

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF DJILLALI LIABES- SIDI BEL ABBES
FACULTY OF LETTERS, LANGUAGES AND ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**The Assessment of Students' Intercultural Competence Torn Between
a Lack of Practical Guidelines, Teachers' Monolithic Beliefs, and
Students' Cyber Learning: The Case of LMD Students at the
University of Mostaganem**

Thesis submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Candidature for the Degree of
DOCTORAT in Applied Linguistics

Submitted by:

Mr. Mustapha BOUDJELAL

Supervised by:

Prof. Mohamed MELOUK

Board of Examiners:

President:	Prof. Belabbas OUERRAD	Professor	University of Sidi Bel Abbes
Supervisor:	Prof. Mohamed MELOUK	Professor	University of Sidi Bel Abbes
Examiner:	Prof. Zouaoui MERBOUH	Professor	University of Sidi Bel Abbes
Examiner:	Dr. Fatima Zohra BENNEGHRUZI	M.C.A	University of Mostaganem
Examiner	Dr. Souad AMARA	M.C.A	University of Mostaganem
Examiner	Dr. Yahia ZEGHOUDI	M.C.A	University of Tlemcen

2015-2016

DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not been submitted for the fulfillment of any degree before, and hence I assume its originality.

Mustapha BOUDJELAL

Both the theoretical parts and the practical ones are conducted by the author.

Mustapha BOUDJELAL

DEDICATIONS

To my family, colleagues and friends

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would firstly like to express my gratitude to Pr. Mohamed MELOUK for his patience, confidence, grace, wisdom, and for the tremendous efforts he made for the completion of this research work.

I acknowledge the valuable information and guidance he offered to me whenever required. Truly, I had been privileged to have his supervision that accompanied the work along its diversified stages.

I really appreciate his intellectual and humane qualities that positively influenced my work and my inner side. I would be monstrous glad if I get the chance to reflect his intellectual generosity in my research work and, most importantly, in my career as a teacher of English.

I really thank the board of examiners who would definitely enrich this work with their insightful comments and valuable pieces of advice. I thank Prof. Belabbas OUERRAD for accepting to chair this work. I also thank Prof. Zouaoui MERBOUH for dedicating some of his precious time to read, examine and evaluate the study on solid and convincing methodological grounds. These thanks extend to Dr. Yahia ZEGHOUDI, Dr. Souad HAMERLAIN, and Fatima Zohra BENNEGHRIOUZI for being part of this scientific experience.

I also thank some foreign teachers who had enriched the theoretical part of the study by means of affording some references that were unavailable and necessary for my research work. These teachers include “Pr. Alan Tonkyn (University of Reading, Great Britain), Dr. Rosario (University of La Mancha, Spain), and Pr. Benrabah (University of Grenoble, France).

ABSTRACT

The interplay between language and culture outlines the fact that foreign language learning is foreign culture learning. Howbeit, this reciprocity has ceased to be the concern of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Now, the attention is given to the richness of the cultural learning process. The latter is believed to take place in various settings and along multifarious types of socializations. Truly, while much literature had been written in relation to first and second processes of socializations, online socializations, the immediate sequel of globalization and technological boom, had been cast aside, as far as the body of theoretical knowledge is concerned. Clearly, as learners of English partake in this online learning, they come across some representations of the Self and the Other. Under this spirit, negative connotations are scattered along the two sides: online representations depict the Self (learners' cultures) chauvinistically, which make the learners react towards the Other negatively, in most cases by producing certain stereotypes and prejudices.

Inconvertibly, as online platforms mediate cultures chauvinistically and ignite cultural misunderstandings, the duty of foreign language classes is underscored. Nevertheless, the context of teaching about other cultures within the LMD system, universities of Algeria, does not foment learners' development of an intercultural competence that matches the needs of a 21st century world. The process of eschewing the intercultural dimensions of foreign language learning reaches the peak along the process of assessment. This process hinges on teachers' beliefs that prioritize the development of learners' linguistic competence at the expense of their intercultural learning. To put it in a nutshell, the context of teaching about other cultures within the Algerian universities reflects the exile of the divergent sources of cultural learning and the preservation of a linguistic competence that overrules an intercultural world. Indeed, there is a need for a culturally responsive pedagogy that accounts for both classroom socialization and online socialization within solid intercultural assessment frameworks.

List of Figures, Pie-charts, and Graphs

Figures:

Figure 1.1. Model of the Relationship Between Language and Culture.....	32
Figure 1.2 Model of Intercultural Communication	59
Figure 1.3 Constituents of Otherization.....	68
Figure 1.4. Coherence and Cohesion based Concepts of Culture.....	76
Figure 1.5. Coherence and Cohesion based Concepts of ICC	77
Figure 1.6 Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence	78
Figure 1.7. Dodd's (1998) Model of Third Culture	90
Figure 1.8. Model of Culture of Dealing	92
Figure 1.9. Types of e-collaboration technologies	102
Figure 1.10: Model of Knowledge Processing in Virtual Communities.....	110
Figure 2.1. Learners' of English Exchange of Humour.....	133
Figure 2.2. Learners' Online Disagreements.....	134
Figure 2.3: Group's Self Awareness.....	135
Figure 2.4. Learners' Online positions.....	135
Figure 2.5. Online Negative Representations of Islam.....	155
Figure 2.6. Online Representation of Christianity.....	160
Figure 2.7. Online Representations of Judaism	182
Figure 2.8. English and Arabic's Representation in Wikipedia.....	173
Figure 2.9. Stereotypical Process	192
Figure 3.1: First Year Learners' Value-judgments.....	277
Figure 3.2. First Year Learners' Value- judgments.....	277
Figure 3.3. Learners' Cultural shortcomings.....	278
Figure 3.4. First Year Learners' Negative Attitudes.....	279
Figure 3.5. First Year Learners' Negative Attitudes.....	279
Figure 3.6 .Second Year Students' Negative Attitudes.....	280
Figure 3.7. Second Year Students' Negative Attitudes.....	281
Figure 3.8. Second Year Students' Attitudes.....	282
Figure 3.9. Second Year Students' Attitudes.....	282
Figure 3.10. Third Year Students' Attitudes.....	284
Figure 3.11. Third Year Students' Negative Attitudes.....	284
Figure 4.1. Obstructions of Developing Learners' ICC.....	292
Figure 4.2. The Proposed Scheme for Enhancing Learners' ICC.....	293
Figure 4.3. Deardorff's Model of Intercultural Assessment.....	316
Figure 4.4. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.....	322
Figure 4.5. Assessment Cycle.....	324
Figure 4.6. Quadrant of Assessment Formats.....	334
Figure 4.7. Continuous Attitudinal Scale for Assessing 'Tolerance of Otherness.....	351
Figure 4.8. Assessment of Intercultural Knowledge.....	354

Pie- Charts

Pie Chart 2.1. Members' Gender	137
Pie Chart 2.2. Members' Nationalities.....	138
Pie Chart 2.3. Members' Occupations.....	139
Pie Chart 2.4. Learners' Use of Social Media.....	141
Pie Chart 2.5. Positive and Negative Images about Islam in Google	155
Pie Chart 2.6. Positive and Negative Images about Christianity.....	159
Pie Chart 2.7. Positive and Negative Images about Judaism.....	160
Pie Chart 2.8 Learners' Online Representations of the Americans.....	199
Pie Chart 2.9. Learners' Online Representations of the Europeans.....	200
Pie Chart 2.10. Learners' Online Representations of Arabs.....	201
Pie Chart 2.11. Learners' Stereotypes about the Jews.....	202
Pie Chart 2.12. Learners' Stereotypes about Christians.....	203
Pie Chart 2.13. Learners' Stereotypes about the Muslims.....	203

Graphs

Graph 2.1. Learners' Facebook Online Participation.....	129
Graph 2.2. Learners' Online Interaction	130

Bar Graphs

Bar Graph 2. 1: Arabs' Online Representations.....	170
Bar Graph 2. 2: Negative and Positive Videos about Arabs Women in Google.....	179
Bar Graph 2 .3: Africans' online Representations.....	185
Bar Graph 2. 4: Americans' Online Representations.....	189

Tables

Table.1.1. Features of Human Communication	50
Table.1.2. Perspectives of Cyberculture	115
Table.2.1. Learners' Abbreviations and Acronyms	131
Table.2.2. Learners' Use of Algerian Dialect	133
Table.2.3. Google Services	152
Table.2.4. Learners' Attitudes towards Islam's Online Representations	205
Table.2.5. Learners' Attitudes to Online Representations of the Veil	206
Table 2.6. Learners' Negative Attitudes towards Jews' Online Representation	207
Table 2.7. Learners' Attitudes towards Africans' Online Representations	209
Table 3.1. The Contents of First Year LMD Syllabi of English	240
Table 3.2. The Content of the Subject of History of Cultural Ideas	242
Table 3.3. The Contents of Second Year LMD Syllabi of English	244
Table 3.4. The Contents of Third Year LMD Syllabi of English	245
Table.3.5. The Content of the Subject of Literary Genres	262
Table 3.6. The Content of the Subject of British Literature	263
Table 3.7. The Content of the Subject of American Literature	265
Table 3.8. The Content of the Third Year Subject of British Literature	266
Table 3.9. The Content of Third Year Subject of American Literature	267
Table 3.10. Description of Learners' Exam –Copies	274
Table 3.11. Teachers' Correction Symbols	275
Table 3.12. Learners' Cultural Short-comings	285
Table.4.1. Criteria of Judging Learners' ICC in Receptive Skills	327
Table 4.2. Criteria for the Assessment of in Productive Skills	328
Table.4.3. Long-term Assessment of Learner's ICC	329
Table 4.4. The Self and the Other in Literary texts	341
Table.4.5. Misunderstandings in Exploring the Literary Texts	342
Table.4.6. Learners' Exploration of the Self and the Other in Virtual Platforms	342
Table.4.7. Misunderstandings of the Self and the Other in Virtual Platforms	342
Table.4.8. Self Assessment of ICC	347
Table.4.9. Steps for Effective Intercultural Assessment	360
Table.4.10. General Competences (a)	369
Table.4.11. General Competences (b)	370
Table 4.12. General Competences (c)	370
Table 4.13. Professional Competences (a)	371
Table 4.14. Professional Competences (b)	371
Table 4.15. Professional Competences (c)	372

TABLE OF CONETNTS

DECLARATION	I
DEDICATIONS.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	III
ABSRACT.....	IV
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES.....	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VIII

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
---------------------------	---

CHAPTER ONE: The Review of the Literature

1.1. Introduction	18
1.2. Some Understandings ¹ of Culture.....	20
1.3. The Interconnectedness of Language and Culture.....	25
1.4. Linguistic Competence	35
1.5. Communicative Competence	38
1.6. Intercultural learning	43
1.6.1. Some Understandings of Human Communication.....	47
1.6.2. Intercultural Communication.....	51
1.6.2.1. Cultural Conditioning vs. Culturing.....	61
1.6.2.2. Barriers of Intercultural Communication.....	64
1.6.2.3. Intercultural Competence	70
1.6.2.4. Third Culture	84
1.7. Virtual Communities	93
1.7.1. The Bans and the Boons of Virtual Communities	106
1.7.2. Cyberculture	113
1.8. Conclusion.....	118

¹The term “understandings” had been employed instead of “definitions”, since the former, according to the American online Dictionary (Dictionary.com) refers “*knowledge of or familiarity with a particular thing*” while the latter entails “*the act of making definite, distinct, or clear*”. Likewise, the ideas that scholars postulated in relation to culture had been approximations and not definite conceptualisations.

