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Intercultural Communication Issues in The Algerian EFL Classroom in Reading Literary Texts

Case Study: Third Year Students of English at Abbess Laghrour University, Khenchela

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Dedication

We dedicate this work to our loving mother and father

To our brothers: Mahamane, Abdoul kassoum, Issa, Abdoul Salam and

Attaher

To our sisters: Aissata, Fatoumata, Safiatou, Mariamand Agaichatou

To Mister Samake and his family

To all our friends who were with us in the bad and the good moment

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ABSTRACT

Students face several difficulties when they study literature texts, because of the lack of intercultural awareness. This study attempt to understand EFL student's intercultural communication' difficulties while reading literature texts (African and British).It aims at identifying the difficulties that obstruct EFL students when they attempt to enhance their literary expertise .It also tries to find out what are the appropriate methods and techniques used by teachers to help the students surmount those difficulties . The educational setting in which this study took place is languages and letters; university of Abbes Laghour kenchellaour investigation was carried out through Mixed research design which contains two questionnaires administered to students (n=10) and teachers (n=4) seeking their opinions about the difficulties that face English learners when they study literature courses. Data analysis revealed that the students lack of intercultural awareness caused most of the problems in reading literature. Consequently; it becomes necessary for teachers to give much attention to intercultural communication in teaching literature texts; and adopt modern technique that enhance students' participation and interaction. Teachers should give much attention to the teaching of intercultural communication they teach a foreign language belonging to another culture.

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List of abbreviations

EFL	English for foreign Learners
ESL	English as second language
IC	Intercultural communication
ICC	Intercultural communicative competence

General Introduction

The modern world is becoming more and more a globalized society and people are developing the need to engage in cross-cultural relationships. Globalization involves increasing contacts between individuals coming from different cultural backgrounds. In fact intercultural experience is the fact that an individual walks into an unknown world where people's behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, values, views and customs differ from his/her country of origin.

To be able to communicate in such a community people need to learn how to deal with differences; to adjust to them, thus building a new personality, and adopting a multicultural personality Albut (2012:1). One way to help individuals to cope with a multicultural community is through education. For that reason, one of the main concerns for the English language education is to make the link between language and culture because the new generation needs cross cultural borders as a requirement of the political, social, economic and educational aspects of globalization. Hence a good relationship between different cultures should be created and maintained. A good relationship between different cultures can only be maintained through an effective intercultural communication even though it is not an easy task.

Intercultural communication deals with communication across different cultures; and social groups, or how culture affects communication. It is used to raise the problems of the processes that naturally appear within a social context like in education made up of individuals from different religious; social and ethnic groups. It seeks to understand how people from different cultures and countries act; exchange and perceive the world around them. For this reason Intercultural communication plays a great role in social sciences where identity and culture are also studied to find out how globalization affects ways of thinking, beliefs, and values.

As the English language becomes an international and intercultural medium of communication; it raises some issues for EFL teachers and learners. English language teachers need to teach the language with the accompanying culture especially when literature is concerned. Language is a part of culture; therefore without the culture, language teaching seems incomplete. So, if culture is an important component of language teaching and learning then it became a particular concern for English as Foreign language teachers.

The foreign culture is represented in its literary works. Similarly; literature is a part of culture, therefore culture becomes highly significant for literature teachers. In the current study, the British and African cultures are concerned. So, the English language teachers have the particular task of integrating those cultures in their teaching especially those who teach literature. As said before, literature is a part of culture; therefore teachers need to find strategies in order to help learners overcome their intercultural communication issues while reading literary texts. One way of doing so is to raise learners' intercultural awareness. This latter will probably lead learners to an improvement of their intercultural communicative competence. By doing so, learners will be aware of the cultural differences and learn to be tolerant toward the others and their culture. By understanding the others culture; learners have more chance to carry effectively an intercultural communication.

Given the fact that the field of intercultural communication is relatively new Albut (2012: 1) most of people are not familiar with it. Intercultural communication is certainly new as a field of study; but not as an existing phenomenon. It goes deep in ancient times of history and civilization when communities from different cultures come to interact in different contexts for various reasons. It is only when intercultural communication became a field of study that people started to clearly observe its presence in most of the cultural exchanges. People face many challenges during intercultural interactions, among them, cultural differences, unfamiliarity, and differences among the individuals.

In the case of Algeria, the phenomenon of intercultural communication issues is not popular among the scholars. A handful number of Algerian scholars have dealt with intercultural communication. Some master and doctorate researchers of English as L2 and L3 throughout Algeria and our Department, have approached interculturality from different perspectives such as the incorporation of intercultural communicative competence in EFL speaking classes and the integration of culture in EFL classes. However the issue of the British and the African literary texts interpretations was not paid much attention. For that reason, in this study the researchers are going to deal with the Algerian EFL learner's intercultural communication issues while reading British and African literary texts in a didactic perspective. The researchers, believe that by checking out learners intercultural awareness they will have more chance to read and interpret effectively foreign literary texts.

1. Background of the study

Reading literary texts from one's own culture seems quite easy but; when it comes to the literary works from a foreign culture, it becomes more complex. This complexity emerges from the complex relationship between the native and the target culture which comes to be known as interculturalism. As reading is said to be an interaction between the text and the reader Davis TF, (2002: 9) and that the reading material belongs to a foreign culture (British and African literary texts), then it becomes intercultural communication. Nevertheless, based on our experience as EFL learners we noticed that English third year students of at Abbas Laghour, Kenchella University are unable to interpret effectively British and African literary texts. Consequently, British and African literature teachers need to find strategies in order to improve third year students' intercultural awareness so that they become interculturally competent.

2. Statement of the problem

According to some British and African literature teachers; during EFL literature exams, the cultural difference in addition to some linguistic issues influence the answers of more than 50%; of the students and result in the drop of their grades.

3. The purpose of the study

Reading foreign literary texts might seem simple, however interpreting them effectively might be a complex task. The purpose of this study isto check out the third year license EFL students' intercultural attitude at the Department of English at Kenchella University in order to improve their intercultural communication skills; so that they can interpret effectively passages of novels while reading British and African literary texts.

4. The Research Questions

In order to check out the intercultural awareness of third year students at Abbas Laghour, Kenchella University, the following question and sub-questions are formulated:

➢ How can teachers raise the Algerian EFL third year students' Intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence in the Department of English at Kenchella university

- What is Culture?
- What are the factors that can hamper intercultural communication in reading comprehension classes?
- What strategies can teachers use to teach interculturality?

In order to answer the research questions mentioned above, the researchers adopted a mixed research design to explore the participants' views, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and values.

5. The Rationale

Despite the fact that intercultural communication is a relatively new field of study; the western Universities give much attention to it. However in Algeria in general and at Kenchella University in particular; the field is not given much attention even though it is an issue faced by learners and teachers as well especially when foreign literature is concerned. For that reason, this study aims to show the importance of teaching interculturality to Algerian EFL students while reading literary texts hence the importance of strategies used by teachers.

6. The layout of the dissertation work.

This dissertation work is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter dealt with the literature review which aimed at addressing some theoretical studies done previously in the area of interest of the researchers. The second chapter of this paper shed light on the way the researchers intended to carry out the study; including the research design, research instruments and the population. Finally, the third chapter is devoted to the analysis and the interpretation of the findings from the instruments used for data collection, as well as a general discussion of the results.

7. The Methodology.
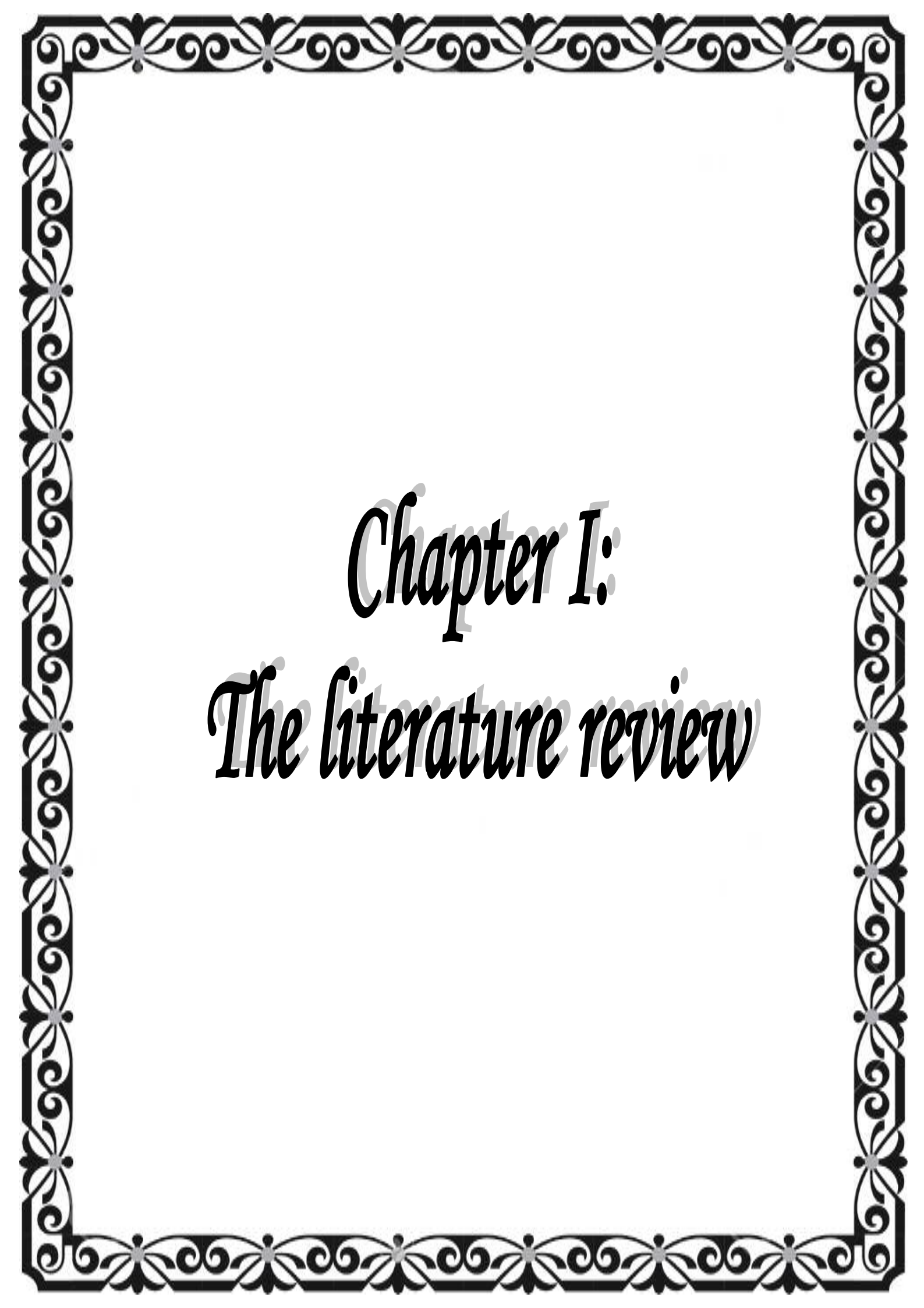
It is a mixed research design, which is composed of two questionnaires administrated to third year students at the Department of English at Kenchella University and to some literature teachers at Abbes Laghour University.

Data is first from tens (10) males/ females third year LMD students at the English Department at Abbes Laghour university. Data is also collected from (4) literature teachers.

8. The Sampling.

Since the current research is about how to check out Algerian EFL learners' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communication competence while reading British and African literary texts the sample includes both teachers and students. Only a small sample of four (4) teachers were randomly selected and questioned by researchers according to their availability .Also since a focus group does not require a large sample this is why a total of tens (10) third year LMD student were randomly selected

Chapter I:
The literature review

In the field of education, researchers such as Fernando and Gomez (2012), Bandura (2008) and others felt the need to check out learners' intercultural awareness through multicultural literature in the classroom. Most of the time, learners are aware of their own cultural values, therefore they can communicate effectively with those who share the same culture. However, they face communication issues whenever they have to interact with people from a different culture; for instance the case of literary works in a foreign language. Some master and doctorate researchers of English as L2 and L3 throughout Algeria and our department have approached interculturality from different dimensions which were mostly in EFL speaking context rather than the reading context. However, the issues of British and African literary texts interpretations were not paid much attention. The subject on which, our study will focus more by dealing with the Algerian EFL learners intercultural communication issues while reading British and African literary texts in a didactic perspective.

