share. At the end of the session, a limited period of time (most probably half an hour) should be allotted to individually write an account of the outcomes which would be eventually corrected by the language teacher.
- 3. The third activity is linked to the religious services. This task is generally a field work which involves the observation and description of a religious ceremony; hence, the work mainly implies the actual description of activities that occur during a religious service. However, we are aware that in the Algerian context apart from a limited number of large cities, it is nearly impossible to find a church to realize the field task. Therefore, students need to use- even if it is less enjoyable and motivating- recordings (online, videos or CDs) of religious ceremonies in order make their observations. The following steps concisely present the necessary procedure for the achievement of this activity:



- * At the beginning, students are informed that different religions often display particular ways of celebrating their faith and what is of interest to learners is certainly the discovery of customs and behaviours which are unfamiliar to them.
- * The language teacher naturally indicates what aspects of the service students should observe and describe. The suggestion of some guiding tips is necessary. For instance, learners should look for points such as: the name of the faith, the time and place of the ceremony, the arrangement of the participants or worshippers and the sequences in terms of order and time of events.
- * If the circumstances allow it, students may attend a religious service to work as observers (in small groups) in order to write a report of their notes. Eventually, reports are corrected by the language teacher and ultimately discussed in the classroom during a following session.
- * The tasks that are required in the next lesson are the comparison of the general individual notes of the class; then the writing of the groups' short reports and finally the oral discussion which involves further clarifications and question/answer interactions.

3.6.3. Politics

The question of political systems is logically significant because of its influence on people. The individual's daily life is affected in various ways by the policies applied in any nation. It is also evident that political systems change from one country to another and they largely depend on the socio-cultural norms of each nation. Influential decisions that concern human communities are taken in different manners: in almost all countries it is the system of elections of politicians; but in some other nations there are elite groups of personalities who represent the majority.

However, what is actually important in view of intercultural language teaching is the kind of communication which exists between political groups and parties. It is interesting and beneficial that students discover how can political parties or leaders in particular convince whole populations (the impact of speech on people) to vote for them because they are able to make everybody wealthier, happier and more secure!

Consequently, the types of communication used in politics are of a great interest and use in cross-cultural interactions and are worth analysis; because they provide valuable information about the socio-political and cultural organizations of the foreign language society. A number of

motivating and efficient activities are at the disposal of the language teacher; and we think it is necessary to analyse some of them which can be eventually used within the Algerian English language teaching context.

- 1. The first activity that is developed by the language teacher can be entitled 'Political Symbols'; it mainly encourages learners to think about the various political symbols which are used universally in order to indicate political systems or militancy. It is preferable to begin with a general view and; then, precise definitions of certain doctrines such as communism, monarchism, liberalism or environmentalism. The following step would be the presentation and explanation of beliefs and ideas that are conveyed in those systems. The notion of symbolism in connection with political parties is of a great importance because nearly all political groups use these symbols to identify themselves. In addition, these symbols usually serve to communicate the political parties' fundamental values and beliefs. Learners are often eager to find out such symbols, slogans and logos which may have a large impact on huge populations. In reality, students need to have access to Internet with a view to gather significant and sufficient information on political symbols in multiple nations. The possible steps that contribute in the effective organization of the present activity may be summarized as follows:
- * In the warm-up part of the lesson, the language teacher utilizes a work sheet on which there is a scrambled classification of political symbols and the beliefs or systems they represent. Students are asked to match the names with the appropriate political symbol; however, they also have to put forward arguments in order to justify their choices. It is more practical (gradual complexity) and motivating (often students know the expected answer) to start with the most famous symbols and their political parties.
- * The second step can be achieved during the lesson or it takes the form of a homework which should be rendered back in the next session. The task consists of identifying the symbols used by political parties and organizations in the students' own countries or even in a number of other foreign nations. The activity necessitates the asking of question related to the meaning of the emblem used by a political party (for instance an animal, a bird a flower etc...), the colours of the symbols and their significance and; finally, the slogans that are utilized (in terms of possible impact and objectives).
- * The last part is better undertaken in a following lesson when students' research work is completed. Learners present their findings to the whole class so that it would be possible to compare the symbols and feedback their classmates. Students can as well perform group

activities like writing reports on their intercultural research with the aim to show less familiar systems and symbols.

2. We believe that the second activity increases learners' curiosity and cheerfulness since it essentially deals with politicians' body language. The activity puts an emphasis on the body language adopted and performed by politicians and most importantly its significance. It is true that body language has a specific function in order to realize planned objectives and; generally, has a broad influence on the audience. In reality, politicians-as important public speakers-employ body language as an additional means to prove and confirm their authority and abilities. This is the reason why it is important that students consider the type of body language used in different cultures by politicians with an aim to influence and convince listeners to trust them. In fact, this manner of communication combines language of persuasion and body language.

The preparation of the activity is primordial because it is necessary that the language teacher records various interviews, speeches or broadcastings which feature a large number of politicians especially from different countries. It is preferable that the political speeches are delivered in English but it is not compulsory since the language teacher just focuses the students' attention on body language and facial expressions. The practical organization of this activity requires the following procedure:

- * The language teacher attracts the attention of the learners to the consideration of how persons in authority (leaders or responsible persons) especially politicians employ body language to convince people or audiences and try to influence them to the extent that they totally trust these politicians. The warming-up consists of showing famous and successful politicians in clips of political publicity, interviews or speeches addressed to a huge crowd. At first, the teacher should turn the volume down and asks his students to concentrate on just the body movements. They can do it through the completion of a checklist which contains multiple types of gestures and facial expressions; such as the opening and rising of arms, pointing or wagging a finger, nods, leaning and smiles or frowning.
- * The next step is the organization of the class in pairs of students. The goal is to encourage students to discuss the reasons and objectives of using specific gestures which sometimes may become particular to a specific politician. Learners may reveal their personal appreciations of the impression that is given by certain politicians. It is significant that students discover the cross-cultural functions and goals that are assigned to body language and facial expressions performed during political speeches. Afterwards, the language teacher supervises a classroom general

discussion about some fundamental issues in terms of interpretations of body movements and the possible effects they might have on people. For instance, the language teacher proposes a number of repetitive and widely spread cross-cultural body movements and the whole class discusses their possible interpretations as the task is presented in the following:

- Leaning forward means cooperation and interest.
- Smiling indicates optimism and reassurance of the audience.
- Eye contact is used to indicate authority and control of the discussion.
- Exaggerated gestures like shrugging or rising up the arms often emphasize a particular point.
- Open arms normally signify an open personality and chiefly avoidance of folded arms because they suggest reserve and distance.
- Long pauses (i.e. embarrassing silence) should be absolutely eluded particularly after the audience's applause.
- * The third task is to replay the clip or video but this time with the volume turned up, the principal objective is to indicate in a schedule box the connection between a gesture or facial expression and its significance. The activity is better undertaken individually because interpretations and appreciations are often personal and disparate. The goal is to avoid (in order to gain time) discussions between the pair of students about the correct interpretation since this activity is performed as the last part of the lesson.
- * The fourth phase of the activity is devoted to the comparison of results; students work in pairs and the focus is on their opinions concerning the effectiveness of politicians' body language. The comparative task may be intercultural in order to find out whether body movements are similar or different and; essentially, the positive or negative effects they would probably have in various cultures.
- * The fifth point concerns the same task but it is a more elaborated and complex version because it implies learners of advanced levels in the foreign language. Students are asked to prepare a short (nearly two minutes) political speech of their own. This speech should achieve four main functions: introduces a new policy, proves the importance of the proposed policy, criticizes the policies of political opponents and convinces the audience to support the new policy. After the writing of the speech, learners should present it but it is essential that they use the learnt body language. The rest of the class rates in turn the speakers and give feedback on their performances.

3. The third activity introduces a particularly significant issue in politics which is usually known as the 'Political Debate'. The treatment of this question implies multiple possibilities and elements which the language teacher may use in the language class. However, the basic principle is that the activity an official debate and analyses an essential issue in politics that consists of the determination of persons who should vote. The activity is usually handled in close relationship to other courses such as history, social sciences or citizenship; nevertheless, the language teacher because of practical reasons may decide (in accordance with the stated goals of the lesson) to propose the activity independently of other topics.

It is useful to point out that students within this situation should research and debate political issues which necessarily evoke the possibility of their personal involvement in favour or against any question discussed in the classroom. What is really important to the language teacher is to develop the students' persuasive skills through the practice of selected tasks and research that would enhance in the first place the understanding of the values and principles of their contradictors. The style of the foreign language which is involved in this activity is often characterized by the application and respect of socio-cultural conventions that determine the formal debate.

As far as the students are concerned, they need to have access to practical information on a traditional political question especially the multiple international voting systems. Nevertheless, the language teacher equally offers them opportunities to discuss present day issues which may concern the students directly; in addition, it is also fruitful to deal with political questions that are more relevant to the target culture community. The available resources are in general Internet, local libraries and; possibly, the students' e-partners. Reading materials which are closely related to a particular problem can also be selected and proposed to students; for instance the problem of women's suffrage throughout the world. In this type of activities, it is more practical and effective that the language teacher provides a worksheet that is needed in the performance of such tasks. Moreover, it is essential that students understand and learn in advance the sociocultural conventions of debate in the target culture. As a matter of fact, the language teacher may decide to furnish a worksheet which comprises a table or a list of conventions that can be consulted during the analysis of reading materials or political speeches.

The successful realization of this kind of activity necessitates the careful application of the following steps:

- * At the beginning, students are informed and prepared in consequence that the principal task is clearly to discuss a political subject. Learners can choose a specific issue by a general consensus or a vote that is in itself a good political practice. After the selection of an interesting political problem, the language teacher should proceed with a general review or elicitation of students' knowledge about the question. However, a particular emphasis should be given to points like the significance of universal suffrage (i.e. the right to vote regardless of gender, race, religion or other factors), internationally shared currency or human rights.
- * In addition, it is useful to focus on the historical development of the chosen question in order to better understand the present situation. Of course, there are some topics which may particularly appeal to students such as women's vote or freedom of press. The language teacher can suggest a reading text that is handed out to learners during the lesson (the number of topics should be limited so that the teacher would be able to prepare a reading text for each subject); learners in their turn are asked to read and then summarize useful information.
- * If it is necessary, additional time would be devoted to further research of the selected topic during the rest of the session; or the other option is to regard the task as a homework that should be submitted in the next session. The usual sources of information are normally known to learners such as the Internet, university or external libraries, or e-partners especially from the target culture community (the language teacher would certainly suggest a number of useful websites).
- * After the completion of the research, students are organized in groups in order to debate (like in a parliament) on a motion closely linked to the selected political question. The discussion would gain broader information and would be more useful and appealing if the classroom debate follows the historical development of this political issue.
- * Classroom interaction is obtained if the language teacher divides the class into two equal groups; each group either prepares arguments and evidence in favour of the motion or against it. It is crucial that students should be personally concerned by the question in order to avoid 'clashes' of ideas or hostile attitudes. Learners should be perfectly aware that the activity is simply an imitation (or reproduction) of the kind of debate that may occur in any parliament throughout the world. Sometimes it is necessary to complete the work and enrich it by additional information after class; the final outcomes can be presented in the following sessions.

- * Additionally, the conventions of a debate should be clearly explained to learners who are required to scrupulously respect them. The obvious aim is to avoid any kind of classroom disorganization in terms of ordered and fair debate (the discussion should not be monopolized by a small number of students). Learners should be prepared in such a way that they higher their abilities to make strong and convincing arguments for or against any proposal. Feedback is actually grasped from the rest of the class (or the audience) which decides who are the most efficient persuaders among the speakers and; accordingly, the class votes the adoption or rejection of the motion.
- * The last step or phase of the lesson is devoted to the discussion and objective evaluation of the results which have been gained after the performance of this activity with regard to its advantages and drawback.

3.6.4. Cultural Behaviours

We believe that it is important to emphasize the fact that all the activities are suggested within the concept of cultural behaviours. In fact, they are intended to increase students' awareness and sensitivity to various modes of behaviour which are manifestly determines by cultural values and beliefs. In previous parts of the present study we have already indicated the numerous problems that result from cross-cultural misunderstandings. Therefore, we do think that it is necessary in contemporary teaching of English as a foreign language to pay much attention to culturally appropriate behaviour.

The fundamental principle is that Algerian students of English should be aware and; if necessary, adapt what native speakers of English naturally 'say' and 'do' in particular social situations. It is not superfluous to remind again that successful communication in English definitely requires the recognition of different cultural patterns which are permanently present in the behaviours of persons from English speaking societies. However, what is even more significant is the students' own behaviours and attitudes because they should be equally aware of the ways in which their proper cultural backgrounds affect their behaviours.

Therefore, this kind of retrospection of one's personal reactions and their probable impact on native speakers of English would certainly lead to develop tolerance and positive attitudes towards behaviour patterns that are often completely different from their own. In fact, the activities presented in this part of our work are mostly information-oriented tasks which present and explain to students the factors that make behaviour culturally acceptable in English speaking

communities. Indeed, we think it is positive to present an overall view of some interesting activities despite the limited scope of this section due to organizational factors.

- 1. The first activity has been appropriately entitled by B. Tomalin and S. Stempleski (1993) 'Critical Incidents' along with an interesting variation called 'Cross-cultural Role-play'. They both effectively highlight the different misunderstandings experienced by many persons in cross-cultural situations. The main goal is to encourage students to identify the cultural factors which provoke the incomprehension or even breakdowns of intercultural communication. Additionally, students suggest their own solutions to the problems encountered in order to restore communication and to improve on positive perceptions of each other. In this process, learners can also practise listening and/or reading skills; the following steps constitute the procedure to be applied in this type of activity:
- * At first, it is necessary to distribute three task sheets for each student; the function of the task sheets is really important because they are used to record any incident in carefully selected cultural contexts which are respectively: accepting a compliment, addressing the interlocutors and attending a party. Then, the language teacher should introduce the subject of 'critical incidents' to the class; for instance he can explain that it is a situation where there is a communication problem between people who belong to different cultures. Moreover, he is expected to make it clear that the main reason of the problem is due to the participants' in ability to understand each other's cultures.
- * The second step is to ask students to start working on the first task sheet (accepting a compliment); they required to read the incident and then suggest their own solutions through the answers they give to the questions (multiple choice exercise) which accompany the text. A sufficient period of time should be allotted to enable students to read about the incident and select the answers.
- * The activity is effectively realized in group work, that is why the class should be divided into small groups of three or four students; interactions between groups is encouraged so that they can discuss the problem and compare their answers.
- * The task may involve some questions which enhance the students' feedback. The language teacher writes questions on the board about for example the cultural values which were present, the person who was at fault and what they would personally do in such situation.
- * Lastly, the language teacher supervises a whole-class discussion of the incident and the various answers chosen by learners. Particular emphasis should be put on the cultural values involved

and to verify if the suggested solutions take into account these factors and; at the end, the discussion of the possible results which can be brought about by the solutions put forward. Of course, the procedure is repeated foe each task sheet.

- 2. Concerning the 'cross-cultural role play' activity, one can point out that this type of task aims also at increasing awareness of the kinds of misunderstandings which often take place between people who ignore or just have limited information of the other's cultures. In this version of the activity no particular materials are needed; however, the language teacher can make use of simple props. To our knowledge, what is significant is the language teacher's efficient and appropriate preparation of a brief but precise description of the incident that occurred and led to a cross-cultural problem of communication.
- * It is important that the language teacher explains that such incidents may happen to anyone in cross-cultural interactions. The teacher's main role is to encourage students to recall similar problems which might have occurred to them and to reveal their experiences in front of the whole class. Generally, learners have many apprehensions about this type of incidents because they are afraid to lose face or to seem ridiculous to their classmates. Consequently, the language teacher's role in this situation is quite important since ha has to create a 'relaxed atmosphere' that enables students to 'laugh it all' if the incident is funny. In addition, the teacher's own experience can serve as a 'model' which is analysed in order to draw the suitable conclusions that would probably help students to adopt the appropriate behaviour in similar situations.
- * The organization of the task takes the form of group work activities; therefore, the teacher should divide the class into small groups of students. Then, students take turn to narrate their stories through a precise description of the intercultural incident in which they have been involved.
- * What is interesting in this activity is that students should not dramatize their proper roles but rather select one of the incident described and work together to play in different parts.
- * The performance of the students' role plays if realized in turns and the rest of the class constitutes the audience.
- * Finally, the entire class discusses each incident and its cross-cultural implications; however, a special focus should be put on the possible readjustments and the adoptions of the appropriate cultural behaviours in order to avoid this sort of misunderstandings.

3. The third activity which is practised in the teaching of the appropriate cultural behaviours in the foreign community is the 'culture assimilators'. This kind of activity has been thoroughly described and analysed in the theoretical background of the present section; nevertheless, it is beneficial to remind that learners are particularly requested to examine culturally sensitive situations and select the most suitable behaviour for that situation.