CHAPTER TWO: Learners' Online Intercultural Journey Torn between Arab's Culture Centeredness and Its Western Internet Representations

1.1. Introduction	119
2.2. Debating the Concepts of the Self and the Other²	121
2.3. Learners' Online Community Questioned	128
2.3.1. The Exploration of Learners' Online Community	136
2.4. Online Representations and Stereotypes	141
2.4.1. Some Understandings of Representations	142
2.4.2. Some Understandings of Stereotypes	148
2.4.3. Methodological Framework	150
2.4.4. Online Representations of Abrahamic Religions ³	151
2.4.4.1. Online Representations of Islam	155
2.4.4.2. Online Representations of Christianity	158
2.4.4.3. Online Representations of Judaism	159
2.4.5. Online Representations of the Arabs, the Africans, and the Westerners	169
2.4.5.1. Arabs' Online Representations	169
2.4.5.1.1. Representations of the Arabs in Wikipedia	170
2.4.5.1.2. Arab Women's Online Representations	178
2.4.5.2. Africans' Online Representations	184
2.4.5.3. Westerners' Online Representations	188
2.5. Learners' Stereotypes about the Self and the Other	189
2.6. Learners' Attitudes towards the Online Stereotypes of the Self and the Other	204
2.7. Conclusion	210

²Both **the concepts of Self and the Other** are taken from two juxtaposing panoramas. The learners think of themselves as the self and the West as the Other. While the Western online representations describe the West as the self and the Arabs as the Other. Both perspectives are going to be elucidated along the chapter.

³**Abrahamic religions** “*Of or relating to any of the faiths traditionally held to descend from the biblical patriarch Abraham, especially Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*” (Dictionary.com, retrieved from “ (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Abrahamic+religion>).

CHAPTER THREE: Linguistic Competence Overrules an Intercultural World: Learners' Cultural Representations, Stereotypes, and Prejudices Eschewed in EFL⁴ Classrooms⁵

3.1. Introduction	213
3.2. The History of Teaching About Other Cultures	214
3.3. The Significance of Cultural Instruction	218
3.4. Quandaries of Intercultural Instruction	227
3.5. The Context of teaching About Cultures in Algeria	234
3.5.1. The LMD Reform in Algeria	234
3.5.1.1. LMD Syllabi of English	239
3.5.1.1.1. First Year LMD Syllabus of English	240
3.5.1.1.2. Second Year LMD Syllabus of English	244
3.5.1.1.3. Third Year LMD Syllabus of English	245
3.5.1.2. The Significance of Literature in Cultural Instruction	246
3.5.1.3. Approaches of Teaching Literature	259
3.5.1.3.1. The Contents of the Subjects of Literature Within LMD System	261
3.5.1.3.1.1. First Year Subject of Literature	261
3.5.1.3.1.2. Second Year Subject of Literature	263
3.5.1.3.1.3. Third Year Subject of Literature	266
3.6 . The Assessment of Intercultural Learning	269
3.6.1. Predicaments of Intercultural Assessment	270
3.6.2 Study Sample	274
3.6.3. First Year learners' Views About the Other	276
3.6.4. Second Year learners' Views About the Other	280
3.6.5. Third Year Learners' Views About the Other	283
3.7. Conclusion	288

⁴EFL stands for English as a foreign language.

⁵Here, **representations, stereotypes, and prejudices** are believed to be developed in different settings, including learners' cultural backgrounds , processes of socialization, and online platforms.

CHAPTER FOUR: Insights Into Culturally- Responsive Pedagogy: Reducing Learners’ Stereotypes, Providing Solid Grounds of Intercultural Assessment, and Emphasizing Teachers’ Intercultural Education

4.1. Introduction	291
4.2. Strategies for Reducing Learners’ Stereotypes and Prejudices	294
4.2.1. Identifying Common Goals of Learning	295
4.2.2. Knowledge Construction	296
4.2.3. Intergroup Contacts	298
4.2.4. Stereotype Suppression	299
4.2.5. Cognitive Strategies	300
4.2.6. Coping Strategies	301
4.2.7. Other Strategies	302
4.3. Practical Guidelines for the Assessment of Learners’ ICC	313
4.3.1. Models of Intercultural Assessment	315
4.3.1.1. Deardorff’s (2006) Model Intercultural Competence	315
4.3.1.2. Objective-Oriented Approaches	317
4.3.1.3. Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity	321
4.3.1.4. Scarino and Liddicoat’s Assessment Cycle (2009)	323
4.3.1.5. Hammer’s Intercultural Development Inventory	331
4.3.2. Tools of Intercultural Assessment	332
4.3.2.1. Direct vs. Indirect Assessment	334
4.3.2.1.1 Direct Assessment	335
4.3.2.1.1.1Portfolios	337
4.3.2.1.1.1.1.Assessment of Portfolios	339
4.3.2.1.1.2 Learners’ Self-Assessment	346
4.3.2.1.2.Indirect Tools	347
4.3.2.2. Other tools of Assessment	348
4.3.3. Assessment of the Components of ICC	350
4.3.3.1 Assessing Attitudes and Behaviours	350
4.3.3.2 Assessing Intercultural Knowledge (Savoirs)	353
4.3.3.3 Assessing Intercultural Know-How/Savoir Faire	354

4.3.3.4 Assessing Intercultural Being (SavoirEtre)	355
4.3.3.5 The Assessment of Meta-cognitive Strategies	356
4.3.4. Features of Effective Assessment	357
4.4. Teacher's Intercultural Education	365
4.4.1. Socio-cultural Consciousness	372
4.4.2. Affirming Attitudes towards Diversity	373
4.4.3. Diversity in Teachers' Education	374
4.4.4. Acting as Agents of Change.....	376
4.4.5. Constructivist Views of Learning	377
4.4.6. Learning about Students	378
4.4.7 Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices.....	380
4.4.8. Discourse Approach to Intercultural instruction	382
4.4.9. Cognizance of the Context of Intercultural Instruction	383
4.6. Conclusion.....	387
GENERAL CONCLUSION	389
BIBLIOGRAPHY	399
APPENDIX I.....	440
APPNEDIX II	444

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Culture is among the concepts that generated heated debates among scholars and researchers from divergent disciplines. While some scholars outlined it in relation to human behaviour, others considered it as a mere abstraction from behaviour. Others underscored the inclusive nature of culture, and hence pointed the various elements that fall under the heading of this intricate construct. Nevertheless, the concept received due interest in the process of teaching second and foreign languages. Positively, the pedagogical essence of culture had been established on the interplay of both language and culture.

The review of literature about both constructs is very rich. Indeed, both language and culture had received due attention in relation to the theoretical apparatus. Nevertheless, a fruitful intercultural instruction hinges on the harmony that can be brought to both theory and practice, if not; hierarchical stratification between cultures is going to be established on grounds of ethnocentric attitudes and behaviours. Under this spirit, foreign language classrooms are futile grounds for learners to experience otherness and to develop empathy towards what they may consider strange and different. These milieus, when are subsidized by solid theoretical framework and reasonable and valid practice, become befitting settings for learners to generate a sense of appreciating diversity and developing a readiness to embrace cultural non-conformity.

Apparently, what theorists suggest in relation to teaching about cultures and what is actually practiced in English language classes nurture a vivid paradox. That is, the role that classrooms play in cultural mediation is not emphasized, since learners are not encouraged to abandon their ethnocentric view about the Other. This claim is valid due to the fact that language teaching is established on mere linguistic grounds, and does not account for the reciprocity pointed at earlier. The classes are being attired a suit of conflicts, misunderstandings and prejudices. On the one hand, learners subjectively react towards particle aspects of the target culture. On the other hand, teachers are “imprisoned in their linguistic shells”, the shells that encompass grammar, syntax, etc. In other words, teachers’ beliefs exclude cultural learning from the educational process.

Therefore, an issue of due interest that needs emphasis is the set of pedagogical deficiencies that hinder an objective and effective intercultural education.

The process of intercultural learning may be hindered by various obstacles that emanate from divergent sources. Learners are prone to bring certain views and expectations about learning, and in doing so, they may come across cultural aspects that do not match their positions of experience. In addition to this, cultural presuppositions also take their share from the creation of misunderstandings within language and culture classrooms. These forms are believed to create certain forms of interpretation, a kind of a filter that makes use of all the aspects that are cognitively presupposed for the learner, and disregard the other features that are not available in learners' cognition. Another barrier that comes in the way of intercultural educational processes emanates from learners' self-perception, a feature that emphasizes ethnocentrism and culture's centeredness.

The complexity of intercultural learning does not emanate from the nature of the concept of culture only, but it is fomented by the diversified settings where intercultural learning befalls in. These settings include language classes, homes, and online settings, along other environments. Virtual communities are among the venues where learners may construct and deconstruct their cultural learning practice (see chapter two). For a virtual community to be called as such, a number of features such as common interests and collaboration should be available. In relation to intercultural learning, these milieus are believed to have certain bans and boons. As to the positive side, these communities are, to a given extent, more objective than the physical communities. This claim can be nurtured by the fact that cultural differences such as belongings, gender and religious beliefs are not taken as the only filter for communicative activities. However, these digital venues are believed to be a double-edged sword, since they carry and foment certain implicit and convincing thoughts, ideas and ideologies, to boot. In addition to this, the absence of physicality in these settings paves the way for intercultural misunderstandings to emerge, leading to preconceptions, judgments, and prejudicial attitudes.