It is believed that, by checking out learner's intercultural awareness; they would have more chance to read and interpret effectively foreign literary texts.

The difficulties for foreign language learners to fully understand British contemporary literature come from their lack of sufficient target cultural background knowledge. Foreign students can face unfamiliar cultural values, cultural expressions or the coherence of the discourse that could discourage them in reading (Bandura, 2008, p. 1). In the case of African literature; foreign language learners can also be confronted to the same difficulties while reading the literary texts especially with unfamiliar cultural expressions. These issues stated above show that there is a need to develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC) among Algerian EFL learners. In the context of the present study, teaching ICC while reading British and African literary texts in the Algerian EFL classes seems to be highly relevant.

The present chapter will shed light first on the notion of culture; second on the intercultural communication, third on the factors that can hamper intercultural communication, then on some theories involved in intercultural communication, and finally on reading as a process and a skill.

1. The notion of culture:

1.1. Definition:

It is difficult to discuss interculturality without pointing out the notion of culture because they are highly related to each other. In order to understand intercultural communication competence, it is important to define first what culture is.

A definition given by Oatey (2017) says that,

Culture is a fuzzy set of assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures, and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people and that influence each member's behavior and his /her interpretations of the meaning of other people's behavior. (p. 9)

This definition of culture claims that; the same values, beliefs and conventions shared by a group of people tend to be accepted, but not necessarily agreed with or followed in a strict way because the cultural status who might influence individuals; and might not be dependent to it. This may lead to the transformation of the ingrained cultural meanings by members of a cultural group.

Moreover; culture is seen as ordinary and this is considered as the first fact because every human society has its own purposes, characteristics and its own meanings. These are expressed by the society in institutions, art, and in learning as well (Williams, 1958, p. 13).

This definition supports the idea that culture is like history; which means it is learned, it is subjected to change, and it is shaped by those who occupy it. In addition, when it comes to the Algerian context we may say that the definition of Williams R is more appropriate because sometimes, in the reading comprehension classes EFL students tend to be influenced by their native cultural background knowledge while interpreting passages.

In the EFL area; elements of culture have generally been seen as static, representative, and homogeneous; because teachers and learners can sometimes create stereotypes, and generalization of a cultural group. Lately EFL scholars view culture as dynamic and variable because they start to notice that culture is constantly changing due to the fact that the members of a given community display different behaviors and attitudes towards the values (Gomez and Fernando, 2012, p. 96).

Paige claims that, it is not enough to accept the static definition of culture because it changes over time, according to the realities in which the community goes through, in addition to the influence between cultures (Paige et al., 2003, p. 97). Similarly; culture is characterized as a dynamic entity, in a continuous process of change transmitted and reshaped through generations (Trujillo, 2002, p. 107).

There has been a little attention paid to the notion of culture in EFL classes, and Atkinson D. (1999: 626) recognizes the usefulness of adopting a transformation and nonstandard view of culture in EFL area, in which identity, hybridity, power, and concepts become important to redefine the traditional view of culture, besides the intercultural literacy that should be developed. For that purpose, it is worth to mention that developing the Algerian EFL learners' linguistic competence alone may not help them to either communicate or to interpret effectively foreign literary texts, especially the British and the African ones which are our specific focus of research .When intercultural literacy is developed and at a

certain level the stereotypes developed about others might disappear if students are made aware of the cultural differences.

Therefore, three (3) competences are probably required which are: the cultural competence, discourse competence and socio-linguistic competence.

First, cultural competence refers to the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures either while speaking or reading. Cultural competence compromises four components which are self-awareness of one's own cultural view attitudes towards cultural differences, knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and cross-cultural skills. Cultural competency has a fundamental importance in teaching and also in the learning process (Kramsch, 1993, p. 63). Developing cultural competence in EFL or ESL students; results in their ability to understand and to interpret effectively literary texts in reading classes.

In what concerns the discourse competence, it is the ability to understand and to produce a range of spoken, written, and visual texts into meaningful wholes. The interpretation of discourse competence implies that discourse competence is also concerned with the use of the language in social context (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 6). Finally, the sociolinguistic competence *is the knowledge and the use of socio-cultural and discourse rules*

It enables EFL or ESL students to know how to use and respond to language appropriately. Intercultural communication has been of great importance in our modern society, particularly in education.

In the same vein, intercultural communicative competence is strongly believed to help learners in decoding foreign literary texts. The EFL learners can communicate effectively with others only if they acquire a minimum of intercultural communicative competence. As

language and culture are seen to be related to each other, the next step will deal with them as two sides of the same coin.

1.2. Language and culture: two sides of same coin:

Language is a part of culture, yet it is more than that since language is the means through which culture is communicate; expressed, and learned. Similarly, the language used in the literary texts represents the target in culture. In other words, culture is shown through language as argued by Kramsch (1996, p. 3). One of the major ways in which culture manifests itself is through language. Practically culture is constantly mediated, interpreted and recorded among other things through language. It is because of this mediatory role of language that culture becomes the concern of language teachers.

Even though culture is mediated in texts by the language;, it does not seem that the Algerian EFL readers can understand it hence the teacher's important role when reaching literature and the learners understanding of the foreign culture and its language???. As foreign culture is represented by its literature, it needs to be included in the EFL classroom.

1.3. The inclusion of literature in EFL classroom

As a cultural expression, literature can contribute to the transformation of culture through time and help student become critically intercultural individuals. For that reason, some scholars such as Collie and slater (1991), Savvidou (2004), Povey (1967), Carter and Long (1991, pp. 2-4), all agree that teaching literature in an EFL context contributes highly to the learning process of the student in four main phases. First of all; literary texts can be more beneficial than informational materials in stimulating the acquisition process as they provide authentic contexts for processing new language. Since literary texts, contain language intended for native speakers, literature stands as a model for language learners to become

familiar with forms and conventions. Second, using literature in language teaching has the advantage of providing cultural information about the target language. Literary texts increase foreign language learners' insight into the country and the people whose language is being learn:, which fosters learners' ability to interpret discourse in different social and cultural target language contexts. Third, containing real examples of grammatical structures and vocabulary items; the literary texts raise learners' awareness of the target language range and advance their competence in all language skills. Finally, since literature enables students to understand and appreciate other cultures, societies and ideologies different from their own, it encourages personal growth and intellectual development. In order to methodically discuss the inclusion of literature in EFL classes, some teaching approaches are needed in this respect.

1.4. Teaching Approaches to Study literature in EFL context

The study of literature of the target culture is highly significant in the development of ICC. For that reason; Gomez and Fernando (2013, p. 100) propose two teaching approaches to be implemented in multicultural education that suit the EFL context: Interaction of contact zones and engagement in debate. First, the notion of contact zones can be brought in both teaching process. This notion considers the classroom as a place, where student have enough space for discussions and critiques of the material being studied, because it is composed of a heterogeneous community, with individuals from different historical and cultural backgrounds. The differences between individuals are seen as a learning tool rather than an obstacle. In the EFL classroom, students are learning both language and culture of another community. This can invoke awareness of the diversity, and can make them more engaged while reading literary texts.

The engagement of debate and conflict in the classroom are teaching strategies proposed by some scholars. The purpose of these strategies is to enable students to make critical

evaluation about their perceptions of culture on one hand; and understand the social issues of a given community from a more realistic point of view on the other hand .Critical debate as a teaching tool can also be applied to the EFL classroom ,when reading literary texts ,because debate means negotiation of meaning (s), and through dialogue and interaction, learners discuss critically different perspectives in order to build knowledge. In the same vein, author (2001, p. 4) also claims that the teachers' responsibility is to entertain, to challenge and to put into question traditional views and attitudes. The teaching strategies mentioned above can all be applied in the Algerian EFL context in order to develop learners ICC as they are required to critically discuss literary texts contents. The discussion will mainly be based on the target culture and will probably generate a conflict as learners to have different point of views.

As the culture represented in the English course books is different from the Algerian ones; in the next point, the culture representation will be discussed in the English textbooks first, then in the Algerian books.

1.5. Culture representation in the English course books:

Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 315) state that a course book is an almost universal element of English language teaching. Consequently; the English course books must contain some cultural elements or values. Kramsch (1993) asserts that one of the aims of the insertion of cultural contents in English language teaching is to develop interculturality. Interculturality means that students can compare and contrast their own culture with other cultures. Hence, they can develop their communicative competence with people who may have different cultures.

There are some studies that talk about the cultural representation in English language teaching; especially in the course book entitled College English (New) which consist of four

volumes. It analyses the representation of cultures in the texts of the English course books by using cultural categories proposed by Byram (1993). He finds that the target culture mostly appears in the English course book. Therefore, he suggests increasing the representation of local (Chinese) culture and including the international cultures.

He also finds that the English course books develop the students' intercultural competence.

The course books have a simplistic approach concerning the representation of culture because they do not take into consideration the sub-cultures. Lets' consider the case of American course books; they only represent the American culture in a general manner but do not represent the African –American and Hispanic-American cultures. After representing culture in English textbooks, the following point will discuss the cultural representation of the Algerian course book.

1.6. Cultural representation in the Algerian course books:

Culture either taught implicitly or explicitly; penetrates many factors of a foreign language teaching. Teachers need to be aware of how to approach culture when they teach it in the foreign language classroom. Algeria is one of the countries that promote the local design and production of English course books. Those course books are designed by the Algerian experts and it is the local culture which is represented (Messekher, 2014, p. 69). He also posits that in Algeria to be exposed and to be familiar with the English culture seems difficult, and teachers depend heavily on textbooks as the only available source of both language and culture for their teaching. From that perspective, Riazi (2003, p. 52) argues that course books play an important role in both language teaching and the learning process. The

way the English culture is represented in the Algerian course books is very crucial in the way it is taught especially in the EFL reading comprehension classes.

The Algerian education has known reforms under several occasions Miliani (2000, p. 23) these reforms include different levels like the revision of course-books, curricula, assessment, and teaching methods. The reforms are often considered by political considerations (Messekher, 2014, p. 69). As in many developing countries ,the Algerian government has made the English language teaching a priority to keep up with regional and global advancements in order to make up for delay provoked by black decade and be active of globalization (Tsui and Tollefson , 2007, p. 21). In many EFL countries from what Kachru (1986, p. 356) called Inner Circle Countries, course –books are designed by experts, and used for English as a second, or foreign language (Gray, 2010,p. 70) and Algerian is one of those countries.

Culture influence a strong teaching element for EFL or ESL learners, the cultural representations not only encompassed the target culture (British, or US ...), and the local Algerian culture, but also encompasses different cultural aspects of English speaking and non-English speaking countries (Messekher, 2014, p. 69). Therefore, developing EFL students' ICC when teaching /studying a foreign literature is a pre-requisite for an effective intercultural communication.

2- Intercultural communication (IC)

2.1   Definition

The original paradigm for intercultural communication took forms in conceptualizations by Hall and others at the Foreign Service institute in the U.S in the early 1950s before it became a field of study. Even as a field of study, intercultural communication emerged in the

U.S (Dahl, 1995; Leeds-Hurwitz, 1990; Kenji, 1985; Kohls and Brussow, 1995; cited in Smeyers et al., 2015, p. 375) and then spread to Europe. The U.S is known as the icon of an extensive immigration and ethnic variety. This diversity brought issues due to the coexistence of different cultural communities. The communication between these cultural groups started gaining modest academic attention in the 1930s. Intercultural communication became a recognized subject of study at universities in the 1960s. Its emergence was accompanied by the foundation of societies, the publication of academic journals and textbooks, and the organization of specialized conferences in the 1970s. As a result, a large number of U.S. universities stated offering undergraduate courses, Master's degrees and even doctoral level programs in intercultural communication (Zotzmmann, 2015, p. 5).

Intercultural communication is a discipline that studies communication across different cultures and social groups, or how culture affects communication (Lauring and Jakob, 2011, p. 48).

Intercultural communication occurs when the people creating shared meanings have different cultural perspectives and values. Typically, it is the differing world views of members of different cultures that make intercultural communication challenging. Intercultural communication may occur between individuals; it occurs when you travel abroad and talk with someone in a culture that is different from your own (Sadri and Flammia, 2011, p. 10).