Moreover, the principal objective of this activity is to higher students' awareness of appropriate culture behaviour in English speaking societies. In the second place, it is possible to compare and contrast the foreign behaviour patterns with those in the learners' own cultures. The same task sheets can be distributed to students or rather the language teacher can decide to use completely new task sheets with different incidents. In our opinion, it is more useful and motivating to employ new task sheets which involve special social situations. For example, the language teacher can use two task sheets: one deals with social behaviour and another concerns classroom behaviour. The following procedure is easily applicable in this situation:

- * The language teacher starts with the distribution of one task sheet he has previously chosen, afterwards he divides the class into groups of three or four students.
- * The clear explanation of the task is necessary particularly the need for collaborative work; students have to discuss the proposed situations and decide what they would personally do in each situation.
- * Sufficient time should be allocated to the debate of the situations and answers of the questions.
- * A student who represents the group volunteers in order to summarize the group's discussion and answers.
- * The language teacher in the following phase asks students to imagine the same situation but this time it takes place in their home countries and they are required to describe their reactions. Obviously, the goal of this question is to make learners compare the same happening in the source and target cultures. Hopefully, they would be able to find out the similarities and differences of cultural behaviour in unlike speech communities. Probably, this type of activity would necessitate more time to complete the different tasks.
- * Finally, a general classroom discussion should be conducted by the language teacher in an attempt to make an overall evaluation of the activities. Moreover, students may propose answers to significant questions like the kind of knowledge they have learnt about culture behaviours in English speaking countries and; equally, the kind and amount of information they have gained about reactions in their home countries.

4. The activity consists of a limited survey that is undertaken by a group of students. The task is in the form of interviews of native speakers of English who represent a mostly reliable source of information about typical behaviour in English speaking cultures. One may notice that the survey is described as being 'limited'; in fact, the reason is simple because the language teacher takes into account factors such as the conception of the interview, the techniques of interviewing and the types of questions. It is evident that these factors determine the effectiveness and success of the survey and the students' mastery of such elements are also rudimentary.

On the other hand, the objectives of this kind of activity are to increase awareness of social behaviour and customs in the target culture. The process equally requires the use of the foreign language in order to interview native speakers; an additional goal is to prepare and present to the class an oral report. Obviously, the useful material that is needed in this task is a questionnaire about customs and other social conventions. In this case, there are two possibilities either the language teacher provides the questionnaires himself; this offers the advantage of time saving, or he may decide to help students elaborate the questionnaires themselves.

The collective conception of questionnaires needs an independent session; however, it is also a positive opportunity to deal with the methodological requirements in the elaboration of questionnaires. The second problem which may face students especially in the Algerian context is the extreme difficulty to meet native speakers of English in the surroundings of foreign learners of English; in addition to the uncertainty about their willingness to collaborate with the students. Fortunately, the use of Internet represents an acceptable solution through the organization of online conferences or interviews of native speakers of English who wish to help foreign students; it is also possible to work with learners' e-partners whose mother tongue is English. The time which is necessary to achieve the task is normally over three sessions that are organized as follows:

- * In the first day the teacher makes three main arrangements respectively the division of the class into groups of five or six students and the distribution of the questionnaires. Then, he explains that each group of learners is requested to interview a representative (person) of the target culture and; ultimately, prepares an oral report to be presented in the classroom. Lastly, the groups should work together in order to decide when they would conduct the survey, where it should occur and the number and identities of the persons that would be interviewed.
- * The second day is partly devoted to the summaries of the information the students have gathered and the preparation of an oral report to present to the rest of the class. The reports

should be conceived in such a manner that they comprise an introduction to the survey, a concise gist of the outcomes and a conclusion that states the interpretations and comments of the information. The other part of the task in this class session is reserved to collective group work namely the summarizing of the information obtained and the elaboration of students' oral reports.

* The third day is concerned with the oral presentations of the reports in turns. After the oral expositions, the rest of the class is allowed to ask questions or to make comments. If the appropriate conditions are present, we think it would be suitable and really useful to invite English native speaking informants to the classroom and organize the interviews with the students. This version of the task offers many advantages like the appropriate setting, the presence of the language teacher if help is needed and the same informant can be interviewed by many groups of learners. In addition, the existence of a direct interaction with native speakers of English in real time implies various linguistic, non-linguistic and socio-cultural manifestations.

It is equally important to point out that the topics of the interviews should focus on the investigation of the cultural behaviours in the foreign language society; we can especially treat issues like those suggested by B. Tomalin and S. Stempleski (1993)namely 'Getting to know people', 'Attitudes to time and space', 'Introductions' and 'Personal relationships'.

5. The fifth activity creates a kind of inner self-evaluation in the minds of students. The reason is that it mainly focuses on a principal aim that is to make learners aware that their own observations can be influenced by their past experiences, learning strategies and cultural backgrounds. The very significant result which is expected at the end of the activity is to identify cultural stereotypes through statements and images; that is why this task is sometimes named 'Observation and judgement'. The materials needed for this activity are simple and easily accessible; they usually consist of a series of photographs from magazines. The preparation and application of the task are summed up in the following chief points:

The language teacher should gather a collection of photographs which generally represent different persons emanating from a broad range of cultures. These people are normally found in various settings. The large number of newspapers and magazines that are available nowadays are actually reliable sources for the obtainment of numerous and varied photographs.

* Learners should be informed about the procedure that is necessary to the task which usually consists of exploring some interesting constituents of the target culture. As a warming-up students may start by elaborating a list of a number of things (up to ten) which they have particularly noticed in the target culture.



- * The language teacher can suggest a simple model on the board that actually consists of a table with two columns; one for the observations and the other reserved to students' judgements. Learners should clearly distinguish between the two concepts; hence, the observations they make are actually about something they see, hear or even know to be true whereas their judgements represent personal points of view about what they can observe.
- * The language teacher should make sure that students precisely classify their statements as either observations or judgements.
- * Then, the teacher just supervises or conducts if he thinks it is more useful- a general classroom discussion which debates very significant questions. The nature of these questions may deal with the aspects which affect our observations, the importance to differentiate between observations and judgements. Additionally, we may cite the development of learners' observational skills as long as the reasons which lead people to think in cultural stereotypes.
- * After the clarification of these concepts and the possible answers to the questions discussed, the language teacher then distributes the prepared photographs to the students (each learner can have one photograph).
- * It is preferable that students work individually, they are in fact required to study and write five sentences describing and commenting on the picture in front of them.
- * The following step is pair or group interactions, students may exchange their photographs then discuss the reasons why they have described the pictures in the manner they did. However, one should remark that it is very important to understand that different judgements are not necessarily contradictory or conflicting. Moreover, learners' judgements are not indicators of hostile attitudes but rather personal opinions based upon one's experience and cultural background.
- 6. The sixth activity is in reality an adaptation of another interesting task proposed by L. Prodromou (1992). The principal objective of the activity is to higher awareness of the differences in social behaviour between the students' cultures and the socio-cultural behaviours of native speakers of English like in the United States of America or the United Kingdom. The material consists of a task sheet which is divided into two parts: the first part is made of ten social situations in the U K or USA (for example greetings, introductions, leavings, start or end conversations etc...); and the opposite part is just a blank space which should be filled by students' indications of the social counterparts in their own countries. In short, the task involves the following steps:

- * The language teacher prepares sufficient copies of the task sheet and distributes one to each student.
- * The task should be explained to learners particularly that they should work in small groups in order to discuss the situations described on the task sheet. Then, they are asked to suggest what would exactly occur if the same situation concerns their native communities.
- * Learners are normally given enough time to debate the social situations and complete the task sheet.
- * When all learners finish their tasks the language teacher conducts a global classroom discussion of the situations depicted in the target culture. Students may propose possible equivalents not only in their own cultures but it is also interesting to extend the debate to other communities. The discussion necessarily emphasizes many important aspects such as:
- The social situations which end up with completely different behaviours in the target and source cultures.
- The social situations which result with similar or entirely behaviours in the two cultures.
- The indication of the kind of knowledge which can be drawn from such behaviours in the UK or the USA.
- A comparative description and discussion of the information that one can obtain from the cultural behaviours in the students' particular societies.
- * There is another motivating and pleasant version of the present activity that also aims at identifying the culturally appropriate behaviours. However, the materials which are needed are different and probably much more attractive; it consists of the use of a short video sequence illustrating behavioural features. The language teacher can utilize the procedure described below:
- The choice of the video sequence is actually very precise and practical because the selected material should necessarily show an aspect of behaviour in the target culture. The sequence should put forward aspects with respect to many social situations such as customs related to greetings, leave-taking or eating. Additionally, we have to indicate that such cultural behaviours might be completely different in the students' cultures even if they imply the same social situations.
- The video is played by the language teacher once so that students identify the situation in terms of the identities of the participants, the social context, the actions involved and the language used.
- The sequence is shown a second time in view of enabling students to take notes in relation to any aspect of behaviour which they believe is strikingly surprising, unusual or interesting.

- The following step is to ask learners to describe what the persons in the video have talked about and the actions they have performed. The language teacher encourages learners by asking some stimulating questions such as the nature of the situation, the kind of relationships between people, the description of their behaviours and; lastly, the language they use.
- The next step is really very useful because students are requested to reveal what they would personally say or do in an identical situation in their cultures.
- Most importantly, students should try to explore and eventually discover what lies under the cultural behaviours (underlying reasons) in the foreign community. The language teacher's task is highly influential since he has to assist students in order to make a conscious effort not to be affronted or upset by the cultural behaviours of native speakers. On the contrary, they are encouraged to adopt positive attitudes which facilitate their understanding and acquisition of the target language and culture.

Lastly, the cultural components in certain social contexts are diametrically opposed to each other; consequently, this situation does represent a particularly sensitive area. The language teacher's contribution in solving this type of problems generally takes two forms: the first one is that in case of doubt he should recommend the maintenance of learners' traditional and conservative behaviour which is by all means the safest. The second is the extensive practice of essential points of behaviour like the degrees of politeness, loudness or quietness of the voice and seating arrangements. In addition, it is primordial that learners should master some essential socio-cultural conventions of the foreign speech community in order to successfully communicate with regard to certain primordial speech acts such as the ways of indicating invitations, disagreements, instructions, and pointing or beckoning.

Conclusion

In summary, we have discussed in the present chapter a number of significant issues that determine the effective introduction and application of the culture skill within an intercultural teaching perspective. In fact, it is necessary in the first place to conceive the practical framework that should encompass the target culture teaching process. Therefore, the elaboration of this type of framework depends on various important factors. The first element that should be emphasized is the general cultural contexts of the English language classroom; in other words, the prior condition for the design of any intercultural teaching programmes is an analysis of the different situations, aspects and; eventually, difficulties that might characterize the source and target cultural contexts.

The second important factor depends on the availability of the sources of 'cultural' information; especially with regard to the foreign cultural components. Indeed, we have to take into consideration the local situation (local Algerian university students) in terms of the indispensible resources (access to the English cultural constituents whether they are artefacts or non-materialistic). In addition, the positive or negative social and psychological factors often determine the attitudes of the source speech community in relation to the question of acceptance or rejection of the foreign cultural behaviours.

As far as the practical conditions in relationship to the intercultural teaching process are concerned, there are a number of difficulties which face the local university foreign language teacher. The first local problem is linked to the size of the class itself; indeed, the foreign language teacher often works with very crowded classes (the total number of students in the same class usually exceeds sixty-five students). Therefore, we think it is evident that the effective undertaking of any classroom activity occurs in extremely complex and difficult conditions. For example, classroom activities such as small groups work or classroom interactions or discussions are organized without the optimum conditions of success.

The following problem is connected to the necessary pedagogical means that decisively condition the efficient application of the different teaching programmes. In fact, these concrete means are not always available (data-show, computers, slides, projectors, etc.) and; if they are, the quantity (with regard to the number of students who constitute each class) of such tools is often insufficient.

On the other hand, we have suggested a number of solutions which are more related to the intercultural teaching practices. These possible solutions concern three levels of application namely the students, the nature of the contents of the various teaching programmes; and the objectives which should be assigned to the intercultural teaching process. Within this context, we have analysed and; ultimately, proposed certain cross-cultural teaching models which we believe would be useful especially with respect to the local (university) conditions. As a matter of fact, we have adapted beforehand these models to the local teaching situation in connection with the teachers and students. Lastly, we should point out that we have tested some of these procedures through the organization of a field work experiment which would be discussed in the next chapter.

4. Field Work and Experimental Design

4.1. The Students' Survey-Questionnaire

4.1.1. Description and Objectives

The organisation of the field investigation of the present research work has been elaborated in such a manner that it is divided into two distinct operations. The first phase consists of the submission of a survey-questionnaire to the total population which is represented by the second year Master students of English Applied Studies (86 students).

Indeed, we have opted for the conception of a closed-ended questionnaire (structured) because the nature of the work is in the form of a quantitative type of research. In addition, the major objective is mainly to obtain precise statistics that would eventually serve as indicators of the major factors that could significantly contribute to the determination of students' preferences and motivational contents with respect to the foreign target culture.

The survey-questionnaire is divided into five sections. The first section is entitled Occupational Fields which consists of the presentation of different professional (economic) activities that are practised by the members of the foreign speech community. Indeed, various and numerous cultural components are deeply embedded in such tasks. The principal aim of the researchers is to discover the students' most appealing elements in the target culture in connection to the different types of professions or economic activities.

The tasks that we have selected within the Occupational Section are as follows: farming, industry, commerce, administration, medicine, law, hotels, restaurants and education. In fact, we have tried to encompass the most important and interesting activities that are usually performed in the foreign speech community.

The second section is called the Recreational Fields which is essentially concerned with the different leisure activities that are preferably chosen by the native speakers of the English society. Our choice of these activities is based upon the observations of the English speech community (in terms of the people's preferences in relationship to how they spend their leisure time).

In addition, we have discussed with a great number of different English persons (of various origins, age, social status and level of literacy) generally through chat-rooms. Lastly, we have incorporated another parameter in the selection of the most attractive leisure activities to the

English people which consists of a micro-survey of these preferred recreational activities. Essentially, the outcomes that we have reached indicate that English persons tend to favour leisure activities such as: cinema, television, radio, theatre, sport, travel and reading. Accordingly, we have included the same elements in the survey-questionnaire that has been submitted to the students.

The third section is concerned with the two most credible sources of information (apart from the mass-media) in the English citizens' points of view. This part is called Informational Sources and it comprises two major elements; namely, the Government and the Publications of institutional documentation.

The fourth section is entitled Educational. The choices that have been incorporated and proposed to the respondents are: Medium of Instruction, Functional (utility of the instruction), Subjects (or topics that are motivating and interesting) and; lastly, the English Study (or the most needed language and culture skills) in the English language teaching operation according to the second year Master students.

The fifth section is named Communal. We think that this section is useful and probably effective in the description of the various daily activities that are performed by the English population. Our selection of such activities has been essentially motivated by the great number and types of cultural behaviours which are present through the achievement of these communal tasks and occupations. Indeed, we have suggested four fundamental activities as follows: Administration (central and local), Political Meetings, Market Transactions and Inter-village Exchanges.

In summation, we do recognize that the question of the selection and incorporation or rejection of other types of activities is open to discussion. Consequently, in the following part of this chapter, we will thoroughly present a detailed argumentation in relationship to the answers (students' reactions) to each choice in the survey-questionnaire. Certainly, we will mainly put an emphasis on the statistics, the nature of the chosen activities and; eventually, the factors that have guided the students' preferences. In the last part, we will draw the necessary conclusions and comment on the results which would principally reflect the motives of English people comportment in terms of the respondents' foreign cultural behaviours, habits or preferred life styles. In addition, we will analyse the attitudinal parameters which would probably indicate the students' opinions, beliefs, values and awareness of the target culture.

4.1.2. Findings and Comments

The principal focus that has been put in the survey-questionnaire is concerned with the classification of the different categories in accordance with the students' choices and preferences. However, in the second part of the analysis we will discuss in details each category with respect to its sub-categories, options and activities in terms of statistical interpretations and comments. Consequently, we will indicate the classification and significance of each sub-category following a scale from the highest to the lowest positions. Indeed, our work consists of the description, analysis and interpretation of the three (3) top-ranking sub-categories which have determined the position of each category. Lastly, the presentation and arrangement of the classification will be concisely presented as follows.

4.1.2.1. Communal

The category Communal has scored 47.38% of the students' preferences and; therefore, it is ranked in the first position. The significance of such classification lies in the different subcategories and options that constitute this group of activities. As a matter of fact, we can observe that a large spectrum of socio-cultural components is displayed. Indeed, various target culture manifestations are incorporated and the first one is represented by the element Administration. Within this respect, students are offered opportunities to discover (learn) multiple aspects and procedures of administrative questions. For example, they can undertake classroom activities in relationship to the notices and announcements which emanate from the English administrative institutions.

In fact, this kind of materials can be incorporated and analysed in at least two courses of the Master Two teaching programmes namely Discourse Analysis and Academic Writing. As far as Discourse Analysis is concerned, students would probably study and interpret this kind of English written discourse; consequently, they would certainly have a better understanding of the organization, techniques and objectives of such written products. In addition, they would benefit from the information that they can grasp in connection with the English administration; on the other hand, they would be able to compare the administrative documents in the target and source speech communities. Concerning the Academic Writing course, this option obviously provides useful information about how to organize and write documents (notices, announcements, etc.) which are specifically elaborated to realize certain objectives such as: information, administrative procedures, and organization of certain administrative services.