The fact that the world had become a digitalized cosmos launches the flowering of novel cultures. Under this spirit, cyberculture turns to be a hybridized culture that jumbles learners' culture, foreign cultures and the culture of the technological device, Internet. Nevertheless, the debate is still occupying the conceptual scene, due to the fact that some researchers believe that this type of culture denotes futurism and is not fully-fledged by the time being. Other understandings of the concept diverge in the perspectives they adopt. While the first one denotes cyberculture as the product of technological practices, the second understanding underlies the fact that such a cultural genre alludes to the interactive practices that befall within these virtual milieus. The above-stated areas of intercultural learning complicate the process of intercultural learning, as they make the task of assessment a knotty one.

This work is anchored in the field of intercultural instruction along English as a foreign language. This study had been launched as a response to certain rationales that had been formulated along my short experience of teaching English at the university (five-year-experience) and extensive readings in relation to the field of intercultural assessment and instruction. It had been noticed that learners, in English classes, bring to the educational milieu certain attitudes, in most cases, negative views about the Other. In connection with this, the current research endeavours established a common route that links learners' online cultural learning, what is termed "online socialization" and second socialization, known as school socialization. In other words, the process of learning about other cultures cannot be constrained to particular settings such as schools only. Per contra, in a technology determined world, one is likely to talk about virtual learning and virtual cultures. Under the same spirit, this study inspects the robotic nature of virtual platforms and explores how online representations of the Self negatively influence representations of the Other. From a pedagogical vista, this work investigates how teachers deal with learners' representations, stereotypes and prejudices in English classes.

The researcher's modest experience in teaching English in the Departments of English and Philosophy (five-year experience) had enlightened the study and founded its exploration grounds. It had been observed that learners of English

are exposed to myriad experiences where they have to deal with the Self and the Other. It is observed that these learners tend to attire subjective and unfair stereotypical labels to the Other. In the same vein, it had been noticed that learners of English within both Departments have distinguished views about the Other. In simpler words, learners along the first department are more likely to adopt positive attitudes, whereas those from the Department of Philosophy, their attitudes are more likely to embrace the Self and disregard the Other¹. This comparative observation alludes to the necessity of intercultural instruction that, apparently, finds a room in English classes, and is excluded from philosophy classes. The observation extends to learners' use of social media, especially "Facebook" to construct virtual communities for learning and building new relationships. As a member of the online community, I observed learner' attitudes towards posted photos about the Other, which I took as an incentive for inspecting the robotic nature of virtual platforms.

It is not not claimed by any means that learners' negative attitudes towards the Other are only developed along online settings. Rather, it is emphasized that the other types of socializations that, to a great extent, affect the cultural process. Cultural process is launched along learners' first socialization, a process that takes place at home, and which determines some cultural norms and standards that the learner would carry to other settings. The second socialization is the one that befalls in classrooms. At this stage, learners are exposed to paradoxes and confusion, when the divergent cultural views collide. At this phase, the Self is opposed to the Other, for the learners who have been initiated to such processes. The task of the teacher is central as to mediating both visions and perspectives. The study focuses on the third type of socialization, which has not received due attention within empirical research. Therefore, online socialization should call upon various researches within different fields, since it displays multifarious cultural aspects, including manipulated discourses and biased representations.

¹ This is not a comparative study between the Departments, but referring to the Department of philosophy is mentioned to highlight the significance of teaching about other cultures, the process that is given certain weight in the department of English; I also inform that the students of philosophy deal with the Self and the Other in their studies.

No doubt, the fact that learners may develop certain negative attitudes within online settings is elemental as far as intercultural instruction is concerned. Howbeit, the study underscores how learners experience the Other in online settings and bring them to English classes. To put it differently, online platforms are believed to enjoy certain freedom, a freedom that displays certain bans and boons. Per contra, language classes are a suitable milieu for these representations and attitudes to be reified and displayed. In connection with this, the cultural divergent views that had been accumulated from various settings are revealed in learners' performances. Under this spirit, teachers' roles as intercultural mediators are vital and viral. Instructors' duty is to reconcile the cultures involved and mould their beliefs so as to account for learners' cultural shortcomings in the process of assessment. By the same token, syllabus designers also partake in this duty, since they are supposed to design subjects that meet the needs of a 21st century global world.

The concepts of the Self and the Other are among the issues that permeate divergent disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, and most importantly pedagogy of foreign languages, in this case English. Within the realm of intercultural education, both constructs constitute the pillars of successful intercultural communication. But, the success of intercultural encounters hinges on how the Self relates to the Other, and vice versa. As to language classrooms, the Self is epitomized in the learner and their culture. The Other in pedagogical milieus represent the target culture that is carried via the foreign language. In language classes, foreign cultures, in most cases are instructed via literary works, to which some learners may object negatively. The mediation between both constructs is knotty, since it requires from the teachers to fully perform the duty of intercultural mediators. However, in other settings, the absence of teachers as mediators complicates the lubrication of the intercultural encounters. The intricate nature of intercultural encounters between the Self and the Other is even knottier, as certain manipulations and ideologies occupy the room of mediation.

Indeed, the mediation between the Self and the Other hinges, to a great extent, on the kind of the means of reconciliation. The line of demarcation between teachers' cultural mediation and media's is established on ethical grounds. This axiological feature of the first mediation is outlined in teachers' attempts to mitigate learners' stereotypes and prejudices via pedagogical tools, including methods and techniques of instruction. Per contra, the second mediation bottoms on representations and biased stereotypes that widen the cultural gap between the Self and the Other.

Online representations are central to the cultural process, since they cogently manipulate the route between the Self and the Other. These representations which stand for someone's vision, views and perspectives, locate learners at a remote from reality. In addition to this, these forms of reality distortion are of due significance in relation to the targeted process, since they shape meaning along several ideological and chauvinistic dimensions. The context of these representations is critical, as the very process of forming these kinds of reality distortion bottoms on the cultures within which it occurs. The most significant feature of representations emanate from their ideological features, the features that are implicitly implanted so as to serve particular cultures and powerful groups. However, the danger that learners of English may come across comes from their unawareness of the various forms of manipulations that underpin the online services and platforms. The lack of cognizance, as the study shows, exposes the learners to the risk of stereotyping the Other as being the enemy of the Self, the Other that endangers the stability of learners' identities.

The chauvinistic nature of online representations in relation to depicting the Self and the Other fuels learners' negative attitudes and processes of stereotyping. The process of representing the Self and the Other in virtual settings is subsidized as it scatters miscellaneous forms of stereotypes within the most visited websites and platforms. Stereotyping needs thorough analysis, given its diversified ways of categorizing cultures and individual within preconceived, in most cases, biased dimensions. In the same vein, stereotypes foment ethnocentric attitudes by means of relying on one's past experiences in dealing with cultures and diversity. Worst of all, is the process of generalization that

unifies diversity under one emblem, an emblem that judges at the level of superficial criteria, and at the expense of a deep diversity. Learners of English are more likely to identify themselves along certain identity frameworks, including religion as the most important identity marker. As it comes to online representations of Abrahamic religions, ideological and biased representations are being scattered in online platforms. These unequal cultural portrayal tends to depict Christianity and Judaism within mere religious connotations, including sacrifice, piety, and charity. However, when it comes to online representations of Islam, learners come across pictures and videos that emphasize the ideologically-constructed image, in most cases relating to aggression, terrorism, and bad intentions. The sequel of such opposing representations would definitely ignite learners' stereotyping processes that tend to encompass whole cultures within a group of individuals.

Learners also experience the interplay between the Self and the Other in online settings, along representations of the Arabs, the Africans and the Westerners. Online platforms tend to describe the Arabs as aggressive people, as it spreads these ideological ideas within miscellaneous online services. By the same token, the Africans also receive their share from these biased online representations. Under this spirit, the Africans are pictured as uncivilized and aggressive people. In addition to the already mentioned representations of the Abrahamic religions, the discussed types of reality distortion are also responsible agents in developing learners' negative attitudes towards the Other. Learners of English tend to describe the Other as a colonizer, an enemy, and as a non-believer who constitutes a threat in relation to the stability of the Self.

Education in Algeria had witnessed a number of reforms over the past years. The introduction of LMD system to the Algerian universities is an illustration of this pedagogical metamorphosis. The change had occurred due to various incentives, including globalisation and its effects that touched almost all life sectors. The system had been employed so as to facilitate education overseas, and to allow learners from different countries to exchange expertise and knowledge. In the same way, the increase of national and international mobility would allow the learners get their chances from job markets, too.

However, the abuse that is practiced over the process of teaching about cultures is reinforced along the introduction of the LMD system to the Algerian universities. As a teacher of English, I have noticed that the new system has been applied superficially only. The shadows of the classical system are gelled to the new system in relation to the actual teaching practices. This controversy is lucid in teachers' pedagogical practices that mainly stem from a bygone system. It is important to note that teachers are not blamed since they have not been trained to teach under the heading of LMD norms and standards. As to the subject of culture, the intercultural dimension of teaching is substituted for subjects that target mere linguistic aspects.

English language classes are inclined to afford sphere of intercultural learning. Howbeit, what takes place in these milieus is not that promising. The process of teaching about other cultures is a periphery that is considered as an additional process that enriches the conceptual side of the syllabi of English. This is lucid, as one uncovers the fact that culture is not thought as a single subject within the LMD system. This could be mitigated, in case culture is taught along other subjects. This is not the case, unfortunately. All the subjects that foment learners' development of linguistic capacities are prioritized as far as time dedication is concerned. In addition to this, literature, the subject that is believed to carry cultures to the learners is constrained to the portrayal of past cultures that do not help much in reflecting the norms of a technology-mediated world, where certain manipulations invade the scene. Another gloomy side of the story is reflected in the process of assessment that overcomes learners' cultural shortcomings and accounts only for linguistic redundant mistakes.

The role that literary works occupy in relation to foreign language and culture learning is undeniable. This carrier of cultures serves linguistic, communicative and cultural skills that learners may develop by means of processes of reading. As to the linguistic side, these literary texts are rich sources for learners to enrich their linguistic repertoires, as they get them to know new words and expressions. As to the communicative benefits of literature, it is believed that learners enhance their communicative skills as they penetrate the ideas conveyed via the pieces of literary works. Most importantly, divergent

literary texts reflect different cultural epochs, and hence enlighten learners' cultural purviews and prospects. Ergo, the learners may meet the Other by means of reading, for instance, Western literature.