Through his experience with foreigners, Hall discovers the details and complexities of one of the most significant problems: Intercultural relations (Hall, 1992, p. 76). Obviously, Hall's experiences brought the issues of intercultural communication to his mind and he made an investigation on it. In fact ; intercultural communication seems to be an important skill in ensuring a harmonious communication between different communities .Especially in the

Algerian EFL reading comprehension classes context, intercultural communication can enhance learners' knowledge ,beliefs ,attitudes, behaviors , and skills so that to increase their intercultural awareness to avoid communication breakdowns and misinterpretations .In the current study ;IC involves an interaction between a receiver and a sender whose cultural backgrounds are distinct enough to alter the communication process (Larry et al., 2007, p. 12). It is difficult to talk about intercultural communication without talking about communicative competence. The following point will deal with this notion.

2.2 Communicative competence:

The concept of communicative competence (a term coined by linguist Dell Hymes in 1972) grew out of resistance to the concept of linguistic competence introduced by Noam Chomsky (1965). Most scholars now consider linguistic competence to be a part of communicative competence. Hymes (1972) says that «Chomsky's concept was concerned with the tacit knowledge of language structure but omits almost everything about socio-cultural significance." (p. 270).

According to Hymes (1972, p. 280), communicative competence is the ability to convey effetely messages to others and to understand effetely others' messages within specific contexts. It can also imply the ability to relate what is learnt in the classroom and outside the classroom. So from this perspective Hymes describes the competent language user as the one who knows when, where, how to use the language appropriately rather than knowing how to produce grammatical structures. The communicative competence is important for an effective communication but, some intercultural communication issues still remain.

2.3. Intercultural communication issues.

Intercultural communication issues are phenomena that can cause a communication misunderstanding amongst people from different cultures. Among those issues we have stereotypes. Positive and negative stereotypes are judgments held by some individuals on the basis of their group membership (Jandt, 2013, p. 87). The negative stereotypes are seen as issues because they impede intercultural communication.

Under several occasions people from different cultures get in contact either through immigration, tourism, business or through art such as literary works. The contact between those people may be negatively affected by intercultural communication issues (Knapp et al., 1987, p. 1). These issues cannot be reduced only to a lack of grammar, knowledge of the pronunciation or the lexicon of the language involved. Some ethnographic studies show that the fluency in a given language does not guarantee an effective communication with the people of the host culture (Knapp et al., 1987, p. 1). Problems often arise from unshared values, behaviors, and ways of thinking or acting. These kinds of differences cause problems whenever people from different cultural, ethnic or social groups find themselves in a situation of contact.

Since the past decades linguists have taken a greater interest in the issues of intercultural communication. According to Knapp et al. (1987, p. 2); the IC issues are not addressed by linguists only, they are also of a particular concern for psychologists, social psychologists and sociologists. Generally, these fields address problems such as psychological problems of acclimatization of the foreigners abroad. Among those problems, we have cultural shock and the effects of culturally specific role relationships. These fields mostly addressed the intercultural communication issues in relation to the speaking skills; however, it can be extended to some other skills such as reading (the concern of the current study). If foreigners

encounter problems when speaking with people from different culture, then they might also face issues while reading literary texts from those cultures. Alongside the issues, there are also some factors that influence intercultural communication .Some factors will be explained below.

2.4. Some factors influencing intercultural communication in reading foreign literary texts.

There are many factors that can influence intercultural communication but, we are going to select few that seem the most relevant to us.

2.4.1. Native cultural background knowledge and target cultural background knowledge while reading foreign literary texts:

The cultural background knowledge either native or target; are important factors that influence the intercultural communicative competence of EFL readers/learners. Since the introduction of the concept of intercultural competence in the 1990s, an important emphasis has been put on raising learners' awareness about the influence that their own cultural background can have on their attitudes toward others and their intercultural communication as well Alred et al.(2003); Byram (1997); Corbett (2003) in Jackson j. (2012: 411). An EFL learner can be competent in his /her own culture but he/she can fail to be competent in the target culture. In this respect, the intercultural awareness can help him/her to be a successful intercultural reader. For this reason, it is important to mention the distinction between cultural competence and intercultural competence.

According to Risager (2007: 161) cultural competence is a sum of knowledge skills and attitudes of a specific culture and related to a given country. Whereas intercultural

communication is constituted of knowledge, skills and attitudes at the linking of several cultures, it includes the learners' native culture and the target culture.

As mentioned earlier in the statement of the problem, a large number of EFL learners have intercultural communication issues because they probably lack intercultural competence. They are competent in their own culture because of their large cultural background. When Algerian EFL learners read British or African literary texts, they need intercultural competence in order to interact efficiently with the text .This is possible only if they have some target cultural background knowledge. This has been said, one can argue that between cultural background and intercultural background, the latter influences mostly the intercultural communication. Alongside this factor, there is also another one that can stand as a barrier to EFL readers ICC, the cultural reference.

2.4.2. Cultural reference

A cultural reference is when people refer to something that relates to the culture of a country, it might be something historic that happened to that country some time ago or it might be something that is being reported in the news that day. Native speakers use cultural references to bond with each other as they're discussing shared experiences and knowledge.

In lectures, cultural references will also come up very often, and you may find them in the texts you have to read for your course as well. Cultural references are difficult for international students to understand as they haven't been in the country long. Even English speakers from other countries struggle with cultural references as they don't have the same shared cultural knowledge or experience ("Collins", 152). Cultural references are probably the highest level of intercultural competence because it takes a long time for foreigners to discover them. They may know much about the foreign culture but still ignore its cultural

references. In the case of Algerian EFL learners, cultural reference is an additional barrier to their ICC when they are reading foreign literary texts. Once students are able to overcome the barriers to their intercultural communication they would develop their intercultural communicative competence.

2.5. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

According to Byram M. et al. (2009: 5) Intercultural communicative competence is the fact of being able to interact with others; to accept others' views of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, and to be aware of the evaluation of their judgments of differences. That is to say, when EFL students are dealing with literary texts, they are able to make critical evaluation of the writers' culture and point of view especially when their socio-cultural backgrounds are different. However, if the students do not acquire the ICC nor build a positive socio-cultural representation, they will be less objective and flexible in their evaluation and may accept the writer's perception of the world without critical evaluation.

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) comprises certain knowledge, skills and attitudes for that reason ICC is believed to facilitate all kinds of intercultural encounters including reading cultural texts (literary texts of any given culture) (Bandura, 2008, p. 20). Reading is not only recognizing and decoding written sentences in the literary text of the target culture but also understanding their significance for a foreign student to be interculturally competent. The foreign reader needs to interpret what she/he has understood in his/her own way and cope with it. For Byram (1997), a student who acquires intercultural competence is able to distinguish and interpret implicit and explicit cultural patterns such the sense of regionalism; racism, social division etc., in the text by putting the text in context (Byram, 1997, p. 63, 64). Reading foreign literary texts is not an easy task this is why many theories rose and attempted to bring some explanations. Some theories are crucial for the

reading of foreign literary texts hence the development of intercultural communicative competence, especially while interpreting literary texts. The section below deals with some of the most relevant theories.

3. Theories involved in intercultural communication.

3.1Social scripts theory:

Social scripts are series of behaviors, actions, and consequences which are expected in a particular situation or environment. When people are engaged in communication they have in their minds a certain social scripts which they internalize through their daily interaction with other people and which influence their presuppositions and hence their way of communication. Since people are engaged in a variety of daily activities, they internalize certain concepts in different situations in their minds. These internalized situational concepts are called social scripts (Shank and Abelson, 1977, p. 16).

Social scripts are specific to a given culture, for example: if someone is born and grown up in a certain cultural community, he/she automatically internalizes the social scripts of that community. Social scripts have some characteristics as they are not innate or instinctive but something that one acquires through daily activities or interactions with other people or in written texts. Therefore, it means that, they are acquired through both actions and interactions, and they require a situation to externalize the concepts in mind, this is described as activity theory (Ratner, 1996; Meng, 2008, p. 132).

Also social scripts are verbal and non-verbal and can be modified through interaction over time. They are universal and they differ from one culture to another, in one way or another. In inter-cultural communication the way to mediate the externalization of social scripts in a given situation seems to be a big issue. On the one hand social scripts are

internalized in a particular culture, usually in one's own native culture. On the other hand, social scripts may occur across culture, in this case the externalization of the social scripts depends on the person's intercultural experience (Meng, 1977, p.133). Because people internalize social scripts by observing experiencing similar problems in natural situations in different cultural backgrounds, it is by « being in the situation » that one comes to recognize and know the social scripts of their own culture (St. Clair, 2006, p. 14). Once one encounters a new cultural situation, most probably they will transfer what is internalized in their mind and feel the cultural gap. It is from actual cross-cultural situations that one is able to develop social scripts of the events and actions when encountering a new culture. In the reading comprehension classes, when learners are beginners in dealing with foreign texts, it is very difficult to externalize the social scripts, but through time with their intercultural experience and interactions, it becomes much clear and easy to externalize the social scripts and to interpret effectively literary texts. After explaining the social scripts theory in this section, the next point will deal with the reader oriented theory.

3.2 Reader-oriented theory

Recent theories of learning and teaching such constructivism or interactionism claim that personal knowledge should be constructed by interacting with the environment .it is believed that engaging the learners cognitively and emotionally can make the learning process effective (Bandura, 2008, p.19). Learner's cognitive and emotional engagement, he/she has also to be critical when reading.

Reading is an interaction between the reader and the text Davis and Womack (2002, p. 9) regardless of the type of the text. While reading, it is important for the reader to be critical (Diyanni, 2007, p. 3). The critical reader can communicate effectively with the text and construct his/her own meaning.

A critical reader is able to critique the reasoning and arguments of the author in the text as well as the ideological assumptions they are based on (Wallace, 2005, p. 42). Sometimes, the reader may have different points of view from the authors especially in sensitive subjects such as culture; but it depends on the ethnic group, gender, age, and ideology.

Through her researches on the teaching of ICC through reading Bandura (2008, p. 19) found that some literary theories such as the reader oriented theory have highlighted the active role of the reader in interpreting the meaning of writing texts. The reader theory is a reading theory that considers the reader as the one who possesses literary competence and makes sense of the text he/she reads (Selden and Widdowson, 1993, p. 59). While Fish (1980) posits that, the reader responds to a succession of words in a sentence whether the sentence is literary or not.

So we have to bear in mind that according to this theory, the reader is the central (main) actor in the reading process. To add to that, the reader oriented theory comes as a reaction to the text oriented theory which, assumes that the text has a meaning without the contribution of the reader.

Similarly, the reader-response theory which is part of the reader oriented theory regards the role of the reader as highly significant to the process of reading and interpreting literary texts. In this respect, Wolfreys (1999, p. 84) argues that literary text is only meaningful when it is read. Reading is when a reader interacts directly with a text to produce meaning. It is also an active participation of the reader in constructing meaning from a piece of writing.

Some of the main reader-response theorists such as Michael Riffaterre, Jonathan Culler and Stanley Fish agree that the meaning of the literary text cannot be disconnected from the role taken by the Reader (Wolfreys, 1999, p. 146). When reading it gives new lives to the text.

The reading process is a complex process as the person who reads. Therefore, the meaning a reader makes from a text is affected by his/her ethnic belonging and his/her experiences as well (Wolfreys, 1999, p. 146).

Reading is believed to be an interactive process that can be considered as a dialogue between the reader and the text and leading to the interpretation of the text by the reader (Carrell et al., 1993, p. 56). Understanding one's own identity helps to understand other's identity. In addition, the fact that the reader is the center of the reading process, meaning construction process makes his/her cultural identity important as well. The cultural identity can be highly significant in shaping the reader understanding, this is explained in details below.

3.3. Cultural identity theory

Lustig developed cultural identity theory to explain the link between identification with a culture and a person's sense of self. Lustig noted that cultural identity becomes part of an individual's self-concept, and that cultural identity can change as a person incorporates new experiences in to the self-concept. Research indicates that identification with culture increase an individual's self-esteem and helps define self-concept.

In the process of developing learners ICC, three types of identity have been identified: human, personal and social; but our focus is on the last one. The social identity can be formed as a result of group differences or membership based on ethnicity, age, gender, social class/status, sexual oriented, political ideologies and religious-cultural allegiance. So, the role of ICC is to facilitate the dialogue between individuals belonging to these groups or communities (Venugopal, 2009, pp. 77-78). Also intercultural communication helps to better understand one's own identity. In the measure that one decides to adopt or continue holding,

one wishes to pursue all affected by culture, ethnic, social class and gender factors. These factors added to one's values and beliefs in their turn affect one's personal identity. In this regard, (Aseel, 2003) says "It was through the experience of living and being raised in the US that I came to truly appreciate and understand my own religion, heritage, culture and language." (p. 67). After examination of some theories of intercultural communication, we move to shed some light on the notion of reading.