In terms of figures, the number of students who have chosen this option is 43 students which represent 50% of the total number of Master Two students (86). The second option concerns the activities of translation (writing skills) and interpretation (speaking skills) of public announcements, notices and other documents. We notice that Master Two students aim at developing their linguistic and also socio-cultural skills. The number of students who have chosen this option is 31 students and it represents 36.05%. The third option is related to voting procedures; it is an interesting phenomenon of socio-cultural organization of the target culture speech community. However, only 19 students have selected this option and this represents 22.09% of the total number of students.

The following sub-category is Political Meetings which is composed of the option Understanding Speeches which has been chosen by 49 students which represents 56.98% of the students. The second option is Interpreting and it has been selected by 21 students which makes 24.42%. In reality, we observe that students are more concerned with the process of understanding the nature and aspects of the political meetings in the English speech society. The third sub-category is Market Transactions which is composed of just one option that is questioning and responding. The number of students who have chosen this option is 38 and it represents 44.19%. The last sub-category is Inter Village Tribal Exchanges and it is constituted of Understanding and Conversing activities. In fact, a great number of students have been interested in this option (59 students) which represents 68.60% of the total number of students.

4.1.2.2. Educational

The category Educational has obtained 45.91% of the students' preferences and it is ranked in the second position. The sub-category Medium of Instruction is composed of two options: the first one is the question of Understanding the Spoken and Written Announcements and Instructions which has been chosen by 28 students and that represents 32.50%. The second option is the acquisition of a high proficiency in the writing and speaking skills of the English language; in fact, 28 students have opted for this choice, it indicates 32.50%. We observe that there is a perfect parity between the numbers of students who have chosen the two options. Therefore, we can logically deduce that Master Two students' interests are concentrated on both the productive and receptive skills.

The sub-category Functional is made of only one option: Asking/Answering questions and it has been selected by 46 students which constitutes 53.49%. The sub-category Subjects is composed of five options. The first option is the issue of Understanding various Subject



Teachers which has been chosen by 38 students which equals 44.19%. The second option is Reading Textbooks which has been selected by 31 students which constitutes 36.05%. The third option is Writing Essays and Examination Papers which is the most interesting; because it has been chosen by 54 students which indicate 62.79%. The conclusion that we can draw in relationship to this top-score is that students are very concerned with their results in the different courses. Indeed, the factors of failure or success incite students to acquire the various techniques of writing in exams which would; eventually, enable them to succeed in their studies.

On the other hand, the remaining figures are less significant in terms of number of students and percentage; they are respectively Discussing Specialist Subjects (24 students-27.91%) and Using Reference Material (19 students- 22.09%). Besides, the sub-category English Study is composed of four (4) options. Two options have obtained very high scores; they are respectively Understanding Spoken English and Speaking Skills which has been ranked in the first position: 64 students representing 74.42%. The second option is Understanding and Answering Exam Papers: 51 students which indicate 59.30%. We can conclude that students are highly interested in two major aspects of the intercultural teaching/learning process: the first is the acquisition of proficiency in comprehension and speaking skills in the English language. The second is learning the different effective techniques of understanding and; ultimately, answering their exam papers. Moreover, the scores of the other two options are as follows: Writing Compositions, Summaries, and Exercises have been selected by 41 students and it indicates 47.67%; and Reading Prose and Poetry has been chosen by 37 students representing 43.02%.

4.1.2.3. Recreational

The category Recreational has been ranked in the third position of students' preferences (45.68%); however, these results are very close to the category Educational (45.91%), thus the difference is absolutely not significant. This category is constituted of seven (7) sub-categories; nevertheless, we will focus on only those (3) which have scored very high outcomes. The first position has been obtained by the sub-category Film which consists of understanding spoken English in films and reading (understanding) the different English captions: 74 students- 86.05%. The second sub-category is Television that consists of the same activities as the first option (Films): 53 students- 61.63%. The third sub-category is Travel which is composed of two (2) options: Asking and Answering Questions that are related to travelling activities and Reading Signs and Documents; the scores are: 41 students- 47.09%.

4.1.2.4. Occupational

This category is in the forth position with respect to students' choices. As we have proceeded with the other categories, we will concentrate on solely the most significant (or striking) figures. Hence, the first sub-category which has obtained top-scores is Restaurants. The figures of the two options are quite interesting because a particularly great number of students have chosen them. The first option is Understanding Spoken English in relationship to meals which has scored: 59 students- 68.60%. The second option is Answering Appropriately (sociocultural discussions with regard to meals or food in general) and it has scored: 61 students-70.93%.

The second sub-category is Hotels and it is constituted of five (5) options. However, only two (2) options are really significant in terms of defining the position of the category. Indeed, the first option is Interpreting for English speaking guests: 58 students- 67.44%. In addition, the second option is Answering Questions which are concerned with Hotel Business in relation to English speaking guests (tourists): 51 students- 59.30%.

4.1.2.5.Informational

The category Informational has been ranked in the last position. In fact, it is composed of three (3) options and all of them have obtained very low scores; indeed, the number of students does not exceed 40 students for each option. As a matter of fact, the highest outcome concerns the option: Answering and Asking questions: 39 students- 45.33%. Lastly, we presuppose that this category is in the final position because of the limited scope of the domains of information which are only confined within the governmental publications.

4.1.2.6. Interpretation of Tables

Communal Category

The first sub-category that represents a priority to students is Inter Village Tribal Exchanges (68.60%). Evidently, students are highly motivated to acquire abilities in order to discern various regional accents of the English language. They are particularly interested in social interactions that necessitate a high level proficiency in understanding and speaking certain English dialects. As far as the second sub-category- Market Transactions- is concerned (44.19%); it also constitutes an attractive domain to students. Hence, they want to learn how to conduct

(questioning and answering) market transactions at the regional level in the English language (socio-cultural and economic patterns).

The third choice is represented by the sub-category Political Meetings (40.70%). As a matter of fact, this is another indicator that students are greatly interested in the intercultural components of the foreign speech community. Indeed, they especially want to possess abilities in understanding and interpreting (listening comprehension) political speeches in the English language. The forth and last sub-category is Administration (36.05%). It appears that administrative discourse manifestations are less attractive to students; nevertheless, they are inclined to have some information about how to understand and interpret the administrative and political organization of public matters such as: understanding notices and public announcements, voting procedures and; lastly, translating or interpreting administrative or political discourse.

4.1.2.7. Tables Representing the Ranking and Percentage of Categories

| | Communal Caterory | Pref | ference | Sub-categories | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------|---------|----------------|-------|--|
| Sub-categories | Preferences | Number | % | Number | % | |
| | Understanding Notices, Public Announcements. | 43 | 50,00 | | | |
| ADMINISTRATION | Translating/Interpreting Public Announcements. | 31 | 36,05 | 31 | 36,05 | |
| | Understanding Voting Procedures, Papers. | 19 | 22,09 | - | | |
| POLITICAL | Understanding Speeches. | 49 | 56,98 | 25 | 40.70 | |
| MEETINGS | Interpreting. | 21 | 24,42 | 35 | 40,70 | |
| MARKET TRANSACTIONS | Questioning/Responding. | 38 | 44,19 | 38 | 44,19 | |
| INTER VILLAGE TRIBAL EXCHANGES | Understanding/Speaking i.e. Conversing. | 59 | 68,60 | 59 | 68,60 | |

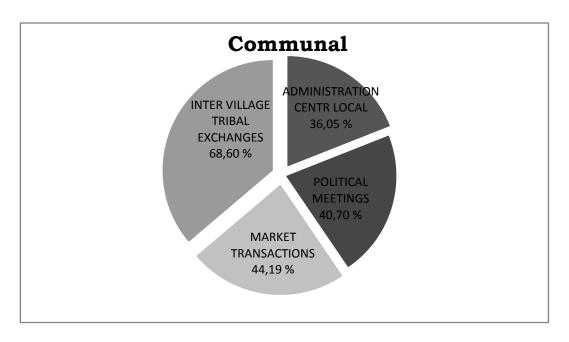


Chart1. Communal Category

Educational Category

This category- Educational- is ranked in the second place and the first subordinate category is English Study (56.10%). Concerning the linguistic proficiency (English Study) in the English language, students have opted for all the aspects of the instruction such as reading authentic materials (reading comprehension), speaking standard English, ability to write different types of written products (compositions, summaries, etc), speaking, listening comprehension and answering exams, writing and reading as a combined classroom activity.

The second sub-category is Functional (53.49%). The ability to answer and to question using the English language both in educational and social contexts. However, we believe that students are in this particular case more concerned with scores of their exams. Thus, it is possible to deduce that they are greatly motivated to succeed in acquiring a high proficiency in the foreign language.

The third sub-category is Subjects (38.60%). In fact, the option Writing Essays and Examination Papers takes the first position; it appears again that students prefer to master in the primary place the writing skills because it would probably enable them to answer the different



exams that are organized in each course of their programmes. We think that they clearly understand the utility of writing proficiency in the English language and; its role in determining (to a great extent) their success in the other courses. The following option is Reading Texts which implies that students are equally interested in the reading comprehension ability; because it is primordial for them to be able to understand the various textbooks and written materials which are used in their courses. The third option is Understanding Various Subjects; in fact, it is apparent that students assign a great deal of importance to the ability to grasp the varied authentic materials. Moreover, one would agree that the factor of comprehension is crucial with regard to not only the acquisition of the information but also the capability to use it in the testing operation. The forth option is Discussing Specialist Subjects. The score of this option is seemingly low; however, the students' general tendency is not related to the speaking skills as such; in fact they are just less interested in discussing particular topics (thematic discussions). As a matter of fact, they prefer to master a general speaking proficiency (i.e. they can debate all types of topics) in the English language. The fifth option is Using Reference Material and it is quite surprising that students place this choice in the last position. The reason is that Master Two students actually need this particular skill, because they are required to submit a dissertation at the end of their studies and; consequently, they would need this ability in order to manipulate the different resources which they would probably use.

The fourth and last sub-category is Medium of Instruction (32.56%). The present sub-category is divided into two major options: the first one is the Writing and Speaking skills and the second is Understanding Announcements and Instructions. The choice of the students is quite logical, because the scores are absolutely similar and; therefore, we can deduce that Master Two students give equal importance to the comprehension of the various announcements and instructions (receptive skills) but also the writing and speaking abilities in the English language (productive skills).

| | EDUCATIONAL Category | Preferences | | Sub- categorie | |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Sub-categories | Preferences | Number | % | Number | % |

| MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION | 1 2 | Understanding Spoken/Written Announcements and Instructions Written and Spoken. | 2 | 32,56 | 28 | 32,5 6 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--|----|----------|----|-----------|
| FUNCTIONAL | 1 | Asking/Answering Questions. | 46 | ,49 | 46 | 53,4 9 |
| | 1 | Understanding Various Subject Teachers. | 38 | 44,19 | | |
| | 2 | Reading Textbooks. | 31 | 31 36,05 | | 38,6 |
| SUBJECTS | 3 | Writing Essays, Examination Papers. | 54 | 62,79 | 33 | 0 |
| | 4 | Discussing Specialist Subjects. | 24 | 27,91 | | |
| | 5 | Using Reference Material. | 19 | 22,09 | | |
| | 1 | Understanding Spoken English/Speaking. | 64 | 74,42 | | |
| | 2 | Reading Prose and Poetry. | 37 | 43,02 | | |
| ENGLISH STUDY | Wrifing Compositions | | 41 | 47,67 | | 56,1 0 |
| | | | 1 | 59,30 | | |

Table2. Educational Category

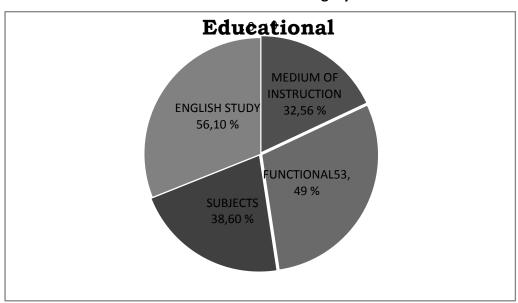


Chart2. Educational Category

Recreational Category

The sub-category Film has received a top score (86.05%) of students' preferences and it represents their first choice. It appears that students like to watch films which use the English



language medium. We understand that learners are more attracted by this kind of entertainment because it is both an enjoyable and educational means of learning the foreign language and having access to the target socio-cultural components. Moreover, students want to be able to read and understand the different English captions (or sub-titles) that accompany certain films and even when the medium (spoken) which is used in some films is not English (reading comprehension).

The second sub-category is Television (61.63%). Concerning this choice, the students have shown a similar interest as films; in other words, learners want to understand the English language used in the different television programmes along with any kind of written or other visual indications. It is also worth pointing out that television can combine entertainment and foreign language learning.

The third position is occupied by the sub-category Travel (47.09%). We can logically deduce that students have put this choice in such ranking because it is understandable that films and television are more accessible and necessitate less expense. However, students wish to be able to question and answer in the English language (while travelling) in order to gain cross-cultural information. Moreover, they want to read without any difficulties (i.e. to understand with relative ease) the various English signs and documents that they may need in the English or other speech communities.

The forth sub-category is Reading (39.53%). Students are actually interested in reading in the first place the English novels; in addition, they would like to acquire developed skills in reading (comprehension) with respect to English newspapers and magazines.

The fifth sub-category is Sport (35.47%). This socio-cultural component has attracted the students' attention in terms of acquiring the ability to read (and understand) magazines and articles in newspapers that are specialized in sports activities. In addition, students would like to grasp the different English sports comments (understanding the sports jargon or discourse) on radio and television.

The sixth sub-category is Theatre (29.07%). The activities in relationship to theatre display low scores; because young students are more interested in films and television programmes. In contrast, they also want to fully understand plays (even classical plays) in the

English language and to be able to read (reading comprehension) the various announcements and captions that are linked to theatre whenever necessary.

The seventh and last sub-category is Radio (20.93%). We think that the positioning of Radio at the bottom of the classification is to a certain extent comprehensible. The reason is that students are more attracted by modern audio-visual means (television, cinema, Internet, etc.) than just listening to the radio. On the contrary, a small number of students would like to understand (listening comprehension) the various English radio programmes because they think that radio is also an effective means that can provide authentic English materials.

| | | RECREATIONAL CATEGORY | Prefere | ences | Sub-categories | | |
|--------------------|---|--|---------|-------|----------------|-------|--|
| Sub- categories | | Preferences | Number | % | Number | % | |
| FILM | 1 | Understanding Spoken English, Reading Captions. | 74 | 86,05 | 74 | 86,05 | |
| RADIO | 1 | Understanding Spoken English. | 18 | 20,93 | 18 | 20,93 | |
| TELEVISION | 1 | Understanding Spoken English, Reading Captions. | 53 | 61,63 | 53 | 61,63 | |
| | 1 | Understanding Spoken English. | 25 | 29,07 | | | |
| THEATRE | 2 | Reading Announcements and Programmes. | 25 | 29,07 | 25 | 29,07 | |
| CDODT | 1 | Reading Sporting Magazines, Newspaper Articles. | 23 | 26,74 | 21 | 25 47 | |
| SPORT | 2 | Understanding Spoken (radio) reports of Events. | 38 | 44,19 | 31 | 35,47 | |
| TRAVEL | 1 | Asking/ Answering Questions concerning Travel Requirements, Simple Buying. | 43 | 50,00 | 41 | 47,09 | |
| | 2 | Reading Signs and Documents. | 38 | 44,19 | | | |
| READING | 1 | Understanding Newspapers, Magazines, Special Interest Literature. | 33 | 38,37 | 34 | 39,53 | |
| | 2 | Novels. | 35 | 40,70 | | | |

Table3. Recreational Category.

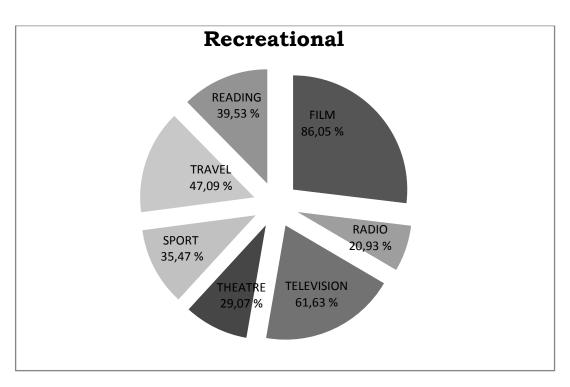


Chart3. Recreational Category

Occupational Category

The first ranked sub-category is Restaurants (69.77%). We notice that this component of the target culture has interested the Master Two students. Indeed, learners have focussed on two major elements which are the understanding of spoken English in connection with Food in general; in addition, they wan to acquire an ability to hold appropriate discussions (from the socio-cultural perspective) in English in relationship to meals.

The second sub-category is Hotels (48.14%). The students show a preference for the interpretation and translation (listening comprehension) in addition to conversing (speaking) with guests who are native speakers of English. The other interesting element is that Master Two students are particularly interested in Hotel Business; in other words, they want to acquire proficiency in English of Tourism. Moreover, they would like to develop their abilities in specific reading and writing skills with respect to correspondence within the domain of tourism. However, they do not assign too much importance to translating correspondence; because they probably do not feel the need to translate documents as long as it is possible to directly converse with native speakers of English (particularly tourists).