As to the reality of teaching literature and about cultures in Algerian universities, the gloomy side overshadows the shiny one. As the first year subject of literature "*Literary Genres*", learners are introduced to mere literary concepts that are more suitable for the analysis of literary works rather than intercultural communication. As to the second year subjects of literature (British and American literatures), most of the literary works depict past culture which date back to the 18th century. The same story is recounted as far as third year subject of American literature is concerned (most of the works depict 18th century societies). Indeed, the third year subjects of literature are closer in the epoch they depict, but still, the 21st century showcases radical cultural changes that do not match the features of the bygone cultures.

Beyond shadow of a doubt, a culturally responsive pedagogy is the pedagogy that targets transforming learners into intercultural beings, citizens who may preserve their cultural identities and embrace otherness in a harmonious manner. This purposeful instructional process, as it jumbles teachers' awareness of the various settings of cultural learning, learners' stereotypes and prejudices, learners' cognizance of online representations and manipulations, would subsidize the co-existence of various cultures. Moreover, a culturally responsive pedagogy is the one that bottoms on solid grounds of assessment. The latter is vital for the process, since it enables the teachers to see how far their learners have gone in relation to the targeted process. It also abets the remedial process that may fill in the cultural gaps that learners may display in their performances.

The afore-mentioned rationales pave the way of the main thesis this study develops, which underscores the interplay between online learning and classroom learning mediated by the process of assessment. In other words, it questions the process of assessing learners' cultural shortcomings that might have been developed along various settings of socializations.

The work is claimed to be both ethnographic and netnographic. Ethnographic because it analyzed learners' behaviour and attitudes in language classes over divergent periods of time (analysis of learners' performances), and netnographic because another part of the study explored learners' cultural behaviours and practices within online settings.

The risks of being a member of the studied cultures are being admitted by the researcher. Truly, the fact the affective side had been involved in conducting the research work can be denied. As a member of the stereotyped culture, some emotions might have been generated. However, this did not affect the process of collecting the data and analyzing the findings. This study had been based on rational thinking and factual descriptions. This work had been empirical in the sense that it hinged on the emblem 'let the findings speak for themselves'. In addition to this, various objective tools of data collection had been used so as to decrease the researcher's involvement in the cultural interplay between the Self and the Other.

The criticism for the LMD system does not hinge on mere objection to the new system that emanates from personal concerns. Truly, the positive change that the system had brought to the process of teaching English as a foreign language is acknowledged. Nevertheless, it is observed that the locus of teaching about other cultures should be reviewed, and balanced so as it develops learners' intercultural competence that meets the needs of an intercultural world. A new system like LMD should account for cultural diversity more than linguistic efficiency.

The data collection had been obstructed by many obstacles. I came across some hindrances when collecting learners' exam copies. The collection of data from these sources had been time-consuming, since it required a search for papers that cover the intercultural process, the suitable papers, and divergent categories of answers. Even the analysis of the exam-copies required huge efforts, as it had been accompanied by extensive process of reading and analyzing all the collected papers. The difficulty extended to the analysis of the LMD syllabi of English. The process had been demanding, since I had to dive deeper into the programmes and the subjects to identify the intercultural cracks within the

system. I have been obliged to consult some teachers of literature so as to examine the subjects of literature rigorously. The most difficult quandaries had been experienced along the collection of the data from learners' online community. I have been obliged to observe learners' community every day, over different times, and take notes about learners' behaviours. I also believe that the process of assessment is a field that requires tremendous efforts and strong will, since most of the researchers bypass this process for the nature of constructs it targets and the scarcity of empirical guidelines.

The findings of this study can be taken at both levels: micro and macro panoramas. From a micro level, it sheds some light on the practices of teaching about other cultures. From a macro level, the shortcomings identified may be taken a background for other studies that target wider populations and more general perspectives. This part is followed by the section that introduces the formulated research questions.

The study is an empirical attempt to investigate the following research questions:

- 1- How do online representations portray the Self and the Other?
- 2- Are learners of English aware of these online representations?
- 3-Does the context of teaching about other cultures help reducing learners' stereotypes and prejudices about the Other?
- 4-How do teachers deal with learners' cultural shortcomings during the process of assessment?
- 5-Is there an interplay between online cultural socialization and classroom socialization?
- 6-Do teachers of English need to go through an intercultural training?

A number of hypotheses had been formulated as an attempt to debate the afore-mentioned research questions:

- 1- Online representations of the Self and the Other epitomize both constructs chauvinistically. The Self that encompasses the Arabs and the Africans is portrayed in relation to aggression, backwardness, servitude. However, the Other is pictured positively, emphasizing traits of democracy, civilization, and peace.
- 2- Unfortunately, learners see these online representations with ethnocentric lens, and hence overshadow the ideological manipulation that some categories scatter online, and which natively dirty the profile of the construct “Other” .
- 3- The context of teaching about other cultures does not help much in developing learners’ intercultural competence via reducing their stereotypes and prejudices towards the Self and the Other. On the contrary it prioritizes linguistic competence over intercultural skills.
- 4- Teachers of English tend to eschew learners’ cultural shortcomings and focus on identifying learners’ linguistic deficiencies in the process of assessment.
- 5- The interplay between learners’ online cultural socialization and classroom socialization is interpreted in the common cultural shortcomings that learners reveal in their performances and attitudes.
- 6- Teachers need to go through an intercultural education to alter their beliefs and embrace intercultural dimensions in relation to their processes of assessment.

Before dealing with the tools employed in this research work, it is of due significance to elucidate some key terms and points that may be confused by the readers, and which may confuse the explicit nature of the study. The clear-cut understandings of these concepts and ideas also serve the methodological framework, as they abet the precision of the findings and their discussion. This part also aims at enlightening the author's views and perspectives in relation the whole study. All these explanation are invested for the sake of producing a valid research that may contribute to the body of research works within the field of intercultural learning.

The process of cultural learning takes place at various milieus. In this study, it is stated that learners do not come to the classrooms as crude repertoires that can be shaped along planned educational cultural practices. Per contra, they bring with them what they developed along home socialization such as cultural norms, traditions, customs, and most importantly a standardized concept of the Self.

The dichotomy Self vs. Other denotes divergent things for divergent cultural perspectives. In this work, it is stated that a successful intercultural process hinges on the possibility of mediating both constructs. Thus, according to this study, the Self epitomizes the Algerian learners who constitute the majority and the Africans who fall within the minority. However, the Other typifies the Westerners and their cultures.

The exploration of learners' online community does not suggest that the cultural learning process befalls in it only. Per contra, the community had been investigated for many reasons, namely showing learners' attachment to online platforms and the cultural diversity they come across in virtual spaces. I admit that there are other online settings that construct intercultural intersections.

In relation to the syllabi of English and literature in particular, it is not suggested by any means that this system should get rid of past literature and past cultures. Per contra, It is claimed that a successful intercultural learning would occur, in case learners are introduced to past cultures (enriching their cultural repertoire), and at the same time, when they deal with modern aspects

of culture, they develop a readiness to communicate in a technology-determined world, a world mediated by various kinds of online representations.

The assessment of learners' cultural shortcomings is overcome by teachers for various reasons. However, it is suggested that the most important reason relates to teachers' beliefs, the beliefs that prioritize learners' linguistic shortcomings at the expense of intercultural learning. Thus, teachers do not bypass learners' cultural deficiencies on purpose, since if they had been offered an intercultural training that would enlighten their beliefs, they would not refuse.

Learners' culture is a concept that is repeatedly used along this research work. The homogenous nature of one single culture that the learners belong to is not underscored. On the contrary, the fact that this study embraces an intercultural dimension makes it precise in using such terms. Learners may belong to the Algerian culture, which in itself denotes various sub-cultures. The same thing is applicable to the learners who come from neighboring African cultures.

The study employs the concept assessment and not evaluation on the basis of certain grounded arguments:

- This work is a process that takes places over a long period of time, and hence requires assessment, rather than evaluation which targets particular periods of time.
- Assessment does not carry decisions, but aids professional judgment to make appropriate decisions. However, evaluation is related to judgments of certain outcomes by means of determining the worthiness, appropriateness, goodness, validity, legality, etc., of something.

The research work had been motivated by my experience as teacher of English (two different departments). Thus, the observations that I have developed along a five-year experience had been the stepping stones for the current study. However, any valid empirical study needs to excel mere subjective intuitions and

introspections, and should account for a solid conceptual apparatus, including key theories and concepts.

In addition the exploration of LMD syllabi of English, learners' online community had been questioned and explored within the social media "Facebook". The questioning of the community had been done on theoretical grounds, by means of identifying the components of virtual communities in the studied one. The exploration of learners' online community had been carried along criteria of gender, nationalities, occupations, etc.

To uncover the chauvinistic nature of online communities, a number of online platforms had been investigated, with the focus of the website "google". The latter affords miscellaneous services. However, for the sake of precision and reliability, only images and videos within this platform had been investigated:

- Images had been used to detect online representations of the Abrahamic religions, and the representations of the Self and the Other.
- The video should have been used to showcase the online representation of Muslim women.

This study comprises four chapters. Chapter one (*Review of The Literature*) reviews the literature of intercultural learning, and hence stands as a support for the next empirical chapters. In the same vein, the conceptual chain reaction is developed, starting with the foundations of linguistic competence and its criticism. This framework is opposed to the model of communicative competence, the framework that underscores communicative side of language acquisition. Intercultural competence is detailed along this section, since it furnishes the grounds of the whole study. The chapter, then, dives deeper into the hindrances that obstruct intercultural communication, and proposes the culture of mediation, known as the third culture, as an exit from cultural misunderstandings.

The second chapter (*Learners' Online Intercultural Journey Torn between Arabs' Culture Centeredness and Its Western Online Representations*) brings both concepts of the Self and the Other to the fore. These two constructs are debated in relation to philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical grounds. Then, a move is made towards the online representations of the Arabs, the Africans and Westerners. The final section within this chapter underscores learners' stereotypes about the Self and the Other. After that, learners' attitudes towards online representations are detailed.