4. Reading as a process and a skill.

4.1. Definition:

Reading is the complex cognitive process of decoding symbols to derive meaning. It is a form of language processing. The number of factors involved in reading process can be difficult for even adult readers to notice because, to them, reading might appear effortless (Cain, 2010, p. 26). In this attempt to develop a better way to assess reading as a skill, Afflerbac (2017) defined reading as an active and complex activity involving understanding a written text, developing and interpreting meaning. Because of the complexity of reading as a skill, it has been approached by many theories but, in the current study, the researchers have chosen the constructivists theory to approach reading.

4.2 The constructivists Approach in reading comprehension.

Constructivism is one of the reading approaches that emphasize the active role of the learner's prior knowledge in constructing his/her own understanding rather than an imposed one. The constructivist approach is the learner's central approach rather than teacher as a direct instructor. It gives learners several opportunities to develop their own understanding like in reading literary texts. It is important to note that constructivism is applied to learner-

centered classes, where the leaner is the main actor. The learner is an information constructor (McCormack, 2008, p. 72).

Similarly, Cohen and Cowen's (2007) claim that constructivism helps each learner to construct his/her own meaning and that learning is based on individuals' experience, background knowledge and previous conceptualizations.

Constructivism assumes that all knowledge, regardless of how one is taught. Thus, even listening to a lecture involves active attempts to construct new knowledge (Vygotsky, 1980).

Constructivist approach aims at encouraging learners to use real world problem solving, experiments in order for them to build their own knowledge and reflect on. For the foreign language learners, this approach allows them to learn materials that are not exclusively from the teachers or the course-book and that may be written in a language hard to comprehend (Cowen, 2007, p. 618). The personality of the reader can affect the efficiency of the reading of the reading outcome. To illustrate, let's consider the concept the resisting reader below.

4.3 The resisting reader

Resistant reading is a way of reading developed by Fetterley (1981). She claims that a resisting reader does not accept the presuppositions and knowledge presented by the writer in the text, but resists them to build a defensive reading. Besides, the resisting reader is the one who believes that it is his/ her responsibility to read and interact with the text, and thinks that literary text content should be approached critically rather than in a passively receptive manner (Fetterley, 1981, p. 22)

The resisting reader decline the fact of accepting all idea saying by the writer as they ready to challenge and question the writer's assumptions and insights and sometimes discredit

the author's claim (if necessary). Most of the times, this kind of reader resists texts that he/she feels are oppressive and rejects the demands of the writer that seem impossible to fulfill (Davies, 2010). For the EFL who has to deal with a foreign culture through the text, it is hard sometimes to accept everything's from the writer. For that reason, the resisting reader needs to approach the characteristics of the foreign culture in a critical way especially when it diverges from his/her native culture.

The resisting reader has many characteristics of the critical reader as they have similar beliefs. They believe that reading is not a passive task because it involves many activities such as: reflection, appraisal, judgment and evaluation. These activities also lead to acceptance or rejection, approval or disapproval (Davies, 2010). In a situation where the native and the foreign cultures are confronted, the position of the reader becomes highly important because it defines the likelihood of an efficient intercultural communication. It is important to raise the resisting reader's intercultural awareness.

Resistance does not necessarily mean rejection or disapproval, it means also thinking critically, that is, the capacity to detect logical flaws in the text and the arguments of the writer as well (Goatly, 2000, p. 1). The resistance of an EFL reader can affect negatively his/her intercultural communication in the absence of sufficient cultural knowledge which has an important role to play while reading foreign literary text. That is why the role of the cultural knowledge needs to be mentioned.

4.4. The role of cultural knowledge in reading comprehension of foreign literary texts.

The cultural knowledge focuses on intercultural communication. That knowledge was developed by (Hall E.) in "the anthropology of manners" published in 1955. In this book, he focuses on the communication between cultures. To understand the role of cultural knowledge

we are going to divide it in to culture-specific versus culture-general; the former deals with a particular culture while the latter is concerned with the general knowledge of intercultural differences. The culture-general is concerned with aspects communication competences that are applicable to all cultures. The culture-specific knowledge on the other hand deals with practical tips about what to and what not to do in a specific country (Pilhofer, 2011, p. 42).

When reading foreign literary texts, student or learner is concerned with both culture-general knowledge and culture-specific knowledge. The former gives learners a more general knowledge about interculturality (Collings et al., 2015, p. 19) such as the relativity of cultures and politeness. If learners have that general knowledge, they will not judge the foreign culture represented in the literary works on the basis of their differences. Consequently, learner will be more open to a good understanding. Nevertheless, for an effective interpretation of foreign texts like British and Africans literary texts, learners need culture-specific knowledge which will give them specific knowledge about the target cultures. Given the fact that each of these cultures differ from the Algerian one, leaners need to know exactly what the differences are in order to be better cope with them. Finally, cultural background knowledge has the important role to support learners when facing foreign cultures (Pilhofer, 2011, p. 42).

4.5. The role of the native cultural background knowledge and reading comprehension of foreign literary texts.

Language is a part of culture and reflects the cultural feature of the communities in which it is spoken (Yang, 2014, p. 303). That is why language and culture are interrelated. According to Yang (2014), learning a language means learning the culture of that language and the cultural background plays an important role. In this regard, a study was conducted among Iranian students in order to observe the impact of their native cultural background knowledge on their foreign language reading comprehension. The study revealed that the

native cultural background knowledge had a great effect on reading comprehension (Kusiak, 2013, p. 60).

Another instance of the influence of the native cultural background is the case of Chinese students. Because of their native cultural background, they have the reading habits of using their native language to translate the English words in isolation without knowing the accompanying (Yank, 2014, p. 304). So teacher must pay more attention to student's cultural background when teaching. For Yang (2014), students need to learn the values, social systems, customs and the religion of the target culture. Otherwise the students will not be able to understand the real meaning of the English texts. Some learners will not be able to understand the real meaning of the English texts. Some in other hand do not understand the meaning conveyed by the writers in literary texts, and only a handful number of information in the texts is decoded. The reason behind this is that learners pay little attention to the culture (Yang, 2014, p. 304). The same Remarque can be said to the Algerian EFL learners, who may not pay more attention to the culture. Consequently, it can be argued that the Algerian EFL learners can probably face the same problem because of their native cultural background knowledge. Nevertheless, if the Algerian EFL students are able to make a link between their native cultural and the target cultures by understanding the differences and similarities, they would understand better the information contained in the foreign British and African literary texts.

Conclusion

Developing students' intercultural communication skills is becoming an important particular concern for foreign language teachers and learners. This development across intercultural communication led many students to investigate the subject from different perspectives. The current study approaches the subject from a didactic point of view.

This current literature study demonstrates the importance of intercultural communication in EFL reading comprehension classes. Also shows how the intercultural communication issues can prevent EFL students from interpreting effectively foreign (British and African) literary texts. The constructivist approach has been used as a paradigm positioning which allows EFL students to construct their own meaning while reading foreign literary texts.

The reviewed studies helped the researchers to select appropriate research tools. Therefore, the following chapter will discuss the research methodology in order to answer the main research question which is: how can teachers raise the Algerian EFL third year student's intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competences in the department of English at Khenchela University? And the three sub-questions are: what is culture? What are the factors that can hamper intercultural communication in reading comprehension classes? What strategies can teachers use to teach interculturality?

Chapter Two: Methodology

Introduction:

The previsious chapter was fully dedicated to the literature review related to the present research. In this second chapter, the research will describe the process through which the practical side of the research was conducted. As mentioned earlier; the purpose of this study was to check out the EFL students 'intercultural awareness in the English Department of Kenchella University in order to improve their intercultural communication skills and make them able to interpret effectively passages of novels in British and African literature. Also, in this chapter; the research questions will be answered by the adoption of a mixed research design. The data will be interpreted qualitatively as collected through a questionnaire administration to students and a questionnaire to teachers.

1. Research design:

Our research aims at checking out kenchella University English department's EFL students' Intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communication skills. Accordingly, the study is based on a mixed research design which is composed of two questionnaires administrated to third year students at department of English at Kenchella University and to Literature teachers at Abbes Laghour University

In addition to that, it will provide a better guidance to find out what strategies can be used by teachers in order to develop students' intercultural communicative competence while reading British and African literary texts. The qualitative approach is often meant to be an objective assessment of behaviors, attitudes and opinions of the participants. Also, focus group interviews are generally used under this approach and the results generated are either in non-quantitative form or in a form that will not be put through a rigorous quantitative analysis Kothari (2004: 5) just like in the case of the current study.

The main purpose of a research design according to Kothari (2004: 31) is to describe how the investigation takes place. Accordingly it includes how data is collected, what instruments are employed and how the research questions are going to be answered.

2. Research instruments

In this research, data is collected from two sources: a questionnaire for students, and a questionnaire for teachers.

2.1. The students' questionnaire

A questionnaire is a series of questions employed to gather information from participants of a research. According to McNabb D. (2010: 147), questionnaires are the most widespread way to collect primary data as it is used in 85 percent or more in both qualitative and quantitative researches. In addition to its flexibility and easiness to be administered, the questionnaire can be used to collect data from various topics such as knowledge, personal behaviors, attitudes and beliefs Gómez-Galán (2016: 32). The purpose of designing and administering the questionnaire in this research is to check the students' perceptions of culture, their attitudes and beliefs toward interculturality and also what prevents them from interpreting effectively British and African literary texts.

2.1.1. The description of the Questionnaire

In this research, the questionnaire is used as a qualitative research instrument. It is composed of 11 items displayed in various formats. First, we have seven (7) open-ended questions that can be answered spontaneously. Then we have five (4) close ended questions answerable by "yes" or "no". The table below includes the questions of the questionnaire and their aims.

Table1: Questions and Aims

Questions	Aims of the questions
1) According to you , the word "culture" refers to: a- Art, music, theatre, dancing … etc. b- The way of life of a given social group, including their customs and traditions… c- Both (a) and (b)	The aim of this question is to gather information about students' perceptions of culture.
2) How often do you read literary texts? a-Rarely b-Sometimes c-Often d-Always	This question aims at discovering the time that student read literary texts
3) What do you prefer to read most? And say why? a- African literature b- British literature	The aim of this item is to check if students prefer African literature or British one
4) Do you think that your culture is better than others? If yes, why?	The aim of this question is to gather how students value their culture compared to other cultures.
5) How would you define interculturality? a- Interculturality is an interaction and relation between different cultures? b- Interculturality is simply to be aware of another culture	The purpose is to find out students opinion about interculturality
6) Does your native cultural background help you to interpret effectively British literary texts?	This item aims at discovering the impact of the students' native cultural background on their interpretation of British literary texts.

7) Do your emotions prevent you from interpreting effectively British and African literature texts?	The Aim of this question is to gather information about the role of students' emotions while reading British or African literary texts.
8) Does your native cultural background help you to interpret effectively African literary texts?	The purpose of this question is to discover the effects of students' native cultural background on their interpretation of African literary texts
9) Do your critical thinking skills help you to fully understand British and/ or African literary texts?	This item concerns the role of students' critical thinking skills in helping them to interpret effectively British and/or African literary texts.
10) Do you resist the authors' point of views while reading British and African literary texts? If yes ,please say why	This item collects information about students' attitudes toward the reading of British and African literary texts.
11) What prevents you from interpreting British and African literary texts? Please comment.	This item aims at getting information about any additional factors that prevent students from interpreting effectively British and literary texts

2.1.2. The administration of the questionnaire:

In the current study, the questionnaire is administered on the 5 of Mai to a focus group of tens (10) third year LMD EFL students at Abbas Laghour university kenchella. The students were told that the questionnaire is part of a master research project undertaken in order to improve Algerian EFL student intercultural communicative competence (ICC). The questionnaire is administered in a pleasant atmosphere and the participants were willing to help. Yet, the questionnaire is not the only research instrument used to gather information in this study. Teachers' questionnaire is also used as a second data collection tool.

2.2. The teachers' questionnaires

Through the current study, a questionnaire with six (6) questions was conducted with a small sample of 4 teachers of literature in the department of English of Abbas Laghour University. In the following table the questions and the aims is each item are explained.