The third sub-category is Education (44.19%). It is important to clarify that this component is placed within a perspective of future occupation or profession (teaching the English language). Consequently, the majority of students seem to be ambitious since they aspire to work at university level. This situation requests an ability to discuss (and explain) all types of school subjects. Then, students assign an equal importance to develop skills particularly in reading and writing articles and comprehending textbooks (reading comprehension and writing skills) on special cultural topics. As a matter of fact, students imagine that it would not be possible to discuss (as teachers) certain cultural components of the foreign speech community if they do not actually master complex cultural subjects. In contrast, there are some students who prefer to focus on the speaking skills and to acquire an ability to ask and answer oral questions using the English language. On the other hand, we observe that two particular options are classified in lower positions namely: Writing Materials for English Medium Purposes; and giving instructions for general administrative or Specialist Subject purposes. We suppose that students do not imagine any professional perspective at the local level in connection to writing specific administrative documents; because very rare job offers (to English graduates) exist within this context.

The fourth sub-category is Medicine (39.24%). The first ranked option (or preference) of students is the ability to understand technical lectures or the English of Medicine. Besides, they aim at acquiring proficiency in discussing medical matters (in terms of questioning and answering) with native speakers of English. The following point concerns the reading skills, particularly with regard to journals and magazines specialized in Medicine. However, students rank at the lowest level the option of discussing technical (medical) matters at conferences; because they are not really concerned with the question (not students of Medicine).

The fifth sub-category is Law (37.21%). Master Two students are additionally interested in English legal discourse. In fact, they want to master (comprehend) legal discussions in English that occur in different conferences and meetings. Meanwhile, they do not actually neglect the writing and reading skills of legal documents.

The sixth sub-category is Administration (33.72%). Then first element which is given importance by the majority of students is the ability to discuss (hold a conversation) administrative questions with native and non-native speakers of English. In addition, the following element is quite surprising since students prefer to learn how to translate into English legal documents, communiqués and newspapers articles. We believe that students place

translation activities within a professional perspective. As a matter of fact, in some foreign countries, the offerings of the Master studies programmes can be in the form of a combination between applied language studies and interpretation and translation. Furthermore, students seek to acquire writing skills especially in administrative matters. Again, we observe that students do not neglect any other skill; indeed, they have shown their interest in not only the speaking skills (conversing in literary, cultural and political topics but also the reading skills (reading and comprehending the administrative reports, communiqués and newspapers articles). Moreover, students would like to have insights into the administrative procedures in the English speech community; especially understanding and answering files and enquiries. Additionally, the other elements which have attracted less interest are given similar ranking; they are Negotiating and Interpreting documents, communiqués and newspapers articles. We think that students perceive the non-usefulness of such skills because of the very low probability of job offerings within this context. The last element is Issuing Notices for general information and in relation to this situation; students logically believe that it is highly improbable that they would be required to elaborate administrative notices or general information announcements.

The seventh sub-category is Commerce (32.27%). The first ranked element is Negotiating. We think that students have assigned the first place to the ability to negotiate (discuss) commercial questions because they imagine the possibility of obtaining a job in international business companies. Besides, they also positively foresee the second option; in other words, the translation of business correspondence (writing skills) is another professional perspective. For instance, the work in an international company may require special skills in translating commercial documents into English or Arabic. The other option concerns the Oral Instant Interpretation of commercial discourse (speaking skills) and transactions (we believe that the same motives have guided the students). The last element is corresponding (writing skills) in the written commercial discourse. On the whole, we notice that students do not actually dismiss any component of Commerce; indeed, they aspire to acquire all the language skills in English (reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension) in the commercial acts of communication. Moreover, they want to have further information about the technical questions with respect to Commerce issues.

The eighth sub-category is Farming (30.47%). It is obvious that this element has not actually attracted the interest of students. However, the subject is related to studies of English for specific purposes; therefore, students want to know how to read (grasp the sense) instructions and understand spoken technical advice in the farming jargon (reading and speaking skills in



professional discourse). Moreover, they would like to learn how to enquire (ask questions) in connection with a specific domain of activity. In contrast, the questions of translation and responding appropriately to spoken forms of instructions do not represent priorities to students. The reason is that there is a low probability that they would eventually work in the domain of farming.

The ninth sub-category is Industry (29.26%). It is clear that this sub-category does not constitute an actual need of students; consequently, they have classified it at the bottom of the ranking. As a matter of fact, we can advance two main causes of the students' selection: the first one is that they probably ignore the different job opportunities that can offer many industrial companies. The second possible reason is that students are more attracted by jobs that can be proposed by firms which work within the areas of banking, publicity, management or services in general. Despite this lack of interest, students wish to acquire abilities in order to read and discuss (reading comprehension and speaking skills) technical matters in relationship to industries. Furthermore, the same motives have probably driven a small number of students to choose the option of negotiating business contracts. Lastly, the question of correspondence (writing skills) in technical and business English is found at the lowest position. The possible reason is that students do not believe at present times that classical business correspondence is needed anymore; because a great number of modern technological means are available especially in the business and financial domains.

| | | Category Occupational. | Prefe | rences | Sub- categ | orios |
|--------------------|---|---|--------|--------|---------------|-------|
| Sub- categories | | Preferences | Number | % | Number | % |
| | 1 | Reading Instructions. | 34 | 39,53 | | |
| | 2 | Translating Instructions. | 18 | 20,93 | | |
| EADMING | 3 | Understanding Spoken Technical Advice and Instructions. | 32 | 37,21 | 26 | 20.47 |
| FARMING | 4 | Responding Appropriately in Spoken Form to Instructions. | 17 | 19,77 | 26 | 30,47 |
| | 5 | Asking Questions (spoken). | 30 | 34,88 | | |
| INDUSTRY | 1 | Reading | 32 | 37,21 | 25 | 29,26 |



| | | TechnicalInstructional Material. | | | | |
|----------|---|--|----|-------|----|-------|
| | 2 | TranslatingTechnicalIns tructionalMaterial. | 25 | 29,07 | - | |
| | 3 | Corresponding (Technical and Business). | 16 | 18,60 | | |
| | 4 | Interpreting Business Discussions. | 27 | 31,40 | | |
| | 5 | Negotiating Business Contracts. | 22 | 25,58 | | |
| | 6 | Discussing Technical or Management Developments. | 29 | 33,72 | | |
| | 1 | Corresponding. | 24 | 27,91 | | |
| | 2 | Translating Business Correspondence. | 28 | 32,56 | | |
| COMMERCE | 3 | Interpreting Business Correspondence/Trans actions. | 26 | 30,23 | 28 | 32,27 |
| | 4 | Negotiating. | 33 | 38,37 | | |
| | 1 | Translating Documents, Communiqués, Newspaper Articles | 39 | 45,35 | | |
| | 2 | Interpreting Documents, Communiqués, Newspaper Articles. | 21 | 24,42 | | |
| | 3 | Discussion with English and Non-English Nationals. | 44 | 51,16 | | |
| ADMINIS- | 4 | Negotiating. | 21 | 24,42 | | |
| TRATION | 5 | Conversing on Literary, Cultural and Political topics. | 30 | 34,88 | 29 | 33,72 |
| | 6 | Reading Reports, Communiqués, Newspapers. | 30 | 34,88 | | |
| | 7 | Understanding and AnsweringEnquiries. | 24 | 27,91 | | |
| | 8 | Issuing Notices for General Information. | 17 | 19,77 | | |
| | 9 | WritingAnnouncements . | 35 | 40,70 | | |
| MEDICINE | 1 | Reading TechnicalJournals, Textbooks. | 34 | 39,53 | 34 | 39,24 |
| | 2 | Discussing Technical | 18 | 20,93 | | |



| | | Matters at Conferences. | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|----|-------|----|-------|
| | 3 | Questioning and Answering English Speaking Patients on | 37 | 43,02 | | |
| | 4 | Medical Matters. UnderstandingTechnica l Lectures. | 46 | 53,49 | _ | |
| | 1 | Reading Legal Documents, Texts. | 30 | 34,88 | | |
| LAW | 2 | Discussing Legal Matters with English Speaking Clients. | 29 | 33,72 | 32 | 37,21 |
| LAW | 3 | Understanding Legal Discussions in English in International Conferences and Meetings. | 37 | 43,02 | 32 | 37,21 |
| | 1 | Reading Correspondence. | 35 | 40,70 | | |
| | 2 | Writing Replies to Correspondence. | 31 | 36,05 | | |
| HOTELS | 3 | TranslatingCorrespond ence. | 32 | 37,21 | 41 | 48,14 |
| HOTELS | 4 | Interpreting for English Speaking Guests. | 58 | 67,44 | 41 | 40,14 |
| | 5 | Answering Questions Concerned with Hotel Business in Relation to Guests. | 51 | 59,30 | | |
| RESTAURAN TS | 1 | Understanding Spoken English in Relation to Meals. | 59 | 68,60 | 60 | 69,77 |
| 13 | 2 | Answering Appropriately. | 61 | 70,93 | | |
| | 1 | Discoursing on School Subjects. | 44 | 51,16 | | |
| | 2 | Lecturing in College or University. | 57 | 66,28 | | |
| EDUCATION | 3 | Reading Articles, Textbooks. | 42 | 48,84 | 38 | 44,19 |
| - | 4 | Writing Material for English Medium Purposes. | 26 | 30,23 | | , |
| | 5 | Asking and Answering Questions in English Medium Situations. | 35 | 40,70 | | |



| 6 | 6 | Giving Instructions for General Administrative or Specialist Subject Purposes. | 20 | 23,26 | |
|---|---|---|----|-------|--|
| 7 | 7 | Writing Articles on Specialist Subjects. | 42 | 48,84 | |

Table4. Occupational Category.

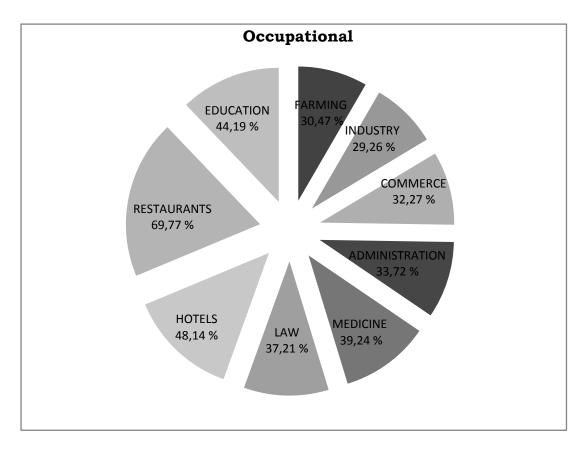


Chart4. Occupational Category

Informational Category

This category Informational (34.88%) is ranked in the last position and it is composed of three principal sub-categories which are as follows: Understanding Spoken and Written Announcements and Instructions, Filling in Forms and Asking/Answering Questions.

The first sub-category that has been assigned more importance is the ability to ask and answer questions (speaking skills) in the English language with respect to governmental publications. This choice reveals that students are really interested in political issues and; therefore, they wish to learn the different techniques of analysing and interpreting political discourse.



The second sub-category is concerned with the writing, speaking and comprehension skills in terms of official (or institutional) announcements and instructions. The students show also an interest in the study of a particular type of informational and political written discourse.

The third and last sub-category deals with the ability to fill (writing skills) forms or documents that emanate from governmental (official) institutions. However, we should point out that the present category does not in reality focus on political matters; in fact, it is more related to the analysis of the various documents (written discourse) that are employed in the different activities of political and social organizations. Evidently, the objective of such category is to

teach students the principal techniques of analysing political social written discourse.

| CATEGORY | | INFORMATIONAL | Preferenc | es | Sub-categories | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|-----------|-------|----------------|-------|--|
| Sub-categories | | Preferences | Number | % | Number | % | |
| GOVERNMENT | 1 | Understanding Spoken/Written Announcements and Instructions. | 30 | 34,88 | 30 | 34,88 | |
| PUBLICATIONS. | 2 | Filling in Forms. | 21 | 24,42 | | | |
| | 3 | Asking/Answerin g Questions. | 39 | 45,35 | | | |

Table 5. Informational Category.

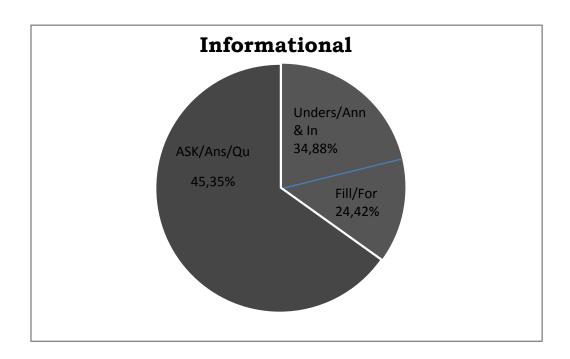


Chart5. Informational Category



| | | | | GENERAL CHOICES | | CATEGORIES | | PREFERENCES | |
|--------------------|------------|---|--|-----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| GENERAL CHOICES | CATEGORIES | | PREFERENCES | Number | Percentage % | Number | Percentage % | Number | Percen- tage % |
| | | 1 | Reading instructions. | | | | | 34 | 39,53 |
| | | 2 | Translating instructions. | | | | | 18 | 20,93 |
| | FARMING | 3 | Understanding spoken technical advice and instructions. | | | 26 | 30,47 | 32 | 37,21 |
| | | 4 | Responding appropriately in spoken form to instructions. | | _ | | | 17 | 19,77 |
| | | 5 | Asking questions (spoken discourse). | | | | | 30 | 34,88 |
| | | 1 | Reading technical instructional material. | 2 | | | | 32 | 37,21 |
| | | 2 | Translating technical instructional material. | | | | | 25 | 29,07 |
| | INDUCTOV | 3 | Corresponding (technical and business). | D D | | | 20.04 | 16 | 18,60 |
| | INDUSTRY | 4 | Interpreting business discussions. | 35 | 40,47 | 25 | 29,26 | 27 | 31,40 |
| OCCUPA- | | 5 | Negotiating business contracts. | | | | | 22 | 25,58 |
| TIONAL | | 6 | Discussing technical or management developments. | | | | | 29 | 33,72 |
| | | 1 | Corresponding. | | | | | 24 | 27,91 |
| | | 2 | Translating business correspondence. | | | | | 28 | 32,56 |
| | COMMEDCE | 3 | Interpreting business correspondence/ transactions. | | | | | 26 | 30,23 |
| | COMMERCE | 4 | Negotiating. | | | 28 | 32,27 | 33 | 38,37 |
| | ADMINISTR- | 1 | Translating documents, communiqués, newspaper articles. | - 6 | | 29 | 33,72 | 39 | 45,35 |
| | ATION | 2 | Interpreting communiqués, articles. | | | | | 21 | 24,42 |

| | 3 | Discussion with English and non-English nationals. | | | | 44 | 51,16 |
|-------------|---|---|----|----|-------|----|-------|
| | 4 | Negotiating. | | | | 21 | 24,42 |
| | 5 | Conversing on literary, cultural, political topics. | | | | 30 | 34,88 |
| | 6 | Reading reports, communiqués, newspapers. | | | | 30 | 34,88 |
| | 7 | Understanding and answering enquiries. | | | | 24 | 27,91 |
| | 8 | Issuing notices for general information. | | | | 17 | 19,77 |
| | 9 | Writing announcements. | 8 | | | 35 | 40,70 |
| | 1 | Reading technical journals, textbooks. | | | | 34 | 39,53 |
| MEDICINE | 2 | Discussing technical matters at conferences. | | 24 | 20.24 | 18 | 20,93 |
| MEDICINE | 3 | Questioning and answering English speaking patients on medical matters. | | 34 | 39,24 | 37 | 43,02 |
| 6 | 4 | Understanding technical lectures. | | | | 46 | 53,49 |
| | 1 | Reăding legal documents, texts. * | +3 | | | 30 | 34,88 |
| | 2 | Discussing legal matters with English speaking clients. | | 32 | 37,21 | 29 | 33,72 |
| LAW | 3 | Understanding legal discussions in English in international conferences and meetings. | | | | 37 | 43,02 |
| | 1 | Reading correspondence. | | | | 35 | 40,70 |
| | 2 | Writing replies to correspondence. | | | | 31 | 36,0 |
| HOTELS | 3 | Translating correspondence. | | 41 | 48,14 | 32 | 37,2 |
| 1101013 | 4 | Interpreting for English speaking guests. | | 71 | 10,17 | 58 | 67,4 |
| | 5 | Answering questions concerned with hotel business in relation to guests. | | | | 51 | 59,30 |
| RESTAURANTS | 1 | Understanding spoken English in relation to meals. | | 60 | 69,77 | 59 | 68,60 |
| | 2 | Answering appropriately. | | | | 61 | 70,9 |
| | 1 | Discoursing on school subjects. | | 20 | 44 10 | 44 | 51,10 |
| | 2 | Lecturing in college or university. | | 38 | 44,19 | 57 | 66,28 |