The third chapter (*Linguistic Competence Overrules an Intercultural World: Learners' Cultural Representations, Stereotypes, and Prejudices Eschewed In EFL Classrooms*) is initiated by means of a short history of teaching about other cultures. After this conceptual brainstorming, the empirical part is introduced via a brief discussion about the Algerian educational reform "LMD". The context of teaching about other cultures is investigated via the exploration of the syllabi of English within the debated system. In the same vein, the significance of literature in teaching about other culture is explored. However, the most important part is left for the last section within this chapter. The final part targets teachers' assessment of learners' intercultural shortcomings, as it dives deeper into the predicaments of intercultural assessment.

Chapter Four: (*Insights Into Culturally- Responsive Pedagogy: Reducing Learners' Stereotypes, Providing Solid Grounds of Intercultural Assessment, and Emphasizing Teachers' Intercultural Education*) is the chapter that encompasses the shortcomings outlined in the previous chapters, and which nurtures some grounds of pedagogical remedies for a successful intercultural instruction and assessment. The section proposed certain effective strategies that teachers and learners may use to reduce stereotypes and prejudices towards the Other.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

The Review of the Literature

1.1. Introduction	18
1.2. Some Understandings² of Culture	20
1.3. The Interconnectedness of Language and Culture	25
1.4. Linguistic Competence	35
1.5. Communicative Competence	38
1.6. Intercultural learning	43
1.6.1. Some Understandings of Human Communication	47
1.6.2. Intercultural Communication	51
1.6.2.1. Cultural Conditioning vs. Culturing	61
1.6.2.2. Barriers of Intercultural Communication	64
1.6.2.3. Intercultural Competence	70
1.6.2.4. Third Culture	84
1.7. Virtual Communities	93
1.7.1. The Bans and the Boons of Virtual Communities	106
1.7.2. Cyberculture	113
1.8. Conclusion	118

² The term “**understandings**” had been employed instead of “definitions”, since the former, according to the American online Dictionary (Dictionary.com) refers “*knowledge of or familiarity with a particular thing*” while the latter entails “*the act of making definite, distinct, or clear*”. Likewise, the ideas that scholars postulated in relation to culture had been approximations and not definite conceptualisations.

1.1. Introduction

The concept of culture had been amid the labyrinthine issues that polarised scholars' views and panoramas worldwide. While some of them speculated that the concept epitomises human behaviour, others construed cultures as behaviour itself. In contempt with the fact that the altercations among scholars in relation to the concept are lucid and conspicuous, their concurrence about the difficulties of coining suitable shared understandings to the controversial concept is accentuated in relation to the body of knowledge. Howbeit, the knotty nature of culture had been a boon in relation to intellectual landscape, videlicet language teaching ecologies, where new approaches had been brought about as a sequel to the heated debates triggered off by the concept discussed.

Beyond shadow of a doubt, culture though it permeates every activity the individual does on a daily basis, cannot exist and develop on its own. Language, in this line of thought serves as a vehicle whereby human practices, norms, and traditions are communicated to the others. Language, within this vista, abets the transmission of cultural practices across boundaries and distances. By the same token, culture influences language at various planes. In some cultures, some languages and dialects are empowered while others are regulated, if not prohibited. Undeniably, both language and culture are interconnected parsimoniously. The reciprocity of both constructs is momentous in language milieus. Inconvertibly, learners' cognizance of such a tight relationship that brings both language and culture together would galvanize the learning process. In the same way, as teachers become au courant of such undeniable fact, they are more likely to plan their lessons so as to foster learning atmospheres featured by tolerance and understanding.

The fallacy that stressed the supremacy of language autonomy in relation to learning foreign languages had been a cardinal approach in the bygone years. Language learning had been bottomed on Chomsky's theory that accentuated the innateness of human language. In the same vein, language learning had been confined to the mastery of some linguistic rules embraced in the term linguistic competence. Positively, learners need to master language rules so as to penetrate

the meanings within the texts and information they come across. However, the linguistic competence they develop would do little as it comes to communication and interactivity. Dell Hymes' communicative competence had been the subsequent approach to be adopted in language classrooms. The communicative panorama took the communicative aspect of learning its nucleus, as it prioritised developing learners' communicative skills. Nevertheless, the communicative perspective overshadowed the unpractical skills within the new approach. The latter had been chastised at various planes, including notably eschewing the cultural aspects of communication.

Communication is tightly affiliated with culture. Truly, individuals communicate with each other by means of commuting cultural practices and information. The reciprocity of communication and culture had been adopted and accentuated in relation to intercultural communication, one of the approaches that fosters and encourages mutual understanding and tolerance among individuals from heterogeneous cultures. This new prospect had been adopted in language classrooms via the application of some models of intercultural competences. These models embrace knowledge about other cultures, skills and attitudes of openness and tolerance. Ergo, according to this intercultural panorama, learners are more likely to decrease their negative attitudes towards the Other and see their own cultures from another prospect. Briefly put, these learners stay at a remove from their own culture and the target one in a space known as "*the third culture*". Moreover, learners who are able to develop such skills and attitudes would be prone to interact globally and across cultures successfully.

Modern ecologies of language learning have undergone an unparalleled metamorphosis during the bygone years. The adoption of intercultural approaches to the EFL contexts has reshaped the classroom's atmosphere, including the learner-teacher rapport and native culture –target culture associations. The move towards global learning had been galvanized by the advent of technology which has, to a great extent, altered the very notion of learning that in prior time was constrained to classrooms only. With the availability of technology and Internet in particular, learners do not rely on the teacher to get information. Now, learners construct their own online communities

to exchange information and ideas about various fields of knowledge, including arguments and questions about classroom's lectures. In such a digital context, learners are developing a novel kind of culture mediated by computers, known as cyberculture. Be that as it may, online communities in addition to the undeniable boons they afford for the learners, generate some bans that may hinder the learning process, especially when it comes to dealing with the target cultures and the native ones (see chapter two).

1.2. Some Understandings of the Concept Culture:

The concept of culture had been among the labyrinthine issues that polarised scholar' views worldwide. The reasons behind such a complexity of concurring on common grounds in relation to universal understandings of the concept, emanate from the very nature of culture that links to the various life practices individuals do. Morillas (2001) postulated that "*The major stumbling block not only for success in culture teaching theory and practice, but in progress in this area of applied linguistics, has been the very notion of culture*". The immediate sequel of such intricate nature of the concept had been manifested in the emergence of miscellaneous approaches and perspectives which analysed culture from divergent angles, and gave birth to a set of sundry understandings of culture. Despite the various definitions attributed to the concept of culture in relation to the body of knowledge, most of them centred on common grounds, namely culture as human behaviour, culture as an abstraction from human behaviour, culture as ideas, and culture as process Sui Generis.³

Inconvertibly, the concept of culture had undergone significant mutations in relation to the way it was approached. The shift had been noticeable, as culture broke away from simplistic understandings that narrowed its scope to physical locations merely. Brooks (2004:12) contends that people tend to perceive culture in terms of '*geographical locations*'. In this regard, an individual who harmonises with a given tribe delineates a particular culture, while another individual from a city epitomises a divergent culture. This, he suggests, is a befitting criterion in

³ **Sui Generis:** is an adjective that describes anything unique (Dictionary.com).

relation to other capacious geographical locations as well. According to the “*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*” (2000) culture is: “*The totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population*”(Cited in Brooks, *ibid.* :16). Brooks (*ibid.*) considered this retrieved understanding as more infallible as it eclipses the notion of ‘*place*’. The afore-mentioned understanding embodies other conspicuous elements like religion, race and many other things. Per contra, this understanding, he speculated, could have incorporated peoples’ ways of thinking, acting and feeling. Culture, in this regard, gains an interdisciplinary status as it embraces multifarious disciplines like psychology, sociology, and anthropology, to boot.

Amid the issues on which some scholars disagreed, was the relation that brings both culture and human behaviour in contact. Here, the views had diverged as some of them admitted that culture is essentially human behaviour, while others counterclaimed suggesting that the two constructs are asymmetrical since they limn different properties. To begin with, advocates of the understanding of culture as human behaviour establish their views on Tylor’s interpretations of the concept culture, elucidated in the following quotation: “*Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*’ (cited in White, 1959 : 227). Tylor’s perspective illuminates the fact that culture is a term that covers almost every aspect of life, and thus reflects individuals’ behaviour. Ergo, within this perspective the line of demarcation between culture and human behaviour blurs. Hall expounds such view as he states:

Culture is man's medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves(including shows of emotions), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized , as well as how economic and government systems are put together and function. However, like purloined⁴ letter, it is frequently the most obvious and taken-for- granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behaviour in the deepest and most subtle ways (Hall, 1976, cited in Hollins, 1996:18).

Tylor's conceptualization of culture has been circulating in the research arena for quite a long time. This elemental understanding of culture has given rise to multifarious attempts of approaching the concept in question. Some scholars who have been much persuaded by Tylor's approach to culture, perceived culture to be solely an abstraction from human behaviour (cited in White, *ibid.*:227). By the end of the nineteenth century, some scholars started putting the understanding of culture as a human behaviour into question. They conjectured that culture needs to be clearly distinguished from human behaviour. This view had been anchored in the perspective displayed by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) who speculated that culture is "*an abstraction from concrete human behaviour, but it is not itself behaviour*" (cited in *ibid.*:228). This understanding of culture, White (*ibid.*) maintains, discriminates between behaviour as being essentially human, and culture as being a mere abstraction from human behaviour. Thus, penetrating this understanding of the concept discussed would indubitably obligate an understanding of what an abstraction really is. This, these scholars seem to take for granted. Likewise, anything that is abstract is obstreperous to observe and to put under rigorous analysis. Linton insinuates that: "*culture itself is intangible and cannot be directly apprehended even by the individuals who participate in it*" (cited in *ibid.*). Kroeber and Kluckhohn offer the following passage to elucidate their point of view:

⁴ Hall (1976) pictures culture to the purloined letter hinging his analogy on Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Purloined Letter. It is a short story written by Edgar Allan Poe, published in 1844 (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britannica, from [http:// www. britannica.com /EBchecked /topic /1699954/The-Purloined-Letter](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1699954/The-Purloined-Letter)). The common ground between the letter within the literary work and that of Hall's understanding of culture is that both of them, albeit their significance, are taken for granted.

Since behaviour is the first-hand and outright material of the science of psychology, and culture is not-being of concern only secondarily, as an influence on this materiality is natural that psychologists and psychologising sociologists should see behaviour as primary in their field, and then extend this view farther to apply to the field of culture also (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, cited in *ibid.*).