- **Table 2: questions and Aims**

Questions	Aims of the questions
1) Do students face problems interpreting passages in African and British literary texts? • If yes, is that due to intercultural or linguistic issues?	The aim of this question is to know the issues observed by teachers while students read British or African literary texts.
2) During exams how can the differences between the native and the target culture affect students' answers?	This question aims at discovering how the cultural differences can affect students' answers during exams.
3) What strategies do you use to raise students' intercultural awareness?	The purpose of this question is to know the strategies that teachers use to raise students' intercultural awareness.
4) In case students do not understand passages how do you help them?	This question has been asked in order to discover how teachers help students when they do not understand passages while reading British and African literary texts.
5) According to you what are the factors that prevent students from interpreting British and African literary texts?	The aim of this question is to see if teachers are aware of the factors that prevent students from interpreting British and African literary texts.
6) Do you use the native language to explain the target culture to students?	The purpose of this question is to know the teachers attitudes towards a possible use of the native language to explain passages.

3. The sampling techniques:

Since the current research is about how to raise Algerian EFL learners' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence while reading British and African literary texts, the sample includes both teachers and students.

3.1. The teachers:

Since the number of British and African literature teachers is very limited in the Department of English at Abbas Laghour University, only a small sample of four (4) teachers, were randomly selected and questioned by researchers according to their availability. In addition to that they declared having a particular interest of the current research and hoped that the findings will help them to improve their teaching strategies.

3.2 The students:
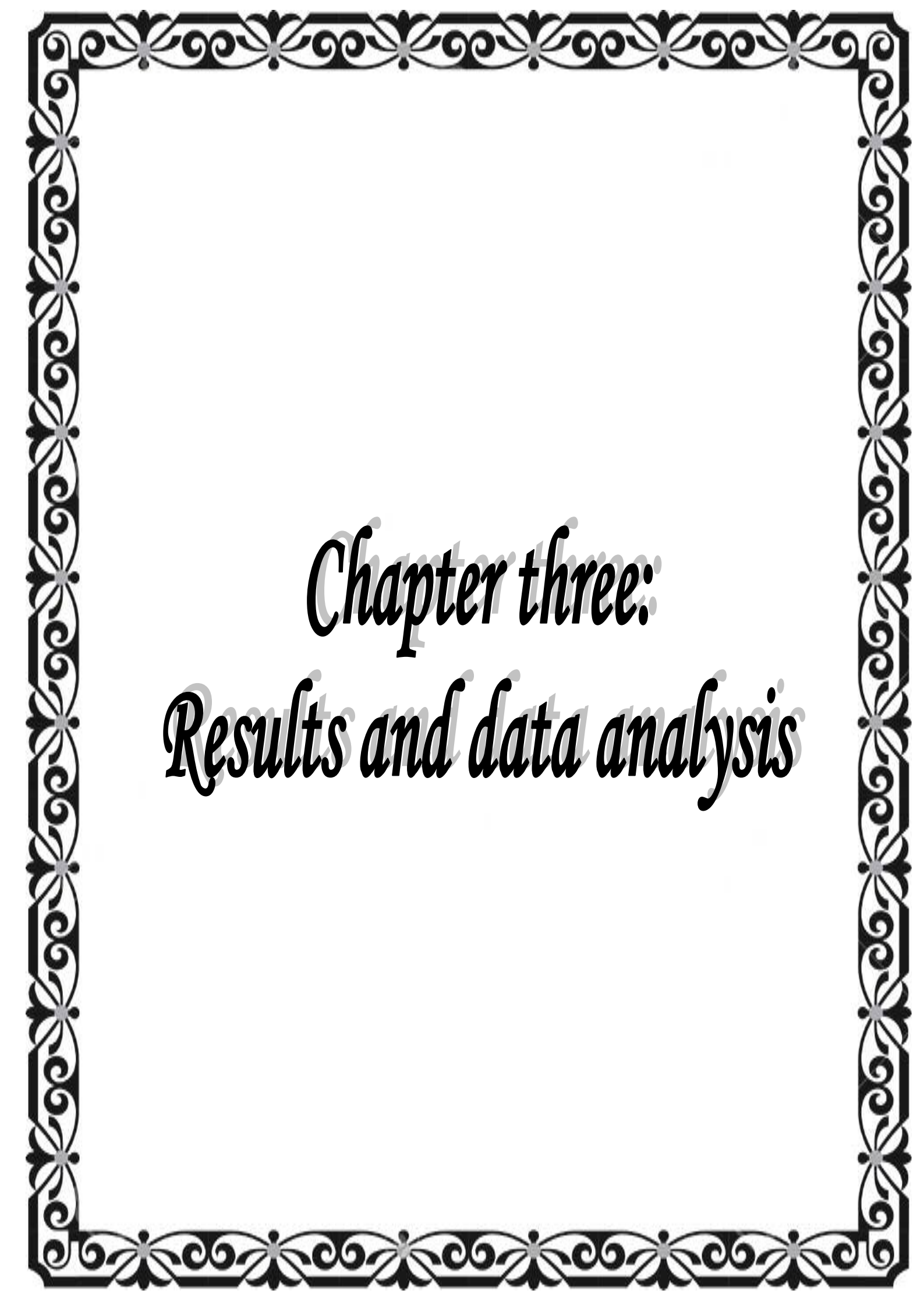
Obviously a focus group does not require a large sample this is why a total of tens (10) third year LMD students were randomly selected in the Department of English at Abbas Laghour university during the academic year of 2018-2019. A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions ,values, beliefs towards something very specific (idea ,module….).The sample included males and females , fives (5) males and fives (5) females .they are all non-native speakers of English and have Arabic as their native language .

The selection of third year student is due to only one reason: it is only in the third year that students are introduced to different types of literature such as British and African ones.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the research methodology. It is composed of students 'questionnaire, teachers' questionnaires used as research tools in order to answer the main question and sub-question. The main question is how can teachers check out the Algerian third year license EFL third year students' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence in the English department at Abbas Laghour university? And the three sub –questions are: what is culture? What are the factors that can hamper intercultural communication in reading comprehension classes? What strategies can teacher use to teach interculturality?

Data collection is first from tens (10) males and females third year LMD student in the English Department at Abbas Laghour university. Data is also collected from four (4) literature teachers. All the data gathered will be interpreted and discussed in the following chapter

Chapter three:
Results and data analysis

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researchers presented a detailed description of the participants and the research instrument as well. The data collected aim at checking out Algerian students' intercultural awareness in order to improve their ICC. The data gathered also aim at showing the importance of teaching strategies to help learners when facing intercultural issues while reading African and British literature.

The purpose of the current chapter is to present the analysis; interpretation and discussion of the results. It is important to remember that the students' questionnaire was administered in order to gather information about their perception of culture, their attitudes and beliefs toward interculturality and also what prevented them from interpreting effectively British and African literary texts. Concerning the teachers' questionnaire, it was conducted in order to explore the strategies they used to solve intercultural issues faced by students while reading British and African literary texts and also their attitudes and beliefs toward the teaching of intercultural communication.

1.   Data analysis and discussion

First, the researchers proceeded with the analysis of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaire that have already been mentioned in the previous chapter.

1.1.   The Students' Questionnaires, results and Analysis

Q1: According to you, the word « culture » refers to;

a-   Art, music, dancing…etc.

b- The way of life of a given social group, including their customs and traditions...

c-Both (a) and (b)……………………………………………………………………

option	a	b	c	Total
Student number	**1**	**7**	**2**	**10**
percentage	**10%**	**70%**	**20%**	**100%**

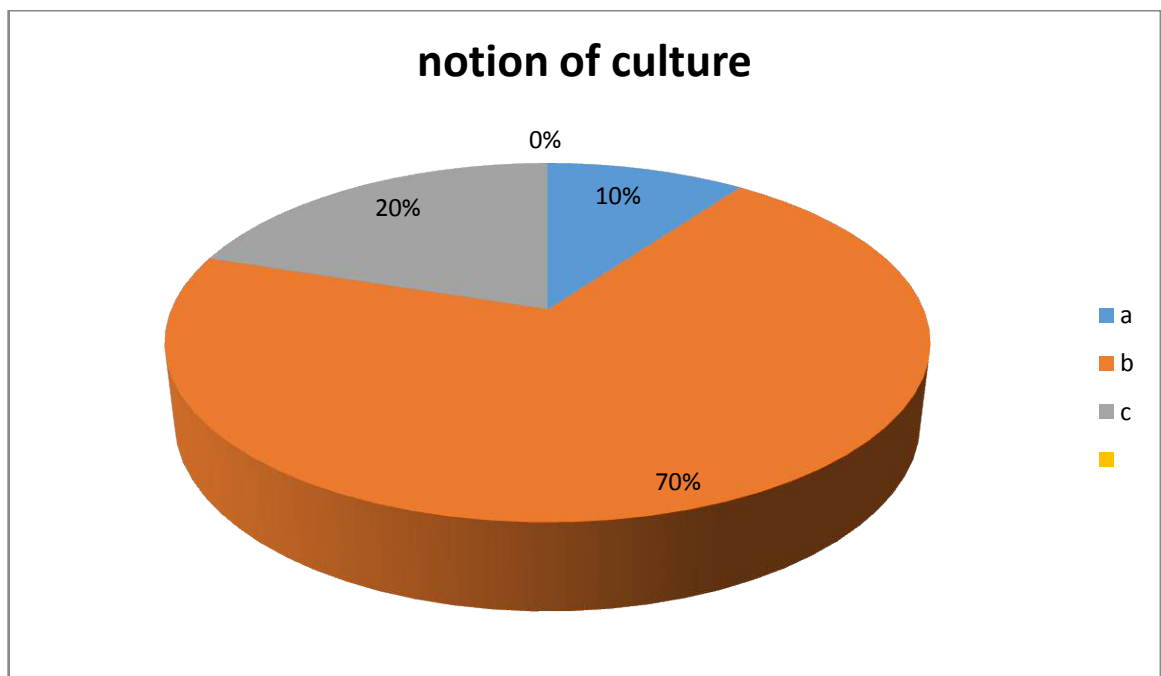**Table N1: students' perception about culture**

Chart N1: student's perception about culture

1- The data from this question show that seven students think that the world "culture refers to: The way of life of a given social group including their customs and tradition; one see culture as: Art, music; theatre, dancing ……and the two others says that culture is both of the two precedent answers.

Q2: How often do you read literary texts?

a- Rarely

b- Sometimes

c- Often

d- Always

option	Rarely	sometimes	often	Always	Total
number	4	6	/	/	10
Percentage	40%	60%	/	/	100%

Table n2: students' attitude toward the period of reading literary texts
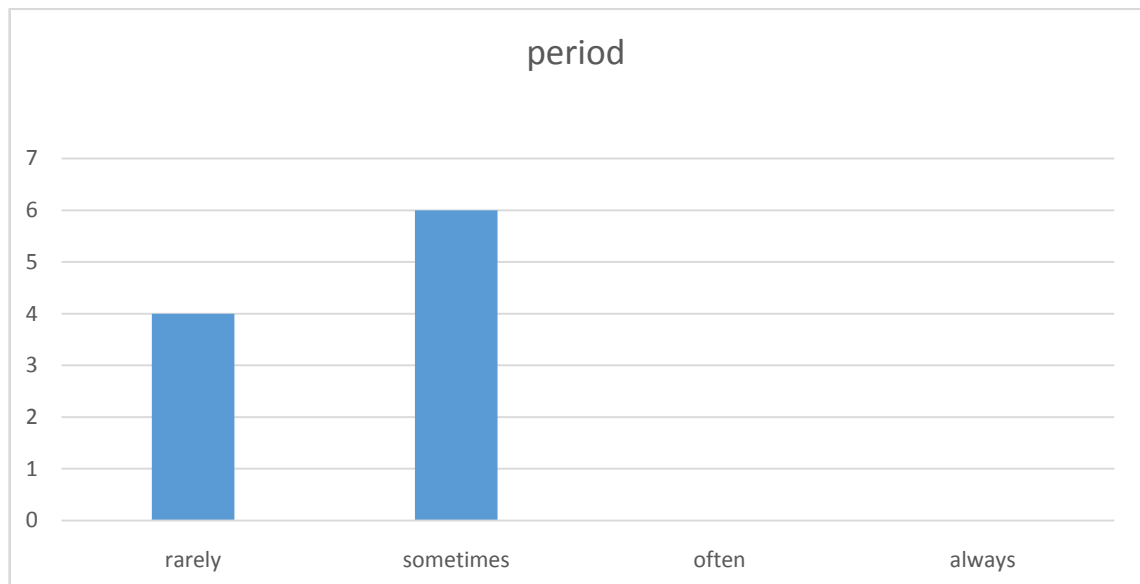
Chart n2: period of reading literary texts

From the table and chart over 40% of students read literary texts rarely while 60% read it sometimes.