| | EDUCATION | 3 | Reading articles, textbooks. | | | | | 42 | 48,84 |
|---------|-------------------|---|--|----|-------|---------|----------------|----|-------|
| | | 4 | Writing material for English medium purposes. | | | | | 26 | 30,23 |
| | | 5 | Asking and answering questions in English medium situations. | | | | | 35 | 40,70 |
| | | 6 | Giving instructions for general administrative or specialist subject purposes. | | | | | 20 | 23,26 |
| | | 7 | Writing articles on specialist subjects. | | | | | 42 | 48,84 |
| | FILM | 1 | Understanding spoken English, reading captions. | | | 74 | 86,05 | 74 | 86,05 |
| | RADIO | 1 | Understanding spoken English, reading captions. | | | 18 | 20,93 | 18 | 20,93 |
| | TELEVISION | 1 | Understanding spoken English, reading captions. | 3 | | 53 | 61,63 | 53 | 61,63 |
| RECREA- | THEATRE | 1 | Understanding spoken English, reading captions. | 39 | 45,68 | 25 | 29,07 | 25 | 29,07 |
| TIONAL | | 2 | Reading announcements, programmes. | | | | | 25 | 29,07 |
| | SPORT | 1 | Reading sporting magazines, newspaper articles. | | | 24 | 05.48 | 23 | 26,74 |
| | Jruni | 2 | Understanding spoken (radio) reports of events. | | | 31 | 35,47 | 38 | 44,19 |
| | TRAVEL READING | 1 | Asking / answering questions concerning travel requirements, simple buying. | | | 41 | 47,09 | 43 | 50,00 |
| | | 2 | Reading signs, documents. | | | 7000000 | and the second | 38 | 44,19 |
| | | 1 | Understanding newspapers, magazines, special interest literature. | | | 34 | 39,53 | 33 | 38,37 |

| | | 2 | Novels. | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---|--|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|
| | | | | | | | | 35 | 40,70 |
| INFORMA- TIONAL | GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS | 1 | Understanding spoken/written announcements and instructions. | 30 | 34,88 | 30 | 34,88 | 30 | 34,88 |
| | | 2 | Filling in forms. | | | | | 21 | 24,42 |
| | | 3 | Asking/answering questions. | | | | | 39 | 45,35 |
| EDUCA- TIONAL | MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION | 1 | Understanding spoken/written announcements and instructions. | | | 28 | 32,56 | 28 | 32,56 |
| | | 2 | Written and spoken. | | | | | 28 | 32,56 |
| | FUNCTIONAL | 1 | Asking/answering questions. | | | 46 | 53,49 | 46 | 53,49 |
| | SUBJECTS | 1 | Understanding various subject teachers. | 39 | 45,19 | 48 | 38,60 | 38 | 44,19 |
| | | 2 | Reading textbooks. | | | | | 31 | 36,05 |
| | | 3 | Writing essays, examination papers. | | | | | 54 | 62.79 |
| | | 4 | Discussing specialist subjects. | | | | | 24 | 27,91 |
| | | 5 | Using reference material. | | | | | 19 | 22,09 |
| | ENGLISH STUDY | 1 | Understanding spoken English/speaking. | | | | | 64 | 74,42 |
| | | 2 | Reading prose and poetry. | | | | | 37 | 43,02 |
| | | 3 | Writing compositions, summaries, exercises. | | | | | 41 | 47,67 |
| | | 4 | Understanding and answering exam papers. | | | | | 51 | 59,30 |
| COMMU- NAL | ADMINISTR- ATION | 1 | Understanding notices, public announcements. | 41 | 47,38 | 35 | 36,05 | 43 | 50,00 |
| | | 2 | Translating/interpreting public announcements. | | | | | 31 | 36,05 |
| | | 3 | Understanding voting procedures, papers. | | | | | 19 | 22,09 |
| | POLITICAL MEETINGS | 1 | Understanding speeches. | | | | 40,70 | 49 | 56,98 |
| | | 2 | Interpreting. | | | | | 21 | 24,42 |



| MARKET TRANSACTION | 1 | Questioning/responding. | 38 | 44,19 | 38 | 44,19 | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|----|-------|----|-------|--|
| INTER VILLAGE TRIBAL EXCHANGES | 1 | Understanding/speaking i.e. conversing. | 59 | 68,60 | 59 | 68,60 | |

Table6. General Scores and Positions of Categories

ALL CATEGORIES 34.88 45.91 45.68 40.47 % % OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATIONAL RECREATIONAL INFORMATIONAL COMMUNAL 69.77 86.05 RESTAURANTS 34.88 68.60 GOVERMENT 56.10 FILM % INTER VILLAGE ENGLISHSTUDY **PUBLICATIONS** TRIBALEXCHANGE 48.14 61.63 HOTELS TELEVISION % MARKET 44.19 FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION % TRANSACTIONS 47.09 TRAVEL % 38.60 39.24 40.70 MEDECINE SUBJECTS POLITICAL % % 39.53 READING MEETINGS 37.2**T** LAW % 32.56 MEDIUMOF 35.47 36.0 % INSTRUCTION 33.72 ADIMISTRATION SPORT % ADMINISTRATIO 29.07 32.27 THEATRE COMMERCE % 20.93 30.47 RADIO FARMING 29.26 INDUSTRY

Table7: Statistical Representation of all Categories

4.2. Workshops and the T-Test

4.2.1. Description and Interpretation

Pre-Test

The pre-test is basically an assessment of learning which we have utilized in order to evaluate the students who constitute our sample study; namely, the eighty-six students enrolled in the Second Year Master programme of Applied Language Studies. The main objective is to determine the learners' levels of proficiency in the English language in terms of the quality and effectiveness of the general teaching process (particularly at university level). In fact, the type of assessment is simply summative; accordingly, we have deliberately intended to test solely the students' linguistic mastery in the English language. Therefore, the kind of tasks that we have incorporated in the pre-test focuses on the amount and quality of knowledge which students have acquired.

Indeed, 'traditional' activities have been selected such as:

- Comprehension checks;
- Vocabulary: matching and selection of meanings;
- Language practice: grammatical derivation, complete sentences using prompts;
- Re-arrangement of sentences;
- Essay writing.

On the other hand, the application of the pre-test has resulted with the following outcomes:

Table 8

* Experimental Group

The table displays the pre-test marks of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) of Master 2 and; we can make the following observations.

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 17 | 10 |
| 7 | 11 |
| 4 | 11.50 |
| 5 | 12 |
| 6 | 12.50 |
| 4 | 13 |

* Control Group:

The same table (1) also indicates the scores of the control group (on the right of the table, 43 students) of Master 2; the results are as follows:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 2 | 8 |
| 2 | 9 |
| 13 | 10 |
| 10 | 11 |
| 5 | 11.5 |
| 11 | 12 |

Interpretation

Graph 1: Experimental Group

The marks of the experimental group vary from 10 to 13; however, the majority of students (17) have obtained an average mark of 10 and the top-score has been realized by only 4 students. Moreover, there are no students who have been graded below the average mark (10). Therefore, we can deduce that this group is composed of average level learners; in addition, there are no students with very weak scores.

Graph 2: Control Group

The marks of the control group vary from 8 to 12; we notice that a large number of students (24) have scored marks that are comprised between 10- 12. On the other hand, 2 students have not reached the average mark (10); moreover, the highest result is only 12. Consequently, these marks also reflect the average level of students of the control group even if a very small number of students (2) have not obtained the average score.

Conclusion

Graph 3: Experimental and Control Groups

The primary conclusion that we can draw from graph 3 is the obvious fact that the experimental and control groups display very close levels of foreign language proficiency (English). Additionally, we can deduce that such levels are acceptable because they clearly indicate the usual scores of foreign language classes; except for the point that there are no extremely high or low scores.

Workshop One

Description

As far as the workshops are concerned, we have adopted a formative assessment type of evaluation. In fact, we believe that this kind of assessment fulfils the requirements of an intermediary evaluation in terms of:

- The instructor evaluation during the course of teaching (workshops);
- The possible feedback into the teaching/learning process;
- The grading of different tasks.

On the other hand, we should point out that in the present workshop; we have initiated the application of a new procedure (experiment) with the experimental group; in contrast, we have continued to work with the control group following the 'traditional' types of activities. Within this context, we have practised with the experimental group some novel types of tasks that take into account the cultural dimension of the target language in the teaching process. Indeed, the main principle on which all of the activities are based is the use of the target cultural components as a language-learning resource. Consequently, we have adopted the kind of activities which allow a comparative analysis of the various cultural behaviours in the native and foreign communities. For example, we can cite tasks such as: brainstorming, culture match or culture chart.

In summation, the results of Workshop One are summarized as follows:

Table 9

* Experimental Group

The scores of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) can be arranged in this manner:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | 10 |
| 15 | 11 |
| 2 | 11.5 |
| 15 | 12 |
| 5 | 12.5 |
| 5 | 13 |

* Control Group

The same table (on the right of the table, 43 students) equally indicates the results of the control group in the following:

| Number of | Scores |
|-----------|--------|
| Students | |
| 11 | 10 |
| 25 | 11 |
| 7 | 12 |

Interpretation

Graph 4: Experimental Group

The marks of the experimental group vary from 10 to 13; nevertheless, this time (Workshop One) the majority of students have scored 11 and the top-score has been obtained by 5 students. Additionally, all of the students do not have below average grades or very weak marks. On the other hand, we notice that there are no minor improvements in the average scores of the majority of students; moreover, the number of students who have obtained a top-score has slightly increased.

Graph 5: Control Group

The scores of the control group are comprised between 10 and 12; however, the majority of students have obtained 11. The top-score has been realized by 7 students; moreover, we observe that this top-score represents solely a medium-level proficiency in the undertaking of the different activities. In contrast, it is noticeable that there are no students who have obtained marks below the average or extreme low marks.

Conclusion

Graph 6: Experimental and Control Groups

The main remark which we grasp from graph 6 is essentially that there is a simple improvement in the scores of the experimental group. In addition, students in the experimental group have not scored below the average mark. On the whole, we can conclude that at this stage (Workshop One) the levels (in terms of marks) of the two groups are still very close to each other.

Workshop Two

Description

In accordance with the procedure that we have adopted in the organization of the four workshops; we have equally employed a formative assessment type in the evaluation of the experimental and control groups. Certainly, we have already stated that we have assigned general objectives to the four workshops; however, each workshop should reach some particular goals. Within this respect, we have continued to apply the same procedure with the control group whereas in Workshop Two we have added new types of intercultural activities to the experimental group (in relationship with the cultural topic 'food' which has been selected by students). Hence, students have undertaken in the experimental group a number of activities such as: Cultural associations, Regional and Ethnic comparisons, and Conception of shopping lists (Corbett, 2010).

On the other hand, the significant figures of Workshop Two are organized and displayed as follows:

Table 10

* Experimental Group

The scores of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) are respectively:

| Number of | Scores |
|-----------|--------|
| Students | |
| 2 | 11 |
| 18 | 12 |
| 9 | 12.5 |
| 8 | 13 |
| 2 | 13.5 |
| 4 | 14 |

^{*} Control Group

The results of the control group (on the right of the table, 43 students) are the following:

| Number of | Scores |
|-----------|--------|
| Students | |
| 14 | 10 |
| 17 | 11 |
| 4 | 11.5 |
| 4 | 12 |
| 4 | 12.5 |

Interpretation

Graph 7: Experimental Group

The marks of the experimental group are comprised between 11 and 14; additionally, in the second workshop students of the experimental group have already started to show some remarkable changes. The first point is that the lowest mark is now 11; on the other hand, there is an increase in the highest mark which has become 14 and; it has been obtained by 4 students. Moreover, the number of students who have reached the score of 13 has also augmented (i.e. it has varied from 4 to 5 students in the pre-test and workshop one); namely, 8 students have been able to attain this mark. The other new positive modification is that 2 students have also scored 13.50 in Workshop Two as compared to the pre-test and workshop one.

Graph 8: Control Group

The scores of the control group vary from 10 to 12.50.; accordingly, we notice that for the first time (compared to the pre-test and workshop one) 4 students have obtained the mark of 12.50. However, the general feature that we have observed in the pre-test and workshop one still exists; in other words, the majority of students (17) have scored 11. Therefore, we can deduce that the overall level of the students of the control group (at this stage) is medium level and has not changed throughout workshops one and two. However, we should add that despite this modest level; all the students of the control group have not scored below the average.

Conclusion

Graph 9: Experimental and Control Groups

The principal observation that we can put forward is that the scores of the experimental group still remain superior to those of the control group. Additionally, it is noticeable that the positive scores (high levels) of the experimental group have been steadily increasing from workshop one to workshop two. In opposition, the results of the control group have stayed static (in a negative sense) except for three or four cases which cannot be regarded as really significant.

Workshop Three

Description

In Workshop Three we have maintained the application of the formative type of assessment in the evaluation of the experimental and control groups. In fact, this kind of evaluation throughout the three workshops has reflected to a great extent the actual levels of students who constitute the two groups. In addition, a special emphasis has been put on cross-cultural reading/writing tasks which are characterized by the employment of educational games such as: Generating background knowledge, Clues to guess meaning, Annotating and Clustering ideas from reading (R. Spack, 2007).

As a matter of fact, the outcomes of Workshop Three are indicated in the following:

Table 11

* Experimental Group

The results of the evaluation of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) are summarized as follows:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 2 | 11 |
| 2 | 11.5 |
| 13 | 12 |
| 10 | 12.5 |
| 6 | 13 |
| 7 | 13.5 |
| 3 | 14 |

* Control Group

The scores of the assessment of the control group (on the right of the table, 43 students) are the following:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 9 |
| 5 | 10 |
| 2 | 10.5 |
| 24 | 11 |
| 5 | 11.5 |
| 2 | 12 |



Interpretation

Graph 10: Experimental Group

The marks of the experimental group are comprised between 11 and 14; however, a large number of students (13) have attained the score of 12. We can remark that the middle score of 10 is not any more obtained by students (i.e. at this level they can do better) and the mark 11 concerns only a very small number of students (2). Consequently, we advance that the scores of the experimental group are regularly improving in terms of the attainment of high levels of achievements. In addition, we point out that the disparities among students' levels have also decreased within a positive perspective. Indeed, an important number of students of the experimental group have ameliorated their results (30 students out of 43) throughout the organization of the three workshops.

Graph 11: Control Group

The scores of the control group vary from 8 to 12; as a result, we remark that some students (5) cannot reach the average mark. Moreover, a great number of students (31) can hardly obtain the medium average mark. On the other hand, we observe that students of the control group are unable to attain high scores; as a matter of fact, the levels of realizations do not really improve. In addition, we notice that only 2 students have scored 12; therefore, we can logically conclude that the results of the control group are unsatisfactory with respect to the number of students (43) who constitute this group.

Conclusion

Graph 12: Experimental and Control Groups

The constant observation which is worth mentioning is that the experimental group maintains its superiority over the control group; as a matter of fact, the students of the experimental group are regularly improving on their levels of achievements. Unfortunately, the results of the control group do not actually progress; on the contrary, throughout the three workshops it clearly appears that the levels of some students (in the control group) do regress.

Workshop Four

Description

In Workshop Four, as it has been planned previously, we have equally utilized a formative type of assessment in the evaluation of the experimental and control groups. As a matter of fact, we remind that the tasks of Workshop Four are intended to indicate how well the students are progressing along with the precise valuation of the effectiveness of these activities. As far as the experimental group is concerned, we have once again introduced new tasks in connection with the cultural topic of the fourth workshop. Indeed, this subject deals with the use and the role of newspapers cross-culturally; therefore, students have worked on activities such as Front-page Features and Headlines (B. Tomalin and S. Stempleski, 1993).

On the other hand, we have arranged the scores of the two groups as follows:

Table 12

* Experimental Group

The results of the assessment of the different tasks of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) are:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | 12 |
| 4 | 12.5 |
| 15 | 13 |
| 12 | 13.5 |
| 5 | 14 |
| 4 | 14.5 |
| 2 | 15 |

* Control Group

The outcomes of the evaluation of the control group (on the right of the table, 43 students) are:

| Number of Students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 2 | 8 |
| 1 | 8.5 |
| 1 | 9 |
| 16 | 10 |
| 3 | 10.5 |
| 14 | 11 |



| 4 | 11.5 |
|---|------|
| 1 | 12 |
| 1 | 12.5 |

Interpretation

Graph 13: Experimental Group

The scores of the experimental group vary from 12 to 15; in fact, a great number of students (15) have obtained a quite 'good' mark (13). In addition, it is noticeable that for the first time (as compared to the pre-test and the other workshops) 2 students have been able to reach a high mark level (15). As a matter of fact, the improvements of the experimental group scores are evident; actually, the lowest mark is 12 and it has been obtained by only (in a positive sense) 1 student. Moreover, 21 students have scored marks between 13.50 and 14.50. On the other hand, the discrepancies between the students' scores have continued to decrease. Therefore, we think that it is a positive indicator with regard to the fact that the ameliorations of students' levels have concerned all the members of the experimental group. In short, we can already deduce (in relationship to the present results and before the post-test) that the work realized throughout the different workshops has been successful to a certain extent (at least on the level of students' better scores).