White (*ibid.* 228) asserted that considering culture as behaviour would call upon the idea of culture as being the subject matter of psychology. In order not to fall in these misconceptions, Kroeber and Kluckhohn's arguments need to be explicated. These scholars postulated that behaviour is the concern of psychologists, and since culture is not behaviour as such, it becomes the concern of anthropologists. This view of culture symbolises human behaviour. Boas (1938:159) perceives culture as '*the totality of the mental and physical reactions and activities that characterize the behaviour of individuals composing a social group...*' (cited in White, *ibid.* 244). A rigorous analysis of culture, Herskovits (1948) speculated, would exhibit a set of features that characterize human behaviour, and which builds up heterogeneous groups. (cited in *ibid.*). Notwithstanding, the discussed understanding of culture seems to have some amphibological traits. White (*ibid.*) contends that counting much on such an interpretation, one finds it unfathomable to distinguish between the features that harmonize with a given group and others which do not. Likewise, it is intractable to discriminate between the elements that incorporate culture and those which do not.

Scholars who espouse such a view of culture point to the prima function of ideas in the productive processes of the human behaviour. In a way, the claim discussed presupposes that through a set of ideas, one may manufacture multifarious artefacts such as pottery bowls and other artistic works. According to Tylor, culture does not typify material objects; rather it represents the mental processes that underlie any cultural practice. He argues that "*Culture consists of ideas, it is a mental phenomenon . . . not . . . material objects or observable behavior*" (cited in Thomas, 2008:02). Hofstede (1980:21) galvanized this idea as he commented "*Culture is the collective programming of the human mind that*

distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another“(cited in *ibid.*). Beyond shadow of a doubt, culture as a set of ideas operates as a distinctive factor when it comes to discriminating between groups. This function seems to be more unfathomable than the prior one which is based on mere geographical locations. In defiance of this fact, White (1959:237) regards these understandings of culture as unsatisfactory. Likewise, confining culture to a set of idea, White (*ibid.*) speculates, would not represent culture adequately. Ideas are really constitutional as they influence our actions; anyhow, some of our ideas are but the sequel of elements within the extraneous world. Under this line of thought, a trusty understanding of culture would indubitably override such a shallow scope.

The above-cited understandings, albeit disparate in the approach they adopt, share the fact that culture counts to a great extent on individuals’ will in its progression. This primitive notion of culture has been withstood by Lowie (1917: 17) who speculated that: “*Culture is a thing sui generis*“(cited in White, *ibid.*: 239). Lowie intends that culture could be understood without reference to other extraneous elements. Within this panorama, culture gains a sovereign status. According to White (*ibid.*), this understanding of culture has been chastised on multifarious planes by many scholars. Boas (1928: 235) says: “*it is hardly necessary to consider culture as mystical entity that exists outside the society of its individual carries, and what moves its own force*”(cited in *ibid.*). Briefly put, culture subsists within its social context. Per contra, in case culture is dismantled from its context, it could not be explained thoroughly. Lynd (1939:39) buttresses this claim as he maintains that: “*It is people, not culture that does things.*” “*Culture does not ‘work,’ ‘move,’ ‘change,’ but is worked, is moved, is changed. It is people who do things*”(cited in *ibid.* 240).

The afore-mentioned understandings of the concept culture epitomise one small portion of the mammoth nature of human behaviour, practices, rituals, norms, and all the things that the concept in question triggers off in one’s mind. Scholars find it arduous, if not impossible, to account for all the cultural practices in one single understanding. Withal, the quandaries of coining a concept that is able to cover all human properties had been a boon in relation to the studies that

took culture as their nucleus. The heterogamous understandings of culture have, beyond shadow of a doubt, nurtured wide streams of divergent perspectives that not only enriched the scope of culture, but they deepened our understandings in relation to the nature and properties of human behaviour and individuals' cultural practices, to boot. The complexity of the concept culture had been cleverly invested in the studies that emphasized the role culture plays in society, education, and other fields of life. Briefly put, the concept led to the emanation of a paramount field of study termed "intercultural education." (This idea will be discussed in the sections that follow this part).

1.3. The Interconnectedness of Language and Culture

In the bygone years, learning a foreign language had been solely related to the acquisition of a set of linguistic rules, including grammar and syntax. These linguistic grounds had been nurtured within particular language teaching methods, videlicet Grammar-Translation Method that stressed language learning via grammar and translation⁵. After all, the shift that globalization brought to the world and language classroom in particular, had metamorphosed the very notion of foreign language learning. Language had been positioned within its cultural ecologies, and systematically language learning was bound to culture learning. Language and culture have become interconnected constructs which signifies the exclusion of one of them will, beyond shadow of a doubt, lead to the exclusion of the other. Despite this incontestable fact, scholars had disagreed in the way language affiliates to culture. While some of them emphasized the superiority of language, others pointed to the significance of culture in the human linguistic fabric.

⁵ **Grammar Translation Method** underscores both the reading and writing skills. It is believed to improve learners' skills along a long exposure to it. (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1703203/grammar-translation>).

Not all the views expressed in relation to language and cultures express the influence of one construct over another. There are some panoramas that portray language as nonpartisan construct in relation to the cultural context. Wardhaugh (2002:2) speculated that language is autarchic as far as its rapport with culture is concerned. Language, according to him, delineates knowledge *“of rules and principles and of the ways of saying and doing things with sounds, words, and sentences rather than just knowledge of specific sounds, words, and sentences*. Elmes (n.d.) postulated that though the understanding provided above does not straightforwardly stress the significance of culture in relation to language, the scholar’s referring language to *“doing things”*, known as speech acts⁶, which befall in cultural environments, points to culture affecting language.

The way language shapes people’s thinking about the world had been inspected by scholars during the bygone times. Though the affiliation between language and thought had been first explored by Wilhelm von Humboldt, it got momentum in relation to the works of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. The latter interpreted the consanguinity between the two constructs in relation to linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism (Hulst, 2004). The arguments that Lee Whorf advanced in relation to how language influences thought had been supported by Edward Sapir⁷ (cited in Hulst, *ibid.*), to become known as “Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This hypothesis expounds the deterministic function of language elucidated in the quotation below:

⁶ **Speech act theory** accentuates the fact that meaning of one’s linguistic expressions is established on some rules that control their use along certain speech acts. It speculates that meaning is full when attributed to particular performances of speech acts (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britannica, from (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1308483/speech-act-theory>)).

⁷ **The notion of linguistic relativity** had been tackled by Chomsky who underscored the historical and the social properties of language that overcome mere scientific usages. This relativity embodies the fact that language influences one’s experiences and thoughts. This view is gelled to *Whorf-hypothesis* or the *Whorf-Sapir hypothesis* (Retrieved from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, from <http://plato.stanford.edu/index.html>).

It powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. [...] The fact of the matter is that the “real world” is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached to them (Sapir: 1929).

The first prospect in relation to language-culture’s kinship points to the momentous duty language occupies in shaping cultural realities. To begin with language expresses the world the individual lives in. According to Kramsch (1998), language decodes the individual’s cultural experiences, and hence an individual is predisposed to utter words that carry cultural significance (cited in Risager 2006:14). That is, linguistic articulations reify the cultural knowledge stored in the individual’s mind. Kramsch (ibid.) elaborates the point stating: “*The words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share*” (cited in ibid.).

According to the above passage, language expresses cultural reality. Kramsch (ibid.) acknowledges that this linguistic function is one amid the other elemental duties language exercises over other constructs. Language does not portray our experiences only; per contra, it contributes to their creation and shaping as well. This is conspicuously outlined in Kramsch’s statement “... *but members of a community or social group...also create experience through language...*”(cited in Risager , 2006:14). Language, as a *modus operandi* of self-expression, diverges from one region to another. Expounding this claim, Kramsch (ibid.) speculated that this linguistic heterogeneity epitomizes multifarious cultural realities. She argues: “*Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language*” (cited in ibid.). Beyond shadow of a doubt, Kramsch (ibid.3) points that people view their language as an emblem for their social identity. The embargo of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a dismissal for their social group and their culture. Within this panorama, language turns to symbolize cultural reality (cited in ibid.). Kramsch (ibid.) outlines the rapport between language and culture in the lines below:

- ✓ Language typifies social reality as it depicts the objects, the things and the beings in the outside world;
- ✓ it is a means of expression whereby the social reality is stratified in a set of social and cultural identities (e.g. social status of individuals) ;
- ✓ language describes cultural reality in terms of the various cultural practices individuals do (cited in ibid.).

The mammoth role that languages have in relation to cultures is conspicuous in the process of tailoring meaning to cultural practices and products. Kramsch (2013:62) contends that language overshadows a mere set of “*arbitrary linguistic forms*”. Human language shapes individual’s beliefs, traditions, and social norms, as it tailors appropriate meaning to each practice. Kramsch (ibid.) postulates that these practices that form our understandings of culture “*would be just observable realities, not cultural phenomena. To become culture, they have to have meaning*”. The significance of language in giving meaning to the cultural reality is elucidated in most approaches to language as discourse. Here, we find that language is a *modus operandi* of signs that befall in a context of use. Halliday (1978:77) has once insinuated that “*it is a ‘social semiotic’, that is, a system of signs that are both arbitrary in their form and motivated in their use.*” Per contra, though language hinges on arbitrariness in meaning construction, the very nature of the conventional signs that shape meanings are culturally loaded. In other words, the signs that individuals give to some objects (signified) are influenced by history and culture, leading to the fact that divergent cultures lead to unintelligible signs and linguistic symbols. From this prospect, culture shaping language is irrefutable.

Actually, language abets the process of shaping cultural experiences, but culture too seems to have more or less the same duty since it consolidates human linguistic fabric. The correlation between language and culture is, as a matter of fact, a two-way process: as language influences culture, the latter affects the

former. To comprehend how culture alters language, Halliday (ibid:45) compares the reciprocity between language and culture to that of text and context. He conjectured that the affinity between them is '*dialectical*'. The claim postulates that text and context are interrelated; ergo the interplay between them results in a third element that embraces both text and context. The extent to which culture may shape linguistic forms is highlighted in Bourdieu's (1990) concept of habitus⁸, ways of thinking and understanding social reality. According to Bourdieu, habitus befalls within a cultural context. This indicates that individual's quotidian behaviours, skills and actions are highly influenced by the patterns of culture. Despite the fact that our thinking and understanding of reality are formed by our language, one should not ditch the role culture plays in shaping them (cited in Morgan and Cain, 2000: 4).