Q3: What do you prefer to read most? And say why?

a-   African literature

b-   British literature

option	African literature	British literature	Total
Number	2	8	10
percentage	20%	80%	100%

Table n3: student preference between African and British literature

Chart n 3: student preference about British or African literature

The respondents appear to include themselves with British literature for satisfaction 80% because they study English and want be more familiar with their culture while 20% prefer African literature because of their traditions.

Q4: Do you think that your culture is better than others? If yes, why?
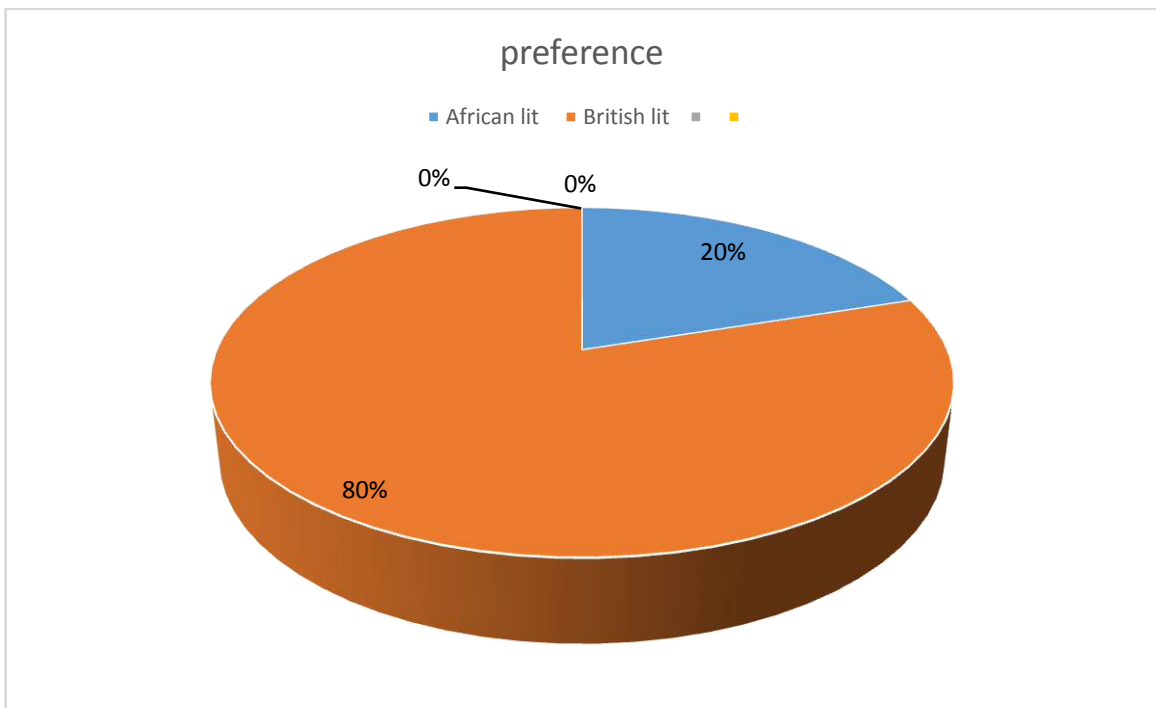
a-   NO

b-   Yes

Option	yes	No	Total
Students' number	**1**	**9**	**10**
percentage	**10%**	**90%**	**100%**

Table n4: comparison of students' culture over others one

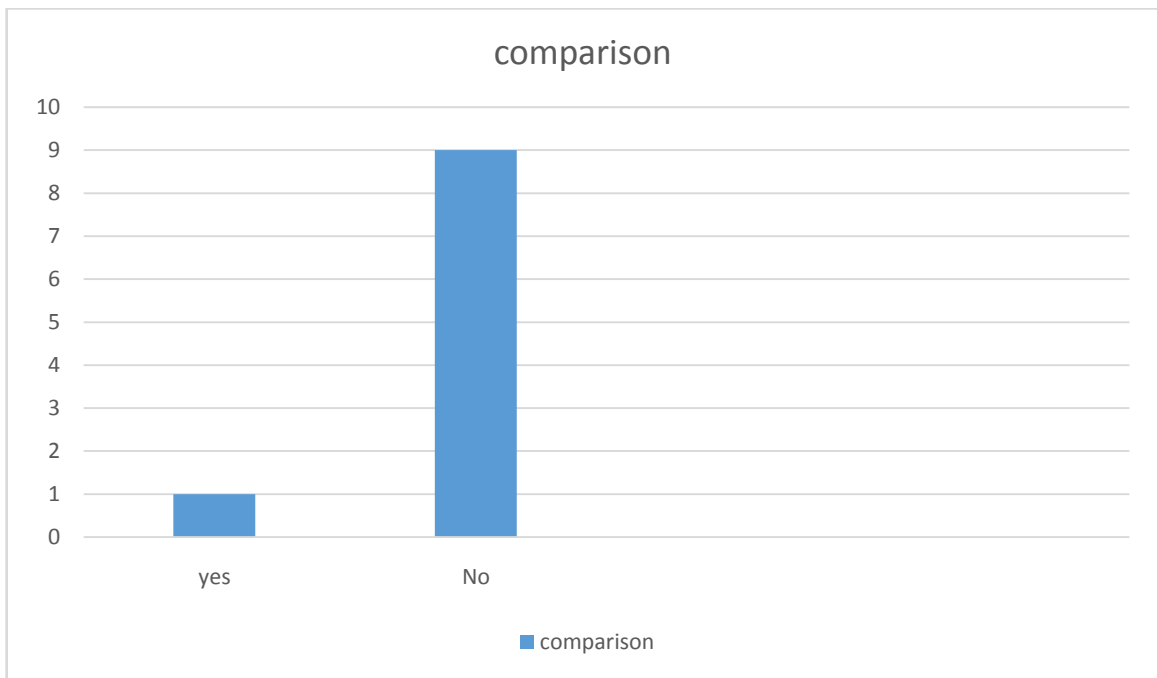**Chart n4: Comparison of students' culture over others one**

The data gathered from this question show that one (1) of the students finds that his culture is better than other cultures because he thinks that the Algerian culture is rich; variant and unique. However; nine (9) of them think that their culture is not better than other cultures because they all agree that every culture is unique.

Q5: How would you define interculturality?

a-   Interculturality is an interaction and relation between different cultures

b-   Interculturality is simply to be aware of another culture

option	A	B	Total
Students' number	4	6	10
percentage	40%	60%	100%

Table n5: the notion of interculturality according to student
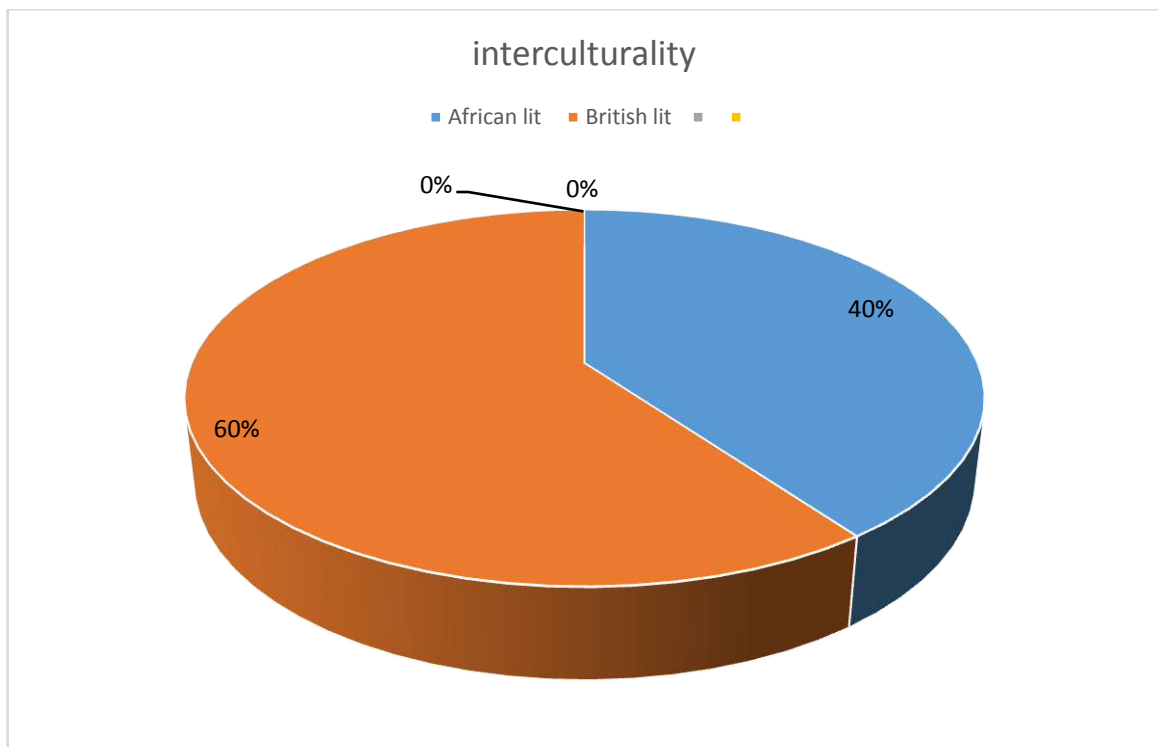

Chart n5: the notion of interculturality according to students

As responses to the question only four (4) students see interculturality as an interaction and relation between different cultures whereas 60% said that interculturality is simply to be aware of another culture.

Q6: Does your native cultural background help you to interpret effectively British literary texts?

option	Yes	No	Total
Students' number	1	9	10
percentage	10%	90%	100%

Table n6: the interpretation of British literature texts effectively according to students' native cultural background
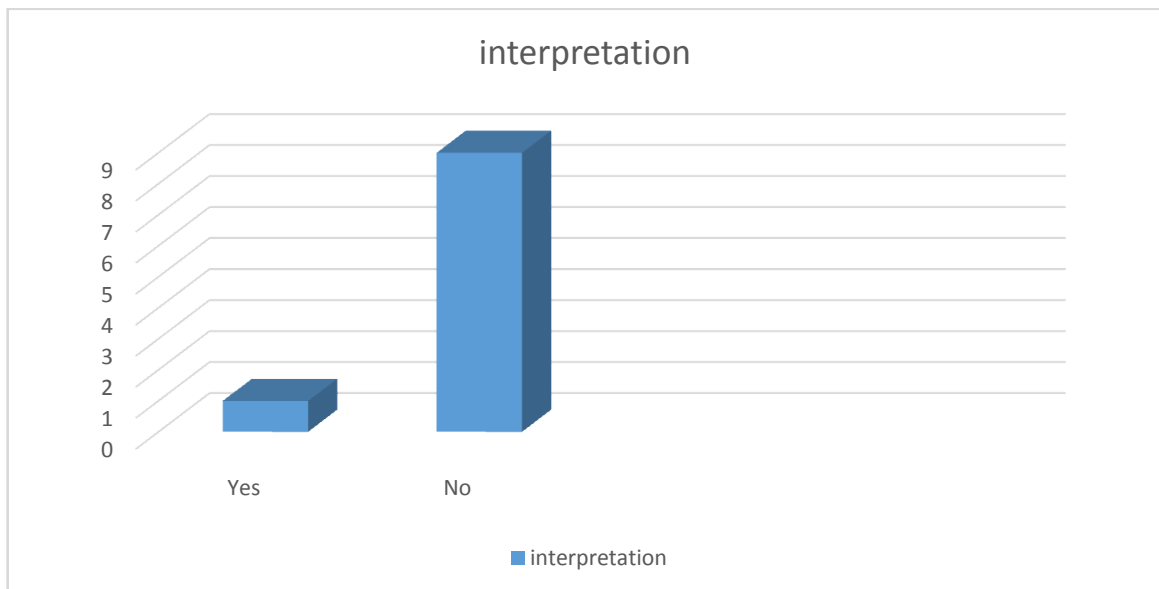
Chart n6: the interpretation of British literature texts according to their native cultural background

Concerning the sixth question nine (9) out of (10) students claimed that their native cultural background does not help them in interpreting effectively British literary texts while the remaining one supported the opposite. If the answers of the majority are taken in to consideration, it can be argued that Algerian EFL Learners naturally apply their habits of mother tongue in decoding meaning in literary texts, sometimes it works but most the time it does not because of the differences that exist between them.