Graph 14: Control Group

The results of the control group are contained between 8 and 12.50.; indeed, the most obvious observation is that there is a total absence of progression in the students' marks of the control group. In fact, some students (4) are still unable to obtain the average (medium) grade. Besides, a large number of students (16) have only reached the average mark (10); and the relative 'best' grade (12.50.) has been realized by solely 1 student. On the other hand, our judgement (or actually first appreciation) of the marks of the control group can only be pessimistic. The reason is that it is scarcely a motive of satisfaction that 37 students (out of 43) have been graded low marks (10-11.50.).

Conclusion

Graph 15: Experimental and Control Groups

Obviously, the premise of logical reasoning already drives us to the preliminary general conclusion that the 'traditional' teaching activities; which have been practised by the students of the control group, are remarkably ineffective and students of the control group seem to be highly de-motivated. Additionally, we notice that the students of the experimental group have continued to ameliorate their scores (from Workshop One to Workshop Four). Moreover, the superiority of the experimental group (at least in terms of scores) has become much more evident. In summation, the comparison of the scores of the experimental and control groups undoubtedly demonstrates that students of the experimental group have followed a dynamic positive and increasing graphic curve; in contrast, the results of the control group have remained static.

Post-Test

Description

As far as the post-test is concerned, we have adopted an additional technique in the evaluation of the experimental and control groups. Indeed, we have introduced two types of assessment, the first kind is the formative assessment and the second is the ipsative assessment (in addition to the usual classroom discussions). In fact, the main objective of the formative evaluation is essentially the testing of the feedback on coursework. On the other hand, the incorporation of the ipsative assessment in the form of classroom interactions is intended to encourage students (of both groups) to effectively participate in the experiment; principally, through the discussion of their opinions and the presentation of peers evaluations. Indeed, the general aims that we have assigned to the ipsative assessment are summarized in the following:

- The comparison of the students' current performance and proficiency that are prior to the experiment; in fact, the process occurs simply in the form of exchange of opinions about the other's (peers) achievements.
- We have integrated both the instructor and peer feedback together; however, we have voluntarily limited our interventions and we have concentrated on the organization and conduct of classroom discussions.
- Students' self-assessment statements concerned not only the different types of activities which have been practised in the post-test; but also the tasks that have been adopted in the four workshops.

Furthermore, we have incorporated in the post-test two kinds of activities: in the first type of tasks we have focussed on students' foreign language linguistic mastery. However, in the second type of activities we have aimed at actually testing the target culture knowledge of the experimental and control groups. Within this respect, the activities of the foreign linguistic proficiency have emphasized the usual tasks such as: Comprehension checks, Vocabulary and Language (formal) practice. In contrast, the activities that have concerned the evaluation of the intercultural teaching process have assigned tasks like Face to face conversations, Investigation of non-verbal communication (eye contact and body language), Writing short reports from field research and; principally, Exploring various foreign cultural behaviours, values and attitudes.

Finally, the scores of the experimental and control groups are presented in the following:

Table 13

* Experimental Group

The results of the post-test evaluation of the experimental group (on the left of the table, 43 students) are:

| Number of students | Scores |
|--------------------|--------|
| 12 | 13 |
| 10 | 13.5 |
| 9 | 14 |
| 7 | 14.5 |
| 5 | 15 |

* Control Group

The scores of the post-test assessment of the control group (on the right of the table, 43 students) are as follows:

| Number of | Scores |
|-----------|--------|
| students | |
| 2 | 8 |
| 2 | 9 |
| 5 | 10 |
| 1 | 10.5 |
| 16 | 11 |
| 9 | 11.5 |
| 6 | 12 |
| 2 | 12.5 |

Interpretation

Graph 16: Experimental Group

The results of the post-test are quite encouraging; indeed, they generally vary from 13 to 15. Hence, we observe that there is a significant improvement on the scores of the experimental group students; in fact, the lowest mark is 13 and it has been realized by 12 students (in the positive sense). We believe that such a partial achievement in itself is a positive indicator of the developments of students' proficiency not only on the linguistic level but on the target culture mastery as well. Additionally, the highest score (15) has equally increased in terms of the number of students who have realized it (5 instead of 2). On the other hand, the average marks (13.50-14.50.) have also augmented in relationship to the level and number of students who have obtained such scores (26).



Therefore, we think that it is an interesting realization because more than 50% of the students in the experimental group have been able to attain high level scores in the different kinds of activities. On the whole, the primary interpretation with regard to these grades is that the intercultural foreign language teaching process has generally succeeded throughout the practice of linguistic and target culture activities in the four workshops.

Graph 17: Control Group

In the first place, we notice that the grades of the control group have not noticeably changed; indeed, they are still comprised between 8 and 12.50. Therefore, as it has been the case previously in workshop four, there are no signs of any kind of developments in the students' marks. As a matter of fact, there are some students who are still unable to attain the average mark; despite the extensive practice of different activities. In addition, the medium grades (10-12) remain weak (as compared to the experimental group) and the number of students who have scored them is very high (37 out of 43). However, the number of students who have reached the 'highest' mark in the control group is very limited: only 2 students in comparison with the whole number of students (43) who constitute the control group. In short, our global appreciation of the control group is that the results are unsatisfactory and; they can serve as indicators of the relative failure in the realization of the various objectives that have been assigned to the foreign language formal activities.

Conclusion

Graph 18: Experimental and Control Groups

The partial conclusion that we draw is that the 'traditional' types of the foreign language teaching activities (linguistic proficiency) have been not only unsuccessful in relationship to their attributed goals; but they have also constituted a de-motivating factor of students in acquiring the foreign language (English). As a matter of fact, a simple comparison of the scores of the experimental and control groups shows that the 'best' mark in the control group (12.50.) is not even equal to the 'lowest' grade (13) in the experimental group. Besides, the controversy is that the marks of the control group have continued to be absolutely 'static' (in the negative sense) whereas the grades of the experimental group have remarkably increased (positive high scores). Generally, the common feature that we have constantly noticed in the scores of the four workshops and the post-test is that the experimental group has remained superior in terms of foreign linguistic and cultural proficiency.

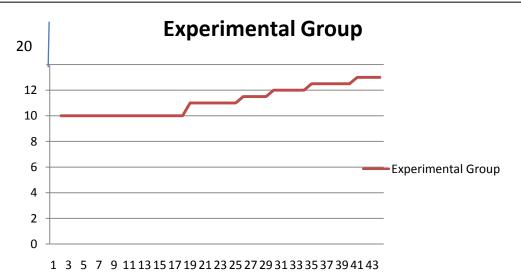
Pre-Test Scores

| Experiment | al Group: 43 | | |
|------------|--------------|---------|--------------------|
| students | • | Control | Group: 43 students |
| 1 | 10 | 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 10 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 10 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 | 10 | 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 10 | 5 | 10 |
| 6 | 10 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 10 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 10 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | 10 | 11 | 10 |
| 12 | 10 | 12 | 10 |
| 13 | 10 | 13 | 10 |
| 14 | 10 | 14 | 10 |
| 15 | 10 | 15 | 10 |
| 16 | 10 | 16 | 10 |
| 17 | 10 | 17 | 10 |
| 18 | 11 | 18 | 11 |
| 19 | 11 | 19 | 11 |
| 20 | 11 | 20 | 11 |
| 21 | 11 | 21 | 11 |
| 22 | 11 | 22 | 11 |
| 23 | 11 | 23 | 11 |
| 24 | 11 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 11,5 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 11,5 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 11,5 | 27 | 11 |
| 28 | 11,5 | 28 | 11,5 |
| 29 | 12 | 29 | 11,5 |
| 30 | 12 | 30 | 11,5 |
| 31 | 12 | 31 | 11,5 |
| 32 | 12 | 32 | 11,5 |
| 33 | 12 | 33 | 12 |
| 34 | 12,5 | 34 | 12 |
| 35 | 12,5 | 35 | 12 |
| 36 | 12,5 | 36 | 12 |
| 37 | 12,5 | 37 | 12 |
| 38 | 12,5 | 38 | 12 |
| 39 | 12,5 | 39 | 12 |

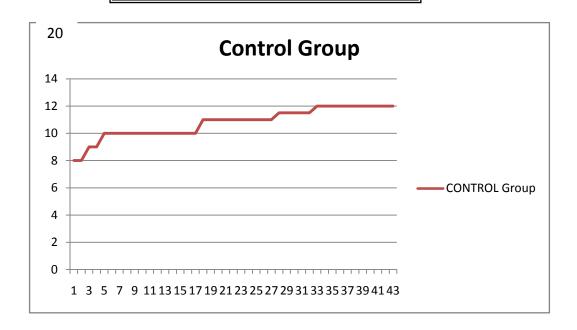


| 40 | 13 | 40 | 12 |
|----|----|----|----|
| 41 | 13 | 41 | 12 |
| 42 | 13 | 42 | 12 |
| 43 | 13 | 43 | 12 |

Table 8. Scores of Experimental and Control Groups.

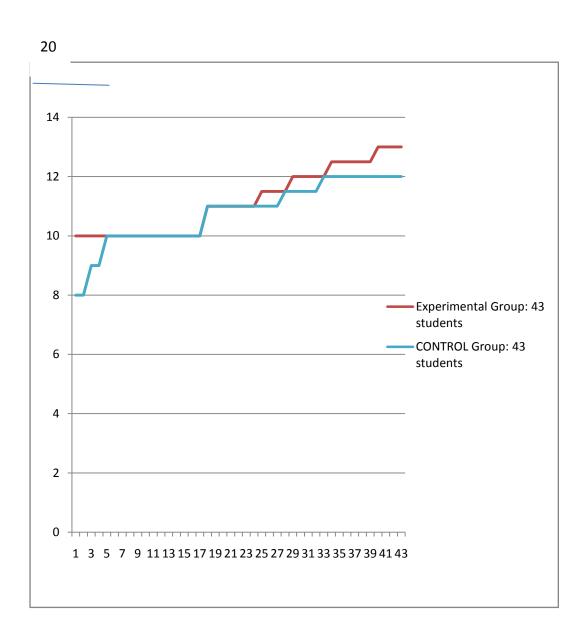


Graph 1. Experimental Group.



Graph 2 . Experimental Group,





Graph 3. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.

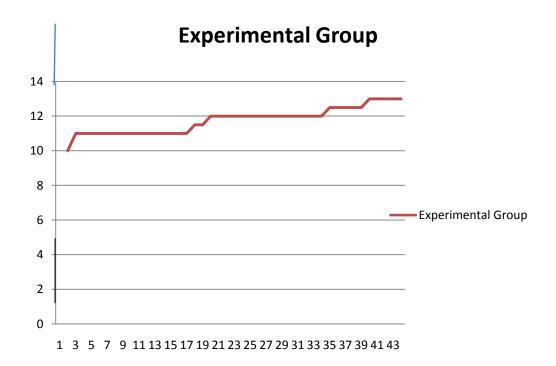
Workshop One Scores

| Experi | imental Group: 43 | Contro studen | ol Group: 43 |
|--------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| 2 | 11 | 2 | 10 |
| 3 | 11 | 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 11 | 4 | 10 |
| 5 | 11 | 5 | 10 |
| 6 | 11 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 11 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 11 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 11 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| 12 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| 13 | 11 | 13 | 11 |
| 14 | 11 | 14 | 11 |
| 15 | 11 | 15 | 11 |
| 16 | 11 | 16 | 11 |
| 17 | 11,5 | 17 | 11 |
| 18 | 11,5 | 18 | 11 |
| 19 | 12 | 19 | 11 |
| 20 | 12 | 20 | 11 |
| 21 | 12 | 21 | 11 |
| 22 | 12 | 22 | 11 |
| 23 | 12 | 23 | 11 |
| 24 | 12 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 12 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 12 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 12 | 27 | 11 |
| 28 | 12 | 28 | 11 |
| 29 | 12 | 29 | 11 |
| 30 | 12 | 30 | 11 |
| 31 | 12 | 31 | 11 |
| 32 | 12 | 32 | 11 |
| 33 | 12 | 33 | 11 |
| 34 | 12,5 | 34 | 11 |
| 35 | 12,5 | 35 | 11 |
| 36 | 12,5 | 36 | 11 |
| 37 | 12,5 | 37 | 12 |
| 38 | 12,5 | 38 | 12 |
| 39 | 13 | 39 | 12 |
| 40 | 13 | 40 | 12 |
| 41 | 13 | 41 | 12 |



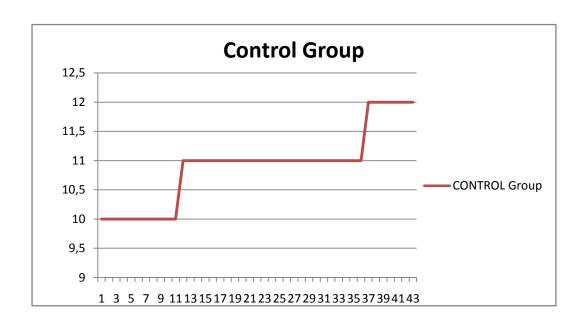
| 42 | 13 | 42 | 12 |
|----|----|----|----|
| 43 | 13 | 43 | 12 |

Table 9. Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.

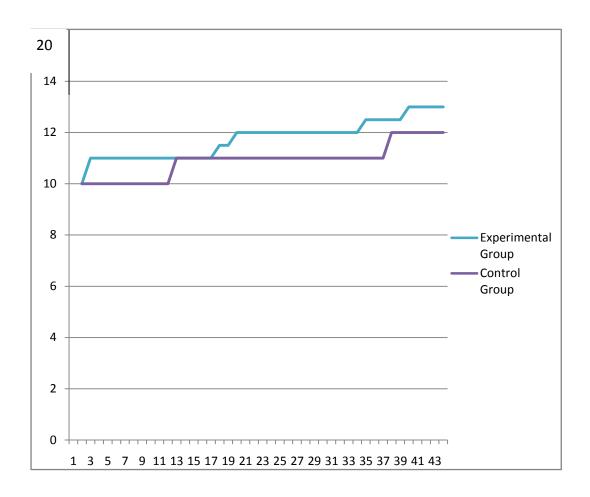


Graph 4. Experimental Group.





Graph 5. control Group.



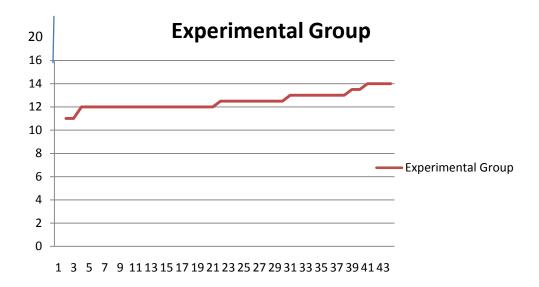
Graph6. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.

WorkshopTwo Scores

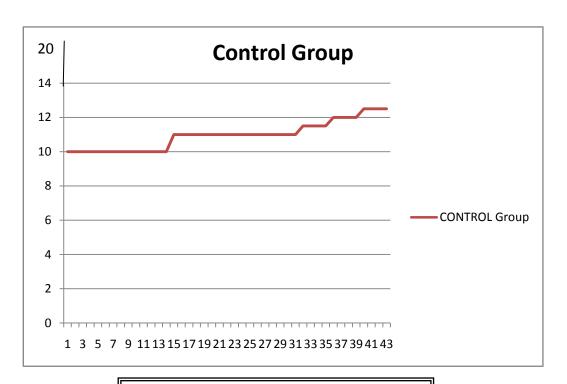
| Experime | ntal Group: 43 students | Control Grou | up: 43 students |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 11 | 1 | 10 |
| 2 | 11 | 2 | 10 |
| 3 | 12 | 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 12 | 4 | 10 |
| 5 | 12 | 5 | 10 |
| 6 | 12 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 12 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 12 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 12 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 12 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 11 | 10 |
| 12 | 12 | 12 | 10 |
| 13 | 12 | 13 | 10 |
| 14 | 12 | 14 | 10 |
| 15 | 12 | 15 | 11 |
| 16 | 12 | 16 | 11 |
| 17 | 12 | 17 | 11 |
| 18 | 12 | 18 | 11 |
| 19 | 12 | 19 | 11 |
| 20 | 12 | 20 | 11 |
| 21 | 12,5 | 21 | 11 |
| 22 | 12,5 | 22 | 11 |
| 23 | 12,5 | 23 | 11 |
| 24 | 12,5 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 12,5 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 12,5 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 12,5 | 27 | 11 |
| 28 | 12,5 | 28 | 11 |
| 29 | 12,5 | 29 | 11 |
| 30 | 13 | 30 | 11 |
| 31 | 13 | 31 | 11 |
| 32 | 13 | 32 | 11,5 |
| 33 | 13 | 33 | 11,5 |
| 34 | 13 | 34 | 11,5 |
| 35 | 13 | 35 | 11,5 |
| 36 | 13 | 36 | 12 |
| 37 | 13 | 37 | 12 |
| 38 | 13,5 | 38 | 12 |
| 39 | 13,5 | 39 | 12 |
| 40 | 14 | 40 | 12,5 |
| 41 | 14 | 41 | 12,5 |
| 42 | 14 | 42 | 12,5 |
| 43 | 14 | 43 | 12,5 |

Table 10. Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.