Morgan and Cain (ibid.) contend that the mental processes as well as their linguistic productions are anchored in cultural contexts. The claim discussed assumes that the affinity between language and culture is an everlasting reciprocal interactive process. Ergo, taking the fact that language is culturally contextualized betokens that learning a given language would obligate a learning of the culture of that language. Per contra, teaching language independently would induce what Rommetveit (1979:25) calls "*problems of literal meaning*". He postulates that:

What is fundamentally wrong about the myth of literal meaning...is the total incapacity to capture certain prerequisites for linguistically mediated intersubjectivity... the dependency of linguistic meaning upon tacitly taken-for- granted background conditions and its embeddedness in communicative social interaction (Rommetveit, 1979:25, cited in Morgan and Cain, 2000: 4).

⁸ **Habitus** had been coined by Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) to portray the social dimensions of human behaviour. Habitus is a set of dispositions that are inculcated in one's social upbringings. (Retrieved from Encyclopedia. com <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Habitus.aspx>).

Rommetveit (ibid.) alludes to the fact that counting much on literal meaning may lead learners to fortuitous misconceptions, since it hinges on language for meaning inference and condones the cultural context. Accordingly, each language is exclusive when it comes to the '*discourse systems*' it unfolds for its users. Ergo, foreign language learners should be cognizant about these systems (cited in ibid.). Furthermore, the duties that culture occupies in relation to our linguistic productions are multifarious and divergent. One of them is '*policing*'⁹. By this, Morgan and Cain (ibid: 7) mean that culture has a discerning function with regard to particular languages and language uses. Positively, particular language uses are regulated in the sense that some discourses are allowed only to some people. Lindstrom elaborates the discussed claim as he articulated:

Context ... is an apparatus by which our talk most of the time is organized and controlled. A set of devices and procedures that protect ruling powers and truth... people talk in a context of existing discursive orders that endow people with different qualifications and opportunities to talk the truth; establish regions of knowledge and regions of silence; set truth conditions and link that regime of truth in circular relationship with systems of power which produce and sustain it.(Lindstrom, 1992:104-5, cited in Morgan, and Cain 2000:7).

Within this particular vista, culture '*prescribes*' language use. This cultural function is more serious as one takes it from an educational prospect. Rosen (1984:17), explicating how classroom's cultural context polices the language use to be authorized, states: "*as a communicative context, the classroom is subject to rules of speaking which constitute constraints on pupils*" (cited in Morgan and Cain, ibid.). Language use, Morgan and Cain, (ibid.) maintain, is restrained by means of manifold variables, including the teacher and the textbook. Per contra, this kind of cultural influence will compel students to know the other culture. Howbeit, in case the cultural norms of the foreign culture differ from theirs', a misjudging atmosphere may presumably symbolize the classroom context.

⁹ The concept is employed here to denote how the cultural context controls and regulates language use.

It becomes diaphanous that the above mentioned arguments, albeit they diverge in relation to some points, hint to the fact that language and culture are interconnected. The reciprocal influence of both constructs had been expounded by other perspectives to language and culture. To start with, both language and culture waive to certain cognitive processes. The figure provided below demonstrates the unfathomable nature that brings both language and culture together. Hulst's (2004) scheme illustrates the mental processes that function as the common ground for both language and culture. The horizontal drawn arrow below pictures the cognitive processes that human mind undergoes, and which are affiliated with manifold environments, namely the cultural environment that furnishes the grounds for the linguistic environment. As to the natural environment, it epitomises the world at large, including the heterogeneous natural contexts. Hulst (ibid.) showcases how the human mind reconciles discriminated environments, as he states:

....there is a bidirectional relationship between the mind-internal processes (in short: the mind) and the mind-external events and things (in short: the environment). On the one hand, the human mind comes equipped with mental processes that determine aspects of the cultural, linguistic and natural environment On the other hand; there are mental processes that arise from exposure to the mind-external environment (nurture, learning or imitation). (Hulst, ibid.)

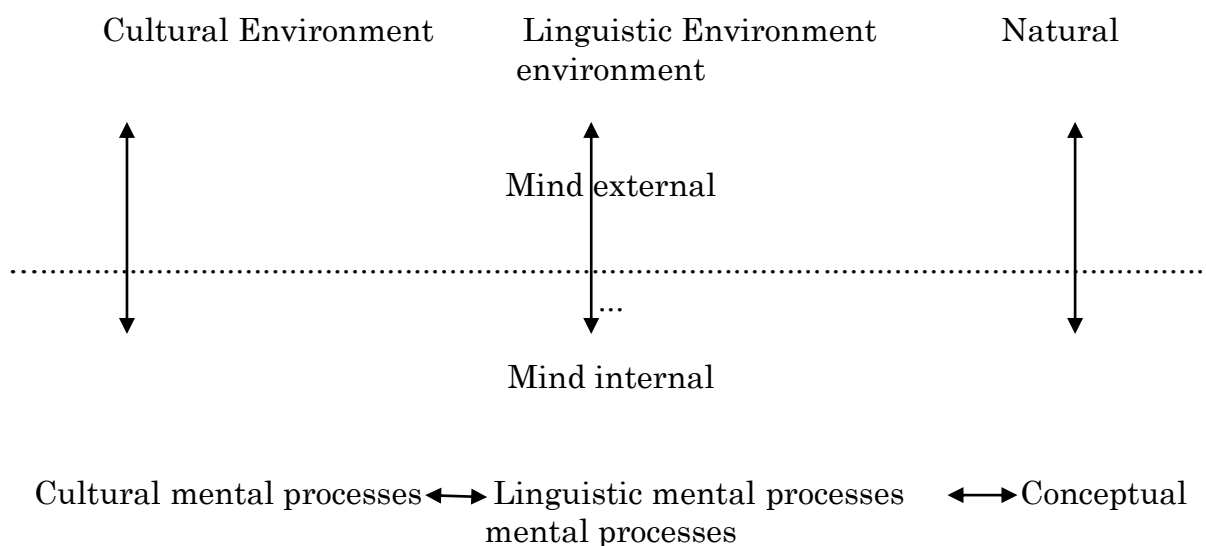


Figure 1. 1. Hulst's (2004) Model of the Relationship between Language and Culture

The scheme also demonstrates the parsimonious copula that relates language to the socio-cultural environments. Any communicative act, be it a talk, a conversation or a presentation, is deemed to befall in a particular ecology. Hulst (ibid.) discloses that the environment can have miscellaneous types. The natural settings affect individual's conception of the whole world. Therefore, "*it follows that people construct different conceptual systems.... individuals' daily contact with the environment, which differs from one place to another, influences one's perception of the world*" (ibid.). The cultural environment also shapes individuals' understanding of the world as it socialises them via the set of the norms and the traditions it displays. As the environment influences language, the latter shapes the former. Pinker (1994) establishes the function of human language in relation to the environment, as he stated the work of George Orwell's (1949) novel "*Nineteen Eighty -Four*". In this literary work, George Orwell described the language called "Newspeak"¹⁰, created by totalitarian rulers to control individuals' thoughts and perceptions (cited in Hulst, ibid.). He states:

¹⁰ **Newspeak** is a language that is featured by euphemism, and the inversion of implicit meanings. The term goes back to George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949). (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britanica, from (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/413153/newspeak>)).

The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc [English Socialism], but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought -that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc - should be unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words (George Orwell, 1949, cited in *ibid.*).

From a socio-cultural panorama, language is created within cultural surroundings. Likewise, human language via the novel signs it manufactures, metamorphoses human behaviour and accelerates individual's biological development. (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Kramersch, 2000: 138). Kramersch (*ibid.*) points the fact that language is actually a bridge that reconciles and internalises human thinking and socio-cultural activities. Furthermore, language shapes culture. According to Lantolf (2000), cultures are constructed within linguistic contexts (cited in *ibid.*). Kramersch (*ibid.*) elaborates the affiliation between language and culture as she maintained that cultures are formed within complex social systems that are nurtured by means of miscellaneous types of knowledge. She argues that culture *"is always linguistically mediated membership into a discourse community that is both real and imagined"* (Kramersch, 1995:85). Atkinson expounds how language and culture interrelate, as she outlined the following understanding of culture:

...an interplay between abstract and concrete social systems which operate dialectically and cannot exist independently...humans are agentive in creating their environments, but not in a wholly unconstrained way. Cultural models and schemes provide basic guidelines for behaviour, but these guidelines are constantly being reworked and remade in the messy crucible of everyday human behaviour (Atkinson, 1999:637).

Within the field of applied linguistics, scholars have expounded the interrelated nature of both language and culture in relation to discourse as opposed to language that, according to them, elicits mere set of signs and rules. Pennycook (1994:130) assumes that “*verbal discourse*” translucently explains the validity of the connection pointed at. He formulated his views explaining the way discourse shapes cultural meanings, as he articulated that “*discourse does not refer to language or uses of language, but to ways of organizing meaning that are often, though not exclusively, realized through language*” (ibid.). Gee, Hull and Lankshear conjecture that discourse embraces all the cultural practices individuals do in their daily life. They posit that:

A discourse is composed of ways of talking, listening, reading writing, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and using tools and objects, in particular settings and at specific times, so as to display or to recognize a particular social identity (Gee, Hull and Lankshear, 1996 :10).

In relation to the realm of education, the sighting of learners, teachers and syllabus designers is the achievement of a competence in the language and the culture studied. The fact that linguistic competence does not effectuate all learners’ requirements to interact globally renders the integration of culture teaching within the micro and macro objectives of education a prerequisite for the success of the learning journey (Kasper, 1997). Per contra, some teachers and learners are not au courant of the fact that some subjects, believed to be autonomous in relation to cultural contexts such as grammar, need some cultural exemplifications to be correctly construed (Byram and Morgan, 1994). Under this line of thought, any specimen of education should take Kramsch’s comment about the significance of culture in language teaching in account:

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one... challenging (learners’) ability to make sense of the world around them. (Kramsch, 1993).