Q7: Do your emotions prevent you from interpreting effectively British and African literature texts?

option	Yes	No	Total
Students 'number	1	9	10
percentage	10%	90%	100%

Table n7: students' emotions about British and African literature.
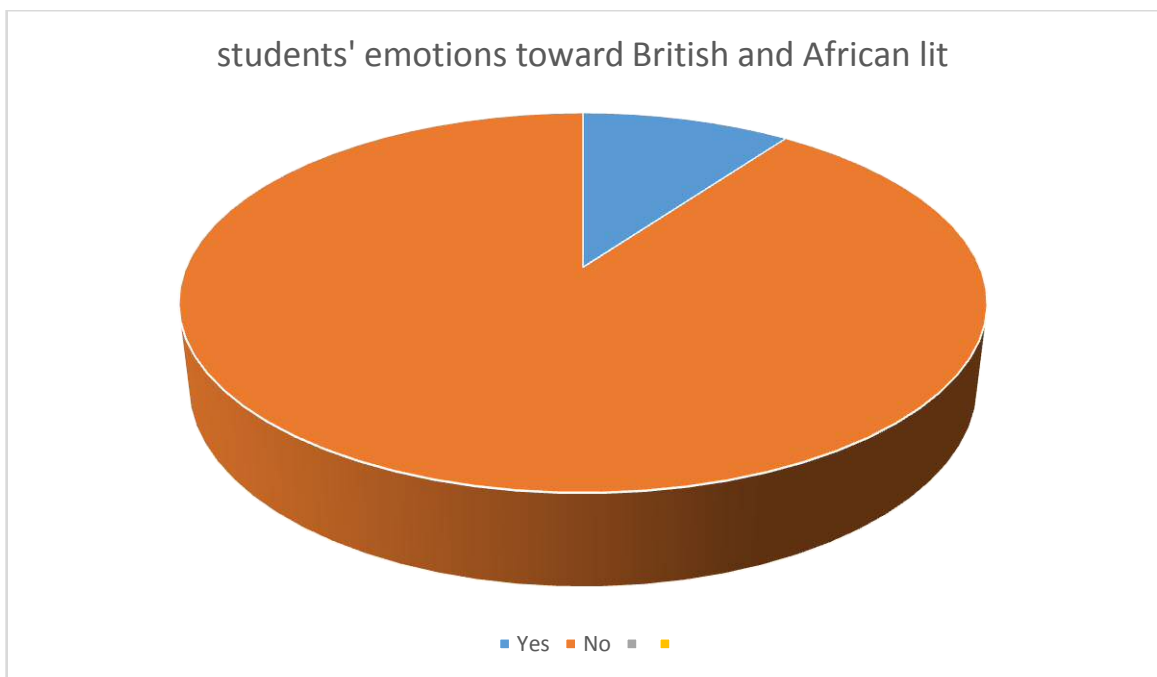
Chart n7: students' emotions toward British and African literature

As findings to this question reveal, in one hand the majority of students, nine in/ out of ten (9/10) declared that their emotions do not interfere while interpreting foreign literary texts. Therefore they can control their emotions and be able to read foreign literary texts objectively. On the other hand only one (1) students declared that while reading a foreign text sometimes it is very difficult to control her emotions, so she can be categorized as an emotional reader contrary to the nine (9) others.

Q8: Does your native cultural background help you interpret effectively African literary texts?

option	Yes	NO	Total
Students' number	**0**	**10**	**10**
percentage	**0%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table n8: student interpretation about African literature

students's interpretation about African lit

■ Yes ■ No
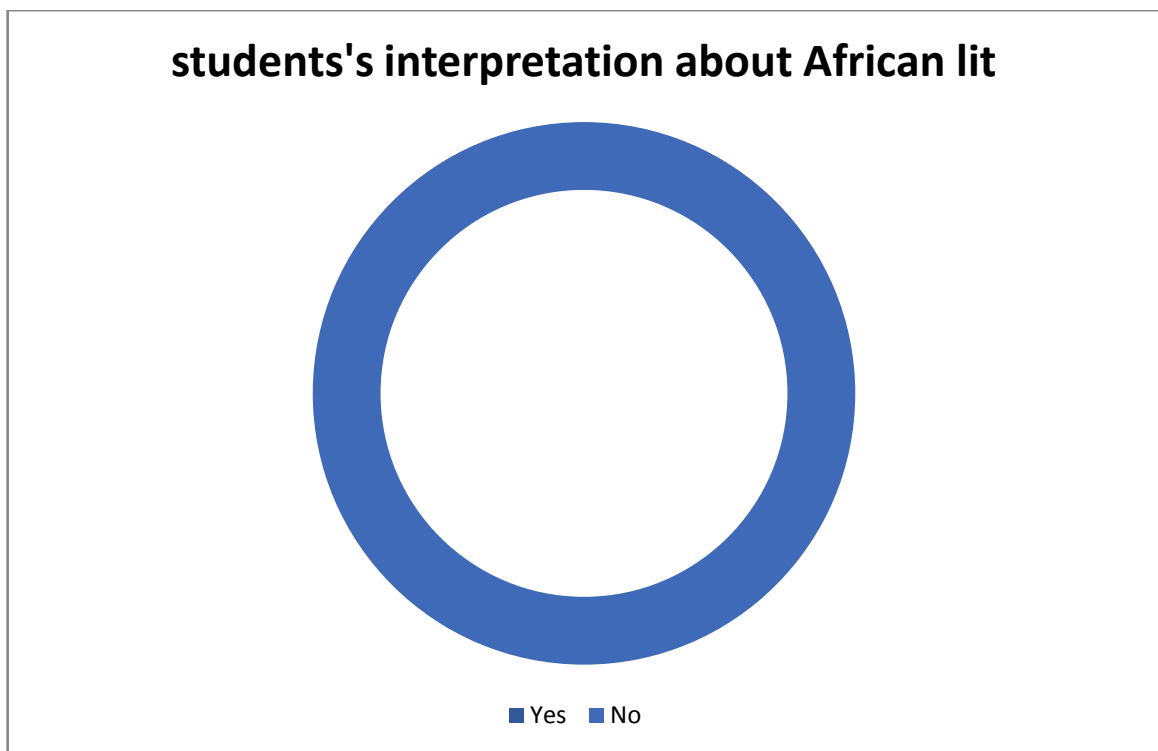
Chart n8: student interpretation toward African literature

In the eighth question, all the tenth (10) students supported that their native cultural background does not help them in interpreting African literary texts.

Q9: Do your critical thinking skills help you to fully understand British and African literary texts?

option	Yes	No	Total
Students' number	**9**	**1**	**10**
percentage	**90%**	**10%**	**100%**

Table n9: understanding British and African literary texts according to their critical thinking
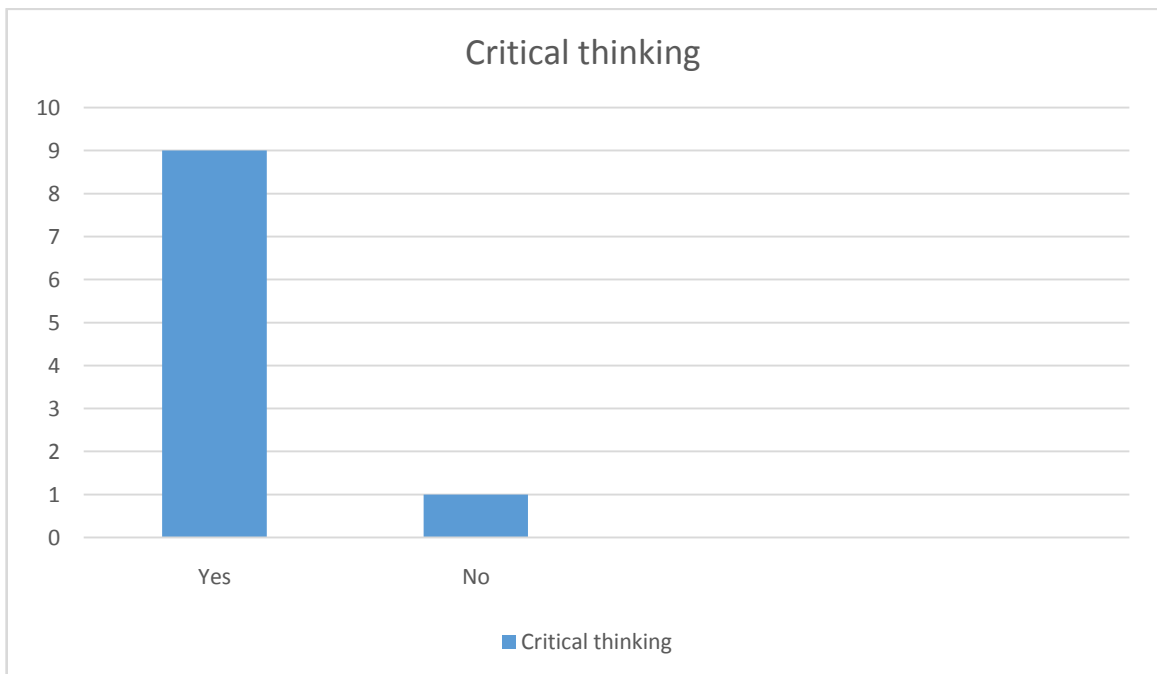
Chart n9: understanding British and African literary texts through students' critical thinking

AS shown by the chart and table, the majority of the students nine (9) out of ten (10) said that their critical thinking skills help them in interpreting foreign literary texts while the remaining one claimed the opposite because of her emotional state .The nine students believe that critical thinking skills allow them to not take everything written in the foreign literary texts for granted and to build own opinions.

Q10: Do you resist the author's point of views while reading British and African texts? If yes, please say why?

option	Yes	No	Total
Students 'number	**10**	**0**	**10**
percentage	100%	0%	100%

Table n10: students 'resistance to author's point of views while reading British and African texts

students'resistance toward author point of views
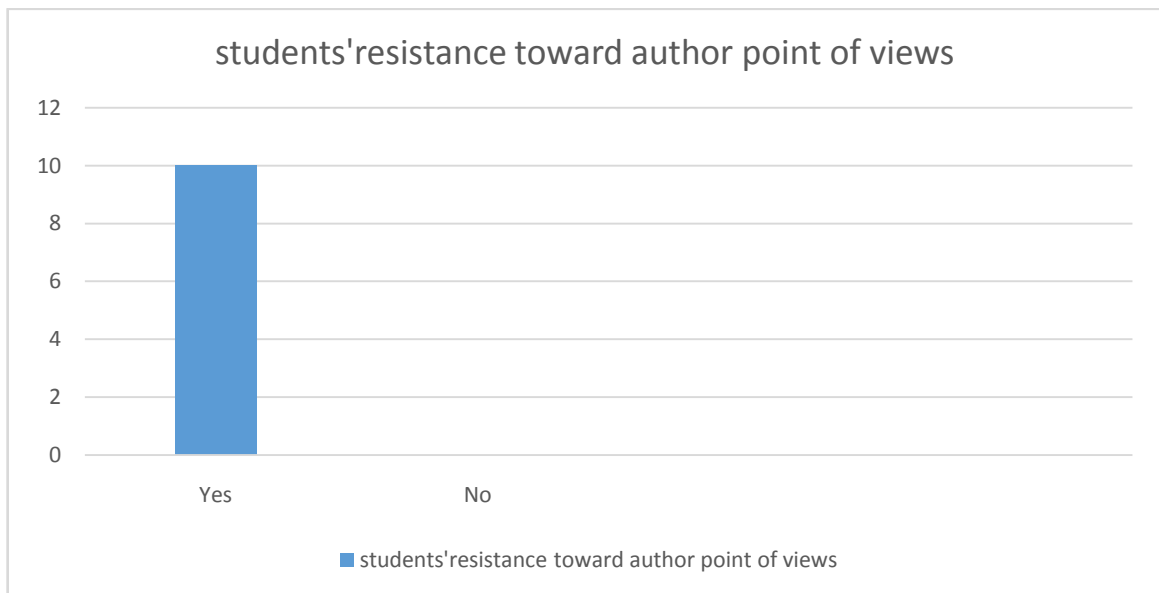
Chart n10: students' resistance toward author point of views

ALL the ten (10) students argued that they resist the authors' point of views while reading British and African literary texts; but one answer to this question seems to be unreliable. Researchers have noticed that the nine (9) students who read critically are the ones who resist because they think deeply and do not accept any form of subjectivity .But the other student who claimed previously that she cannot read critically because of her emotion can barely be resisting reader this is why her answer is considered as unreliable.

Q11: What prevents you from interpreting British and African literary texts? Please comment.