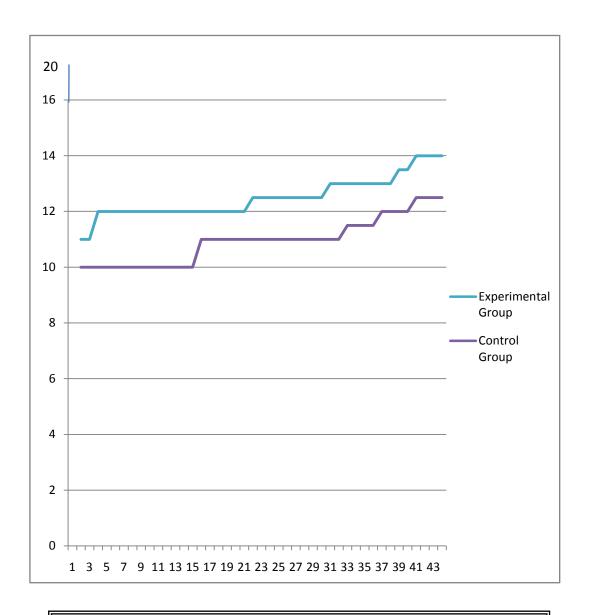




Graph 7. Experimental Group.



Graph 8. Control Group.



Graph 9. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.

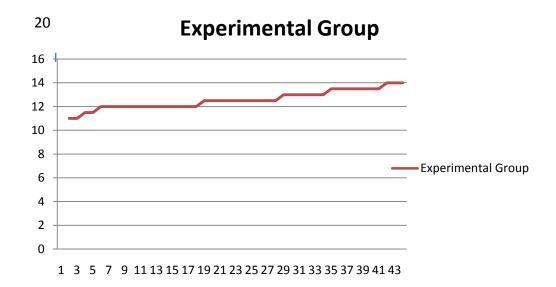
Workshop Three Scores

| Experimental Grou | ıp: 43 students | Control Group: 43 student | S |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------|
| 1 | 11 | 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 11 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 11,5 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 | 11,5 | 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 12 | 5 | 9 |
| 6 | 12 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 12 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 12 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 12 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 12 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 11 | 10,5 |
| 12 | 12 | 12 | 10,5 |
| 13 | 12 | 13 | 11 |
| 14 | 12 | 14 | 11 |
| 15 | 12 | 15 | 11 |
| 16 | 12 | 16 | 11 |
| 17 | 12 | 17 | 11 |
| 18 | 12,5 | 18 | 11 |
| 19 | 12,5 | 19 | 11 |
| 20 | 12,5 | 20 | 11 |
| 21 | 12,5 | 21 | 11 |
| 22 | 12,5 | 22 | 11 |
| 23 | 12,5 | 23 | 11 |
| 24 | 12,5 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 12,5 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 12,5 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 12,5 | 27 | 11 |
| 28 | 13 | 28 | 11 |
| 29 | 13 | 29 | 11 |
| 30 | 13 | 30 | 11 |
| 31 | 13 | 31 | 11 |
| 32 | 13 | 32 | 11 |
| 33 | 13 | 33 | 11 |
| 34 | 13,5 | 34 | 11 |
| 35 | 13,5 | 35 | 11 |
| 36 | 13,5 | 36 | 11 |
| 37 | 13,5 | 37 | 11,5 |
| 38 | 13,5 | 38 | 11,5 |
| 39 | 13,5 | 39 | 11,5 |

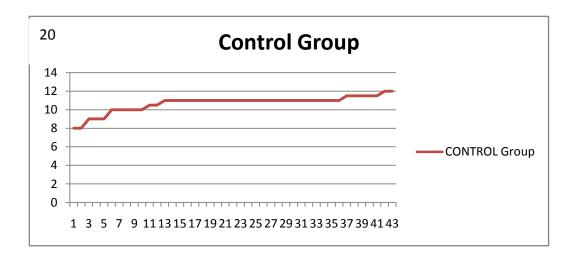


| 40 | 13,5 | 40 | 11,5 |
|----|------|----|------|
| 41 | 14 | 41 | 11,5 |
| 42 | 14 | 42 | 12 |
| 43 | 14 | 43 | 12 |

Table11. Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.

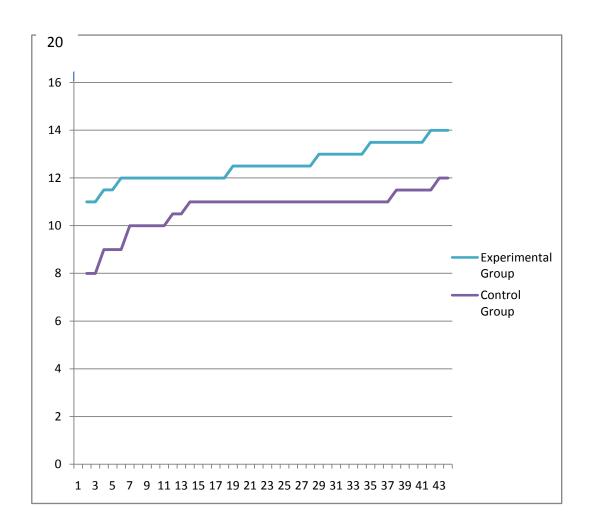


Graph 10. Experimental Group.



Graph11. Control Group.





Graph12. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.



Workshop Four Scores

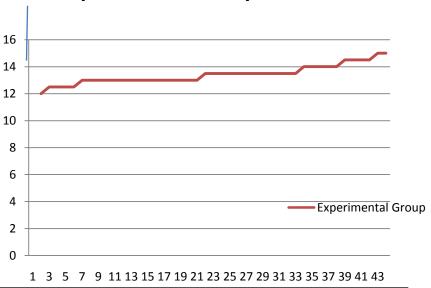
| Experiment | al Group: 43 students | Control Gr | oup: 43 students |
|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|
| 1 | 12 | 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 12,5 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 12,5 | 3 | 8,5 |
| 4 | 12,5 | 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 12,5 | 5 | 10 |
| 6 | 13 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 13 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 13 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 13 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 13 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | 13 | 11 | 10 |
| 12 | 13 | 12 | 10 |
| 13 | 13 | 13 | 10 |
| 14 | 13 | 14 | 10 |
| 15 | 13 | 15 | 10 |
| 16 | 13 | 16 | 10 |
| 17 | 13 | 17 | 10 |
| 18 | 13 | 18 | 10 |
| 19 | 13 | 19 | 10 |
| 20 | 13 | 20 | 10 |
| 21 | 13,5 | 21 | 10,5 |
| 22 | 13,5 | 22 | 10,5 |
| 23 | 13,5 | 23 | 10,5 |
| 24 | 13,5 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 13,5 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 13,5 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 13,5 | 27 | 11 |
| 28 | 13,5 | 28 | 11 |
| 29 | 13,5 | 29 | 11 |
| 30 | 13,5 | 30 | 11 |
| 31 | 13,5 | 31 | 11 |
| 32 | 13,5 | 32 | 11 |
| 33 | 14 | 33 | 11 |
| 34 | 14 | 34 | 11 |
| 35 | 14 | 35 | 11 |
| 36 | 14 | 36 | 11 |
| 37 | 14 | 37 | 11 |
| 38 | 14,5 | 38 | 11,5 |
| 39 | 14,5 | 39 | 11,5 |



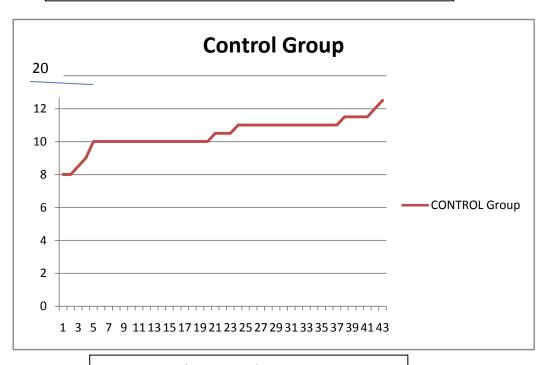
| 40 | 14,5 | 40 | 11,5 |
|----|------|----|------|
| 41 | 14,5 | 41 | 11,5 |
| 42 | 15 | 42 | 12 |
| 43 | 15 | 43 | 12,5 |

Table12. Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.



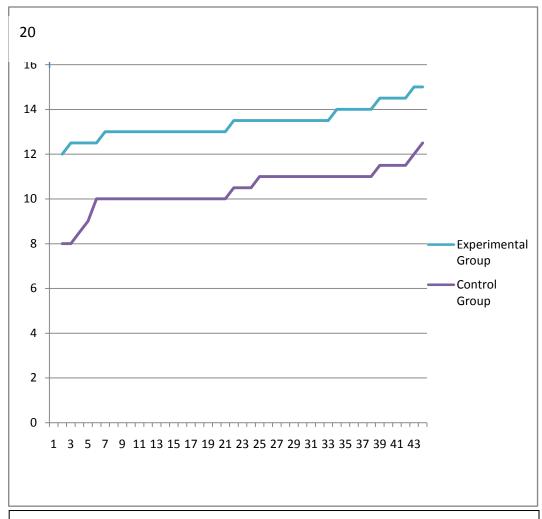


Graph13. Experimental Group



Graph14. Control Group.





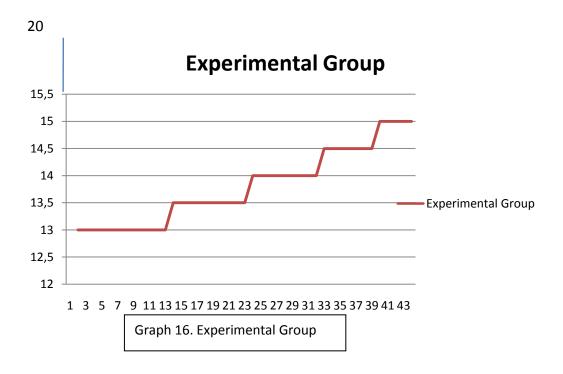
Graph 15. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.

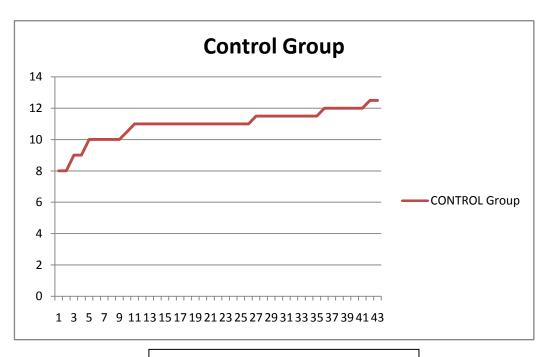
Post-Test Scores

| Experimental Group: 43 students | | Contro | ol Group: 43 students |
|---------------------------------|------|--------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 13 | 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 13 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 13 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 | 13 | 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 13 | 5 | 10 |
| 6 | 13 | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | 13 | 7 | 10 |
| 8 | 13 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 13 | 9 | 10 |
| 10 | 13 | 10 | 10,5 |
| 11 | 13 | 11 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 12 | 11 |
| 13 | 13,5 | 13 | 11 |
| 14 | 13,5 | 14 | 11 |
| 15 | 13,5 | 15 | 11 |
| 16 | 13,5 | 16 | 11 |
| 17 | 13,5 | 17 | 11 |
| 18 | 13,5 | 18 | 11 |
| 19 | 13,5 | 19 | 11 |
| 20 | 13,5 | 20 | 11 |
| 21 | 13,5 | 21 | 11 |
| 22 | 13,5 | 22 | 11 |
| 23 | 14 | 23 | 11 |
| 24 | 14 | 24 | 11 |
| 25 | 14 | 25 | 11 |
| 26 | 14 | 26 | 11 |
| 27 | 14 | 27 | 11,5 |
| 28 | 14 | 28 | 11,5 |
| 29 | 14 | 29 | 11,5 |
| 30 | 14 | 30 | 11,5 |
| 31 | 14 | 31 | 11,5 |
| 32 | 14,5 | 32 | 11,5 |
| 33 | 14,5 | 33 | 11,5 |
| 34 | 14,5 | 34 | 11,5 |
| 35 | 14,5 | 35 | 11,5 |
| 36 | 14,5 | 36 | 12 |
| 37 | 14,5 | 37 | 12 |
| 38 | 14,5 | 38 | 12 |
| 39 | 15 | 39 | 12 |
| 40 | 15 | 40 | 12 |
| 41 | 15 | 41 | 12 |
| 42 | 15 | 42 | 12,5 |
| 43 | 15 | 43 | 12,5 |

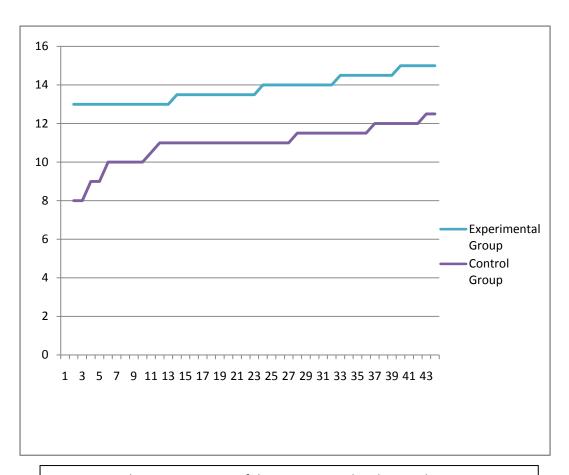
Table13. Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.







Graph 17. Control Group.



Graph 18. Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups.

4.2.2. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences: T-Test

0: experimental group

1: control group IBM SPSS Statistics

GET

FILE='D:\pre-test.sav'.

DATASET NAME total data 1 WINDOW=FRONT.

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES= pre-test

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).£

T-Test

Observations

| | | | _ |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Outcomes | | 18-Feb-2017 11:38:3 | 6 |
| Comments | | | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav | |
| | Total active data | Total data1 | |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> | |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> | |
| | Divided file | <nil></nil> | |
| | N of lines of the working file | 8 | 8 |
| Treatment of missing | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. | |



| values | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Syntax | | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) |
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS |
| | | /VARIABLES=pre-test |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI(.95). |
| | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,031 |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,032 |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav

Statistics of the group

| | Treatment | Ν | Average | Lapse-type | Standard error average |
|------|-----------|----|---------|------------|------------------------|
| Pre | . 0 | 43 | 11,1628 | 1,10583 | ,16864 |
| test | 1 | 43 | 10,7791 | 1,08179 | ,16497 |

Test of independent samples

| | | Test of Levene on equal variants | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|------|--|
| | | F | | Sig. | |
| Pre- test | Equal variants hypothesis | ,2 | 125 | ,516 | |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | ' | | | |



Test of independent samples

| | | - | Test-t of equal averages | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------|--------------------------|------------------|------|--------------------|--|
| | Т | ddl | Sig. (bila | Sig. (bilateral) | | Difference average | |
| Pre- Equal variants test hypothesis | | 1,627 | 84 | | ,108 | ,38372 | |
| Non-equal variants hypothesis | | 1,627 | 83,959 | | ,108 | ,38372 | |

Test of independent samples

| | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | |
|--|-------|--------------------------|--|-----|----------|--------|
| | Dif | ference | Interval of confidence 95% of the difference | | | |
| | | se-type | Inferior | | Superior | |
| Pre- Equal variants hypoth | nesis | ,2 | 3591 | -,0 | 8542 | ,85286 |
| test Non-equal variants hypothesis | | ,2 | 3591 | -,0 | 8542 | ,85286 |

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=workshop1

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).



T -Test

Observations

| Outcomes | | 18-feb-2017 11:38:55 | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Comments | | | | | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav | | | |
| | Total active data | Total data1 | | | |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> | | | |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> | | | |
| | Divided file | <nil></nil> | | | |
| | N of lines of the working file | 88 | | | |
| of missing | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. | | | |
| values | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. | | | |
| Syntax | | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) | | | |
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS | | | |
| | | /VARIABLES=workshop1 | | | |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI(.95). | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,000 | | | |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,012 | | | |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav



Statistics of the group

| | Treatment | N | Average | Lapse- type | Standard error average |
|-----------|-----------|----|---------|----------------|------------------------|
| workshop1 | 0 | 43 | 11,7558 | ,74300 | ,11331 |
| | 1 | 43 | 10,9070 | ,64785 | ,09880 |

Test of independent samples

| | | | Test of Levene on equal | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|--|
| | | variants | | |
| | | | Sig. | |
| | | F | | |
| workshop1 | Equal variants hypothesis | 3,587 | ,062 | |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | | | |

| | | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------|--------------------------|------------------|-------|----|--------------------|------------------|
| | T ddl | | | Sig. (bilateral) | | D | Difference average | |
| hypo Non- | al variants thesis equal vari thesis | ants | | 5,646 5,646 | 82,47 | 71 | ,000, | ,84884 ,84884 |

Test of independent samples

| | | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------------------|--|--------|---------|--|--|--|
| | | Difference | Interval of confidence 95% of the difference | | | | | |
| | | lapse-type | Inferior | Supe | erior | | | |
| workshop1 | Equal v | variants esis | ,15033 | ,54989 | 1,14778 | | | |
| | Non-ed | qual variants esis | ,15033 | ,54981 | 1,14787 | | | |

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=workshop2

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).