Among the collected answers for this question three (3) common reasons have been stated by the students which are: the cultural difference, the unfamiliar vocabulary and the fear of losing one's own cultural identity. Basically we can deduce that students are aware of barrier that hamper the success of their intercultural communication while reading foreign literary texts.

1.2.   Analysis of Teachers' questions and Results

While conducting this study the researchers asked four (4) teachers of literature in the English Department of Kenchella University. The objective of the questionnaire is to elicit information on teachers' strategies used to enhance third year license EFL students' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communication skills while reading British and African literary texts.

Q1: Do students face problems in interpreting passages in African/British literature?

- If yes, is that due to intercultural or linguistic issues?

The aim of this question is to know the reasons behind students' misinterpretation of passages in African literature. In fact, the teachers chose the "yes" option and came up with some common problems. First, the teachers declared that students face some intercultural issues especially when literature is concerned. Among the issues there are some cultural aspects in Africa that students cannot understand, even though sometimes we may find many similarities. In this regard, one teacher said ''I draw their attention sometimes to the existence of similarity between the Algerian tradition and the African one, but very often they do not understand''. In addition to that the teacher assumed

that, there are some differences in languages because some pre-colonial terms seem to be really hard for students to understand. One of the teacher added that students differ from each other as far as the language is concerned. In this respect, he posited that "Good students can manage, but weak students have problems everywhere". They also added that when they considered the students as language learners the issue was more linguistic than cultural, however when students are seen as literature learners, the issue becomes cultural.

One teacher questioned assumed that students actually face problems in interpreting passages in British literary texts. The main problem is not really cultural but it is linguistic. He thinks that the cultural issues do not constitute an obstacle as the linguistic issues. Usually the language is difficult for the students to understand especially the old literary works in which the language is different from the language they are studying now.

Q2: During exams how can the differences between the native and the target culture affect students' answers?

The purpose of this question is to know how the cultural differences can affect students' answers during exams. One of the teachers admitted that the cultural differences affect students' answers during exams because they are asked to write about a culture which is not theirs and therefore they may not find it easy. It is difficult for the students to feel involved in the foreign literary texts. For one of the teachers, students' bad marks during the exams are justified by three factors which are: linguistic problems, the lack of reading and intercultural issues.

The other teacher claimed that most of the time students do not raise such issues of the difference between the native and the target culture. She makes sure that

everything is clear for the students before the exams in order to prevent them from facing things they have dealt with in the classroom. She ended up by saying: "My students have never encountered such problems of differences between cultures which affect their answers in exams".

Another teacher asked clearly stated that it is difficult to notice the effect of the cultural differences on the students' exam marks. Yet, he believes that the cultural differences affect negatively students' marks to some extent. Reaching the last teacher, she supported that some students tend to see questions from their native cultural background which affects the way they process information. In this regard, she said "it is really hard for some students to deal with ideas from the foreign cultural point of view they are not familiar with"

Q3: What strategies do you use in order to improve students' intercultural awareness?

This question aims to highlight the strategies used by literature teachers in order to raise students' intercultural awareness. One of the questioned said that in his teaching experience, he recommends students to read and make research about the target culture. He also advises students to infer meanings by encouraging critical thinking. Concerning the second questioned, she uses different strategies, among them; inviting black African students during literature classes and having discussion with them in front of the other students. The aim of these discussions is to make the black African culture well known and clear for the Algerian students.

The third questioned believed that the main strategy he used to raise students intercultural awareness was to make comparison between the native culture and the target culture. The reason behind this comparison is to make students aware that even though cultures differ they also have some similarities. The last teacher questioned

argued that one single strategy is not sufficient to raise students' intercultural awareness that is why she encourages them to make research about the target cultures.

Q4: In case students do not understand a passage, how do you help them?

The purpose of this question is to discover the way teachers help students to understand passages that seem difficult. One of the teachers stated that he explores first the reasons that prevent the students from understanding the passages, because the diction might be difficult, sometimes the ideas are philosophical and ideological therefore he provides a clear explanation to them. If students find difficulties to understand a passage because of cultural issues, he tries to compare the cultural items that look quite similar to the Algerian ones, but it does not work in all the cases because sometimes there is no similarity. Concerning the second teacher, she claimed that most of the time when students do not understand a passage, she explains to them as if they were children who are learning something for the very first time.

For the third teacher asked, the best way to help students to understand difficult passage is to look for the definitions of key words and generally it works well. Sometimes also she gives more time and the opportunity to students to formulate their own interpretations. The last literature teacher questioned posited that students are given space to guess because when they guess in case their answers are wrong, he gives them the right answer and they retain it longer.

Q5: According to you what are the factors that prevent students from interpreting effectively African literary texts?

The aim of this question is to see if teachers are aware of the different barriers that prevent students from interpreting effectively African literary texts. According to one of the teachers most of the time students do not consider themselves as Africans, so the problem of belonging seems to be a crucial matter for her. Another problem that

she discussed is the religious difference because what seems to be normal and acceptable in the target religion is not the case in the students' religion. She argued that the literary texts include some traditions that the Algerian EFL learners do not share as they seem strange for them.

Concerning the other teacher, he has put a stress on the absence of the cultural background since they do not make the link between the culture and the act of reading. The lack of careful reading is another factor that impacts negatively students' interpretation of the passages, because they, very often, struggle to understand only the meaning of the words in isolation rather than understanding these words in their actual contexts.

In what concerns the British literature teachers questioned, the first one talked about the problem of language because he thinks that the students' linguistic level is not high enough to enable them interpret effectively the British literary passages. Among the linguistic issues, he focused on the difficult words, and the complexity of the sentence structures, he also mentioned the influence of the cultural difference. The second asked stated that the lack of critical thinking is an issue that prevents students from interpreting effectively passages, because in their previous classes they were not trained to think critically and to think deeply, they just look at the surface.

Q6: Do you use the native language to explain passages in the target culture?

The aim of this question is to explore teachers' attitudes towards the use of the native language while teaching African literature. Asking one teacher, he claimed that he does not like using the native language while teaching because for him it is not a good way, but sometimes he finds himself obliged to do so. He supported that culture should be taught with its own cultural items because each culture has its own language

and expressions. For him the best way to teach a foreign culture is to make students think in the foreign language, but the Algerian EFL students tend to think in Arabic very often.

For the second literature teacher questioned, she argued that it is good to use the native language while teaching if it can help, because students are first of all learners of the target culture.

The others teachers argued that they actually use the native language to explain some target cultural concepts that students do not understand.

1.3.   General discussion of the results.

This study aimed to check out the Algerian third year license EFL students' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence while reading British and African literary texts in the   Department of English at kenchella University. First, on the basis of data gathered from questionnaires, the researchers discovered that: students know exactly what culture is in general. They seemed to be culturally well equipped because they were apt to accept that their behaviors and others behaviors were culturally determined, they value their own culture and other cultures. Given the fact that students know what interculturality is, they will be able to carry intercultural interactions. The data from the results have also shown that students have a positive attitude towards foreign cultures; accordingly they will be more open to intercultural communication. Students' awareness about both factors that help them and factors that prevent them from interpreting effectively foreign literary texts show their readiness to be taught intercultural competence by their teachers.

As far as teachers are concerned, they have also positive attitudes towards the target cultures just like the students.

They have revealed that teachers are aware of some of the factors that prevent students from understanding and interpreting effectively British and African literary texts. Accordingly, they have mentioned some strategies to raise their students' intercultural awareness to improve their intercultural communicative competence while reading African and British literary texts. Among those strategies; the use of students' L1 to explain some target cultural concepts, developing students' critical thinking skills through training. Another strategy mentioned by teachers is the use of comparison between the native culture and the target culture in order to make students aware of the differences and similarities between the two cultures. These strategies used by teachers can help learners connect to the target culture; raise their awareness of cultural differences and improve their intercultural communicative competence. The researchers believe that intercultural communication can be taught first by raising students' cultural awareness, improving their communicative competence and intercultural competence. It is equally important that teachers recognize the pedagogical value of intercultural awareness in improving students' intercultural communicative competence while reading British and African literary texts.

1.4.   Limitations and Recommendations:

1.4.1. Limitations:

The current study was limited by some factors which are as follows: the use of qualitative data that was gathered from a small number of students and teachers did not allow finding to be generalized. This research was also limited by the unwillingness of some other teachers and students to participate in this study due to a lack of time. Finally the researchers faced a lack of sources, because they found a myriad number of

articles and books dealing only with intercultural communication in the speaking context, but not in the context of reading foreign literary texts. In addition to that, the majority of the few articles and books that dealt with intercultural communication in reading foreign literary texts were out of reach for the researchers because of the high costs.

The current research has some limitations, but it provides useful findings that help to generate some recommendations that both teachers and students may benefit from.

1.4.2. Recommendations:

In order to eliminate cross-cultural difficulties in reading British and African literary texts; some possible ways can be included. First, students need to be trained in critical thinking in order to improve their critical reading skills. Second, teachers should encourage classroom discussion on interculturality of the literary text to make students use the new vocabularies learned from the text. Third, teachers should focus on the learner's active role in constructing his/her own knowledge as well as his/her own interpretation of the text while providing guidance. Fourth, teachers can use the L1 culture with moderation in order to explain to the learners the new target culture elements. Fifth, to enhance students' intercultural competence; teachers should evaluate the six (6) types of 'saviors' or capacities identified by Byram, M. and Zarate, G. (1996: 240), which are: 'Savoirs' (knowledge of self and other), 'savoir apprendre / faire' (skills to discover and interact), 'savoir comprendre' (skills to interpret and to relate), 'savoir s'engager' (critical cultural awareness), 'savoir être' (attitudes: self–relativity and valuing others) and finally, 'savoir devenir' (ability to adapt to new social and cultural contexts)

From the results obtained; the researchers recommend to check out the awareness of teachers, materials and syllabus designers about the importance of integrating intercultural communication either within the communication skills module or as an autonomous module. Teachers should check out students' awareness of the difference between the native culture and the target culture and find ways to improve students' intercultural communicative competence. Finally further studies could be conducted using a larger sample to investigate on other strategies that may check out EFL students' intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, the researchers have presented and discussed the results obtained from the students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. In addition to that, the researchers ended up by stating the study's limitations and by making some recommendations.

General Conclusion

General conclusion:

The necessity to undertake this study came out first from the researchers experience as EFL students at Abbas Laghour University. It is worth to mention that the lack of intercultural awareness affects negatively students' intercultural communicative competence while reading British and African literary texts, hence their low performance in these modules. Furthermore, some Algerian EFL teachers do not give much attention to the teaching of intercultural communication though they teach a foreign language belonging to another culture.

The purpose of the current research is to check out Kenchella University English department's EFL students' Intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communication skills so that they can interpret effectively passages of novels while reading British and African literary texts. It was conducted to answer the following main question and sub-questions. The main question was: How can teachers raise the Algerian EFL third year students' Intercultural awareness in order to improve their intercultural communicative competence in the English department at Kenchella University? And the three sub-questions were: What is Culture? What are the factors that can hamper intercultural communication in reading comprehension classes? What strategies can teachers use to teach interculturality?

This study was composed of three chapters. In order to explore more the literature related to this study; the first chapter was completely devoted to the review of literature. It dealt with the variables of the study from different perspectives. It highlighted the main theoretical considerations which supported this study, among them; the function and the importance of the culture in language teaching and learning and also its representation in the English course books as well as in the Algerian English course

books. In addition to that, the review of literature tackled the intercultural communication as well as the intercultural communication issues in reading literary texts. It shed light also on literary texts and the development of intercultural communicative competence. As far as the paradigm positioning was concerned; the researchers use the constructivist approach for the reading of foreign literary texts. Finally, the review of literature basically included the improvement of intercultural communicative competence while reading foreign (British and African) literary texts.

The second chapter dealt with the research methodology design. As research tools, a questionnaire was administered to students, and a questionnaire for teachers. In the second chapter, the sampling techniques were discussed by the researchers.

Shifting to the third chapter, it covered the analysis of data gathered from questionnaires, for both students and teachers. After the questionnaires, some recommendations were addressed; and the data collected were analyzed, and interpreted qualitatively.

The English language teaching and learning should not be based only on linguistic competence, but also on discourse competence, intercultural competence, and sociolinguistic competence, because these competences need more attention. Teachers need to provide students with more guidance; and support to increase their motivation and their positive attitudes towards the target culture being studied.

Accordingly, it is necessary to shift to a more innovative teaching method which can raise students' intercultural awareness in order to develop their intercultural communicative competence in reading comprehension classes.

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