T-Test

Observations

| Outcomes | | 18-feb-2017 11:39 | :11 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----|
| Comments | | | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav | |
| | Total active data | Total data1 | |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> | |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> | |
| | Divided file | <nil></nil> | |
| | N of lines of the working file | | 88 |
| Treatment of missing | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. | |



| values | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Syntax | | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) |
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS |
| | | /VARIABLES=workhop2 |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI(.95). |
| | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,015 |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,012 |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav

Statistics of the group

| | Treatment | N | Average | Lapse- type | Standard error average |
|-----------|-----------|----|---------|----------------|------------------------|
| workshop2 | 0 | 43 | 12,5000 | ,72375 | ,11037 |
| | 1 | 43 | 10,9535 | ,81514 | ,12431 |

| | | Test of Le | evene on equal variants |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| | | F | Sig. |
| workshop2 | Equal variants hypothesis | ,357 | ,552 |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | | |



Test of independent samples

| | | | | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | |
|--|---|--|------|---|--------------------------|----------|--------------------|--|--|--|
| | t | | ddl | S | ig. (bilateral) | Differen | ce average | | | |
| workshop2 Equal variants hypothesis Non-equal variants hypothesis | | | 9,30 | | 84 82,839 | ,000, | 1,54651 1,54651 | | | |

Test of independent variables

| | | Tes | st-t of equal averaç | ges |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------|----------------------|----------|
| | | Difference | Interval of confid | |
| | | lapse-type | Inferior | Superior |
| workshop2 | Equal variants hypothesis | ,16623 | 1,21594 | 1,87709 |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | ,16623 | 1,21587 | 1,87716 |

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=workshop3

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).



T-test

Observations

| | Outcomes | 18-Feb-2017 11:39:24 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | Comments | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav |
| | Total Active Data | Total data1 |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> |
| | Divided File | <nil></nil> |
| | N of lines of the working file | 88 |
| Treatment of missing | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. |
| values | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. |
| | Syntax | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) |
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS |
| | | /VARIABLES=workshop3 |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI (.95). |
| | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,000 |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,016 |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav



Statistics of the group

| | treatment | N | Average | Lapse-type | Standard error average |
|-----------|-----------|----|---------|------------|------------------------|
| workshop3 | 0 | 43 | 12,5698 | ,76828 | ,11716 |
| | 1 | 43 | 10,6860 | ,90648 | ,13824 |

Test of independent samples

| | Test of Levene on equal variants | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|--|--|--|
| | F | Sig. | | | |
| workshop3 Equal variants hypothesis | ,118 | ,732 | | | |
| Non-equal variants hypothesis | | | | | |

Test of independent samples

| | | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------|----|--------------|---------|--|--|
| | | t | ddl | Sig. (bila | teral) | | Average diff | ference | | |
| workshop3 | • | l variants thesis | | 10,395 | | 84 | ,000, | 1,88372 | | |
| | | equal varia thesis | ınts | 10,395 | 81,802 | | ,000, | 1,88372 | | |

| | Test-t | t of equal averages | | |
|------------|----------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Difference | Interva | I of confidence 95% of the difference | | |
| lapse-type | Inferior | Superior | | |



| workshop3 Equal variants hypothesis | ,18121 | 1,52337 | 2,24407 |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Non-equal variants hypothesis | ,18121 | 1,52323 | 2,24421 |

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=workshop4

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).

T-Test

Observations

| | Results | 18-feb-2017 11:39:38 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | Comments | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav |
| | Total Active Data | Total data1 |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> |
| | Divided file | <nil></nil> |
| | N of lines of the working file | 88 |
| Treatment of missing | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. |
| values | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. |



| | Syntax | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) |
|-----------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS |
| | | /VARIABLES=workshop4 |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI (.95). |
| | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,016 |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,004 |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav

Statistics of the group

| | Treatment | N | Average | Lapse- type | Standard error average |
|-----------|-----------|----|---------|----------------|------------------------|
| workshop4 | 0 | 43 | 13,4186 | ,68078 | ,10382 |
| | 1 | 43 | 10,4535 | ,93104 | ,14198 |

| | | | Test of Levene on equal variants | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---|----------------------------------|------|------|--|--|--|
| | | F | | Sig. | | | | |
| workshop4 | Equal variar | | | 233 | ,076 | | | |
| | Non-equal var | | | | | | | |



Test of independent samples

| | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----|------|-----|--------------------|----|--------------------|
| | | t | | ddl | (| Sig. bilateral) | Α | Average difference |
| workshop4 | Equal variants hypothesis | 16,8 | 58 | | 84 | ,00 | 00 | 2,96512 |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | 16,8 | 58 | 76,9 | 927 | ,00, | 00 | 2,96512 |

Test of independent samples

| | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----|-------|-----|----------|---------|--|
| | Difference | | | | | | |
| | type Infe | | erior | | Superior | | |
| workshop4 E | Equal variant | S | ,17 | 589 | 2,61534 | 3,31489 | |
| No | n-equal varia hypothesis | nts | ,17 | 589 | 2,61487 | 3,31536 | |

T-TEST GROUPS=treatment (0 1)

/MISSING=ANALYSIS

/VARIABLES=post-test

/CRITERIA=CI (.95).

T-Test

Observations

| Results | | 18-feb-2017 11:39:52 | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Comments | | | | |
| Enter | Data | D:\pre-test.sav | | |
| | Total Active Data | Total data1 | | |
| | Filter | <nil></nil> | | |
| | Weight | <nil></nil> | | |
| | Divided file | <nil></nil> | | |
| | N of lines of the working file | 88 | | |
| Treatment of missing values | Definition of missing | The missing values defined by the user are treated as missing. | | |
| | Observations taken into consideration | The statistics of each analysis are based upon the observations that do not incorporate any missing values or out of the variables of the analysis. | | |
| Syn | ıtax | T-TEST GROUPS=treatment(0 1) | | |
| | | /MISSING=ANALYSIS | | |
| | | /VARIABLES=post-test | | |
| | | /CRITERIA=CI (.95). | | |
| | | | | |
| Resources | Time of processing | 00 00:00:00,016 | | |
| | Time duration | 00 00:00:00,012 | | |

[Total Data1] D:\pre-test.sav



Statistics of the group

| | Treatment | Z | Average | Lapse- type | Standard error average |
|-----------|-----------|----|---------|----------------|------------------------|
| Post-test | 0 | 43 | 13,8023 | ,68260 | ,10410 |
| | 1 | 43 | 10,9535 | 1,02245 | ,15592 |

Test of independent samples

| | | Test of Levene on equal variants | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|--|--|--|
| | | F | Sig. | | | |
| Post-test | Equal variants hypothesis | ,805 | ,372 | | | |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | | | | | |

| | | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|---------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| | | t | ddl | Sig. (bilateral) | Average) difference | | |
| Post-test | Equal variants hypothesis | 15,196 | 84 | ,000 | 2,84884 | | |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | 15,196 | 73,235 | ,000 | 2,84884 | | |

| | Test-t of equal averages | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--|--------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| | | Interval of confidence 95% of the difference | | | | | |
| | Difference lapse-type | Inferior S | | Superio | perior | | |
| Post-test | Equal variants hypothesis | | ,18748 | | 2,47602 | 3,22166 | |
| | Non-equal variants hypothesis | | ,18 | 3748 | 2,47522 | 3,22246 | |

4.2.3. Findings and Comments

In the first part of the experimental design, we have used descriptive statistics in order to study the probable rates of progress of the experimental group after the implementation of intercultural activities through the four workshops which we have organized. However, we thought it was necessary to test our main hypothesis through the use of inferential statistics; consequently, we have introduced a simplified T-Test procedure. Obviously, our principal objective is to consolidate the results (confirmation of the alternative hypothesis) that we have already obtained after the application of descriptive statistics. Within this perspective, we should indicate that there are two types of T-Tests: the independent T-Test or the unpaired test which is applied when the experiment involves two groups of informants (the control group and the experimental group). The second kind of T-Test is the dependent test or the paired test which implies the testing of only one group of informants. Obviously, we have opted for the independent test as long as we have dealt with two different groups.

On the other hand, it is generally agreed that the conduct of statistical tests is applied in order to define the probability that the outcomes which we have reached could have occurred under the null hypothesis. Moreover, the procedure that is usually accepted is that the probability should be less than or equal to 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, it is important to indicate that 0.05 is a p-value which implies that only 5% of the results are due to chance while 95% are likely to be confirmed. In other words, small p-values suggest that the null hypothesis is unlikely to be true; which is exactly the case of our experiment. Indeed, since the p-value that we have obtained is extremely small (0.05), we deduce that the null hypothesis can be definitely rejected. In this case, our results are in total adequacy with the descriptive statistics. In fact, the null hypothesis (H0) stipulates that there are no significant differences between the pre-test and the post-test means. Contrarily, the alternative hypothesis (H1) presupposes that there are important differences between the pre-test and the post-test mean scores as it is the situation in our research work after the implementation of our experiment.

Lastly, since the observed statistics is lower than the critical value (as indicated previously in the tables of the four workshops), the null hypothesis H0 is rejected and; therefore, the alternative hypothesis H1 is automatically accepted because it demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the means of the workshops. Accordingly, we may advance that the implementation of the intercultural activities with the experimental group throughout the four

workshops has resulted with positive scores in terms of greater cultural awareness and high level mastery of the foreign language.

General Conclusion

The assertion of intercultural awareness is now widely recognized as a powerful factor in international relations as well as in foreign language instruction. Indeed, the most recent trend is for intercultural pedagogy to take on a new and even wider significance: without losing its instructional, academic function, it is now impinging on the political and social fields. As a matter of fact, intercultural awareness has become a design for civilization based on genuine human values; involving social progress, moral qualities and the broadest participation in an authentic cultural life (these factors represent significant elements of the universal affirmation of human rights).

Therefore, the source culture should not be regarded as a form of introspection or even chauvinism. On the contrary, it should betoken a desire to join in and to share a truly universal dimension to international cultural co-operation. In fact, it is not a pious hope to state that intercultural awareness can shape and strengthen international understanding. In reality, the individual contributions of the different peoples with their cultural traditions, their historic legacy, their human values and their particular manifestations of artistic expressions; constitute essential parameters in the tolerance of other cultures and; eventually the development of a strong desire to learn foreign languages.

Additionally, we have observed throughout the present work that students' degree of motivations is highly determined by the effective inclusion of the cultural components of both the source and target cultures. Indeed, the universal issues and global cultures should represent the appropriate background upon which the various classroom activities are elaborated. Moreover, students' collaboration as active participants in the foreign language teaching operation can be obtained when the intercultural contents, which are incorporated in the programmes, do actually satisfy the learners' needs with respect to the foreign language cultural dimension.

On the other hand, a significant part of our research investigation has been devoted to the conception of the practical framework that should integrate the intercultural teaching operation. In fact, the elaboration of such framework has obeyed to a number of essential parameters namely, the provision of available data that allow the study of the similarities and differences which exist between the source and target cultures. The analysis of this kind of sources has largely participated in the provision of 'culture information' of the foreign language. Moreover, we have carefully examined the social and psychological factors that have an impact on the

learners' readiness to accept the target culture and; possibly, the development of foreign language cultural awareness.

On a subsequent part of the present work, we have demonstrated that the traditional classroom activities in foreign language teaching have proved to be unsuccessful in a large proportion. Furthermore, they have constituted a number of de-motivating factors of students' eagerness to learn the foreign target culture. Contrarily, the effective incorporation of intercultural classroom activities has obviously increased the learners' cultural awareness of the foreign language. Therefore, the students have displayed a better mastery of the different acts of communication in the English language.

As far as the foreign language teacher is concerned, it is not exaggerated to hold him as fully accountable for the socio-cultural and political parameters in the intercultural language teaching operation. Indeed, intercultural communication requires an emancipation of the yoke of the academic culture which exists within the educational institutions (for example the University). As a matter of fact, the educational culture should constitute the most important aim that the foreign language teacher and learners should necessarily attain.

In summation, we think that culture implies integrity and the components of culture include thousands of innovations, which whether small or wide are produced by intellectuals throughout the entire world, each in the area of his competence. Consequently, it is now our responsibility-as teachers and governmental institutions- to create the proper climate for all aspects of culture (source and target cultures at least), whether in terms of material or abstract elements. Meanwhile, we should create opportunities for seminaries, lectures, public manifestations of global intercultural products, and all that is relevant on a large and regular scale. On the other hand, the official organizations, with regard to the Algerian University, have to subsidize what should be the necessary means (financial or otherwise); because this would represent a vital contribution towards raising the structure of global cultural awareness through the elaboration of sophisticated and efficient curricula of intercultural foreign language teaching.

General Recommendations

- 1. The course cultural contents should appear as if they answer the questions of the students. Certainly, this kind of courses would motivate; in the sense that would arise the interest of the students. Learners must be personally concerned through their engagement in the process of teaching/learning. Indeed, a verbal teaching without the involvement of the students creates what is called a 'weak context'; whereas an announced and prepared lecture which is realized in the form of a personal research (or even group work) would probably correspond to a 'strong or efficient context'.
- 2. The tasks (or field work activities) that are performed inside the social context give an increased yield on the part of the learner with respect to the natural efforts made by the student in order to successfully realize these tasks. In fact, this improvement in the output would be observed by the students themselves; consequently, their motivation would probably increase.
- 3. As far as the students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra are concerned, we believe that it is highly significant to introduce in the ELT operation the indispensible resources (in terms of access to the English cultural constituents) whether they are artefacts or other materialistic cultural products.
- 4. The students' acquisition of the FL is noticeably more effective when the foreign language teacher is inter-culturally competent.
- 5. The globalization process in TEFL may positively contribute to the creation of 'direct and fruitful contacts' between local English language learners and professional writers; or native teachers of English. This process would probably result with the improvement of students' language and culture skills.
- 6. The foreign language teacher should be aware that the mastery of the culture skill on the part of the student is largely dependent on the learning-situation in which he can express his personality and abilities. In fact, the individuation in learning presupposes a method of working that assumes to each student the possibility to discover (and may be control) the different stages of his learning.
- 7. We think it is also necessary to point out that the intercultural dimension in the foreign language teaching process aims at inculcating the basic notions of intercultural communication. Therefore, we should not only develop students' self-awareness skills but also heighten awareness of cultural differences in accordance with the foreign speech community.
- 8. Concerning the evaluation of the students' rates of progress, we can notice that the issue is open to debate. Indeed, this question is rarely regarded as an aspect of learning (just closely

related to it). It is rather considered to be a kind of information about the quality of learning and the improvements realized by the students. However, the information that is provided by the process of evaluation (in the present work it is represented by the organization and analysis of four workshops) can be very important to the students (the psychological effects) and also the teacher (feedback of the language teaching operation). Because the results that are obtained would constitute an important means to estimate the methods used and their efficiency.

- 9. The foreign language teacher as well as the students should be conscious that any bias attitudes or the existence of certain prejudices in relationship to the target culture may negatively impact intercultural communication.
- 10. Eventually, the ultimate objective in the intercultural teaching operation would be to assist students move to the acceptance and appreciation of the target culture in order to avoid any kind of intercultural miscommunication.

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هذا العمل البحثي يحلل دور و تأثير البعد الثقافي في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و بالتالي فإن تمتع المدرس بالكفاءة و اقتصار تحكمه على التحكم اللغوي فحسب ليس كافي بل لابد و أن يتعداه بأن يكون ملما بمعرفة مدى تأثير المعايير الثقافية و الإجتماعية في عملية التواصل. تجدر الملاحظة بأن طلبة السنة ثانية ماستر لغة إنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر ببسكرة يواجهون عدة صعوبات لاسيما المتعلقة بالتحكم في المقومات الثقافية التي تتسم بها اللغة الإنجليزية. وفق لما سبق ذكره فإنه تكمن أهمية هذا البحث في دراسة تأثير إدراج الثقافة في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كمطلب أساسي يتم إعتماده في التدريس. من جهة أخرى فإن منهجية هذا البحث تقوم على تحليل كمي يجمع بين المنهجين الوصفي و التجريبي و قد كانت الفئة المنتقاة لأن تكن محل دراسة طلبة السنة ثانية ماستر محمد خيضر ببسكرة. و لقد خلصنا من خلال بحثنا هذا إلى جملة من النتائج الإيجابية التي تم تحقيقها تكمن أساس في التطور الملحوظ و المعاين في هذه الفئة من الطلبة بتجسيديهم التحكم الأفضل في المقومات الثقافية للغة الإنجليزية .

Résumé

L'enseignement d'une langue étrangère requière la nécessité de son inclusion dans le contexte social et le contexte éducatif prenant en compte non seulement les disciplines de recherche et les motives d'enseignement, mais aussi les représentations et les pratiques sociales et culturelles de la langue, des textes et des discours. L'hypothèse sur laquelle et basé le présent travail préconise une approche interculturelle pour l'enseignant de la langue étrangère qui permettrait non seulement une maitrise des règles linguistiques mais aussi des normes socioculturelles. Les méthodologies de recherche qui ont été employé sont respectivement une méthodologie descriptive et quasi-expérimentale. L'étude a été menée avec les étudiants de la deuxième année Master de la langue anglaise. Le résultat principal qui a été obtenu est une amélioration évidente dans l'efficience de la maitrise des manifestations et comportement socioculturelles et du discours de la langue étrangère.