Elmes (n.d.) argues that the process of teaching about other cultures should not be descriptive. Teachers should not be the storytellers of the target cultures. Per contra, learners need to be involved in the learning process, and more importantly they need to practice the target culture to get deeper meanings and understandings of it. Elmes (ibid.) comments: “*in language education it is not a matter of instructors explaining or telling learners ‘how it is’, it is important to let learners make informed observations such as ethnographers would.* Garfunkel (1967) supplemented that learners, as they partake in the intercultural process, develop a kind of knowledge in relation to how other people use “*unstated assumptions*” to communicate globally (cited in Elmes, n.d.).

1.4. Linguistic Competence

The advent of Chomsky’s linguistic competence had been a turning point in relation to language study and analysis. Chomsky’s “*Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*” (1965) had marked the metamorphosis from language as a set of structures to the human being use of language, with the emphasis on the individual’s production of speech in relation to the mental processes. The prospect that Chomsky launched bottomed on two elemental grounds: language as a cognitive phenomenon and the significance of the community in language production and development (Newby, 2000). The focal point of linguistics had been identified by Chomsky as describing “*mental reality underlying actual behaviour*” (Chomsky, 1965: 4). Chomsky (ibid) views linguistic competence as a set of ‘*tacit rules*’ that help the speaker construct a given number of sentences. This competence is the characteristic of an “*ideal speaker hearer who lives in a homogenous speech community*”. By means of deduction, to be linguistically competent obligates a membership in a homogenous speech community and a full mastery of the language in question. Chomsky assists this assumption in the passage below:

Linguistic theory is concerned with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech- community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected, by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (Chomsky: *ibid.*3).

Linguistic competence endows the speaker with the qualification to recreate other sentences using the same structure. This, Alien and Buren (1971:8) call “*language creativity*”. The novel sentences, the same scholars conjectured, could be construed by the hearer in contempt of the fact that they have not heard them before. Within this vista, linguistic competence in the Chomskyan sense is productive. This productivity seems to be lacking in Saussure’s concept of ‘*langue*’¹¹ (cited in Robins 1979:32). According to Grace’s (1987:127) point of view, linguistic competence embraces a set of divergent skills, which are the outcome of lived-experiences. Physical skills, he contends, are involved in the production of speech sounds. These skills embody other sub-skills such as hearing and deducing from a set of clues what is meant by a given utterance. The skill of erecting experiences is another skill which falls under the heading of linguistic competence. Skills of translation are the subsequent ones to be added to the competence in question. This ability to translate across languages is a pure outcome of a person’s experience of untangling multitudinous translation intricacies (cited in Robins, *ibid.*). These skills, Grace (*ibid.*) postulates, need to be stocked in the human memory. The latter is a part of our linguistic competence and stores all the experiences one lives. This memory abets us decide upon the ‘*acceptability*’ of given utterances in particular languages (cited in *ibid.*).

¹¹ **Langue and parole:** Ferdinand de Saussure outlines the difference between a “language” (*langue*) in its structural form and the spoken word (*parole*). Likewise, Chomsky underscores a distinction between “competence” and “performance.” When a native speaker speaks a language, they “perform” the *parole*, sometimes without being cognizant of the linguistic structure of that language as a generalized “competence” in the linguistics of that language. (Retrieved from Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology, from [http://www. Blackwell reference. com/public/ tocnode ?id=g9781405124331_yr2012_ chunk_g978140512433118 _ss1-13](http://www.Blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405124331_yr2012_chunk_g978140512433118_ss1-13).

Chomsky's (ibid.2) competence-performance dichotomy had been of relevance to language study, since it identifies both conceptual knowledge and practical one. Likewise, he lucidly outlined the incongruence within the two competencies, as he stated: "*We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language and performance the actual use of language in concrete situations*" (ibid.: 3). In contempt with the fact that Chomsky points to the significance of both competencies, he admits that linguistics should be concerned with linguistic competence rather than performance that, he believes, is susceptible to manifold ecological shortcomings.

The altercation over Chomsky's theories had been enriched as it took language performance its nucleus of criticism. Most scholars in relation to theoretical and applied linguistics have acknowledged the significance of performance in relation to language study. Hymes (1972:280) admits this fact as he outlines performance as "*the product of social interaction*". Withal, the concept of performance had been chastised on the basis of a set of shortcomings, including enigmatic traits. Hymes (ibid.) queried the nature of performance in relation to the equivocation it triggers off. He expounds this idea stating that Chomsky's concept of performance is unrestrained, and hence one cannot know whether it accounts for speech only or other variables such behaviour. According to Halliday (1978:70), performance is moulded in human behaviour, what he calls "*potential behaviour*". He (ibid.) limns performance as "*“When I say can do¹², I am specifically referring to the behaviour potential as a semiotic which can be encoded in language, or of course in other things too.”*

Chomsky's linguistic competence had been censured at different planes. To begin with, it was reprobated from a sociological perspective. Here, Hymes (ibid.) contended that the "*tacit rules within a homogenous community*" individuals possess do not match the social reality. The social reality is full of the set of variables that Chomsky identified irrelevant for linguistic competence. Hymes (ibid.272) maintains his view claiming that "*It is, if I may say so, rather a Garden of Eden view. (...) The controlling image is of an abstract, isolated mechanism, not, except*

¹² Halliday (1978) uses the expression « can do » to demonstrate his functionalistic view of language. He outlines performance as the multifarious functions and activities people do on a daily basis.

incidentally, a person in a social world". Likewise, Michael Halliday had been amid the other scholars who reprimanded Chomsky's linguistic competence. Halliday (ibid.) articulates the fact that language cannot be comprehended in relation to a set of mere grammatical competencies; rather it describes "*social facts*" and *social realities*". He comments "*By their everyday acts of meaning people act out the social structure, affirming their own statuses and roles and establishing and transmitting the shared systems of value and of knowledge*" (Halliday, ibid. 2). By the same token, Hymes (ibid.:280) chastised the cognitive pillars of Chomsky's theory of language acquisition as he claimed that the child when acquiring language, they do not appropriate grammar rules only, but they acquire the social skills of what to speak, when to speak, with whom, and how to speak.

Positively, language learning actually obligates the development of linguistic skills and competencies. Ergo, learners who develop their competence in grammar, syntax, and the rest of the language-based subjects are prone to do well in relation to language learning tasks. Per contra, among the aims of leaning another language is the need to interact with people worldwide. Under this line of thought, learners who refer solely to their linguistic repertoire are likely to experience unsuccessful communicative experiences. This is due to the fact that communication hinges on skills and competencies which need to be mastered. Additionally, the communicative scene allows room for cultural differences and diversities. In claiming that, learners are supposed to develop communicative and intercultural competencies.

1.5. Communicative Competence

The development of dexterity in relation to grammar rules is imperative when it comes to language learning as well as communication. Nevertheless, Chomsky's linguistic competence has been rebuked by scholars during the 1960's on various grounds. Likewise, Habermas (1970: 137-138) and Hymes (1972:280) postulated that a mere reliance on grammar would not lead to effective communication. Within the same line of thought. Habermas (ibid.) argues that: "*the general semantics cannot be developed sufficiently on the narrow basis of the*

monological linguistic competence proposed by Chomsky". Widdowson (2003:95) considered communication as a whole process that obligates more than a mere set of limited grammatical rules. According to him, one does not communicate by simply producing sentences promiscuously. These sentences, he goes on to state, should have a social function, to perform social acts. Hymes (ibid.) conjectured that Chomsky's theory does not limit human behaviour as a whole. He concludes that linguistic theory must be able to deal with a heterogeneous community, including the socio-cultural factors. Ergo, Hymes (ibid.) prioritises performance over competence since it deals with the actual use of language. He, therefore, outlines communicative competence as "*the knowledge of rules of understanding and producing both the referential and social meaning of language*" (ibid.).

The concept of communicative competence, coined by Hymes (ibid.), provided a rich body of knowledge in relation to language teaching. Its germane qualities had been displayed in the two elemental substructures it outlines as "*effectiveness*" which typifies the outcomes of the interactive process, and "*appropriateness*" which incorporates the reciprocity between communication and the context of occurrence. More importantly, the model he advanced had bridged Chomsky's gap in relation to theory and practice. Hymes (ibid.) claimed that, communicative competence needs meet theoretical and practical needs, as he commented: "*It is not that there exists a body of linguistic theory that practical research can turn to and has only to apply. It is rather that work motivated by practical needs may help build the theory that we need*" (ibid. 269).

Hymes (ibid.) considered linguistic competence as lacking other salient features. He introduced the concept of communicative competence which embraces '*knowledge and abilities of four types*'. The first one is grammatical and embodies all the linguistic rules which subsidize the formality of sentences. The second one is psycholinguistic and represents what is doable in the '*human information processes*'. The third one is more unfathomable as it affiliates to the socio-cultural meanings of utterances. The last one represents the current situation '*what actually occurs*'. Communicative competence antithetically responded to the claim that linguistic competence and performance are autonomous constructs. Antagonistically, Hymes (ibid.) admitted that the two

competencies are two sides of the same coin, claiming that competence epitomises the abstract knowledge the individual possesses, and performance as the use of the rules within heterogeneous ecologies. He supplemented that language study needs to consider the social context as a prerequisite for any interactive process.

Communicative competence had been of great relevance, chiefly in second and foreign language teaching and learning. Hymes' model had been invested in designing multifarious teaching methods and approaches. Widdowson's (2003) concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)¹³ and Saville Troike's model of communicative competence illuminate the point best. Saville-Troike (1989) elaborated Hymes' model of communicative competence in relation to the manifold types of knowledge it consists of. She identifies three types of knowledge: linguistic, interactional, and cultural knowledge. To begin with, linguistic knowledge parallels Chomsky's linguistic competence. The point of divergence between the two understandings of knowledge relates to the fact that while Chomsky's linguistic competence is solely cognitive abstract rules, Saville-Troike (ibid.) accounts for the social settings in meaning production and construal. Albeit the pertinence of linguistic knowledge in relation to the process of meaning coding and decoding, individuals need to develop some interactional communicative skills. These skills outline the knowledge about the social norms that govern interactive processes, including norms of turn-taking¹⁴. Ergo, since communicative competence prioritises the effect of communities on language processes and communication, individuals need to be cognizant about the cultural norms within these communities. As a matter of fact, they need to develop what Troike (ibid.) calls "cultural knowledge" outlined as "*the set of social structures of the speech community and the values and the attitudes attached to language use*".

¹³ **In this approach (CLT)** , the teacher acts as a facilitator only; learners are encouraged to learn autonomously. Moreover, it underscores performative usages of the target language. (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britannica, from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1703215/communicative-language-teaching>).

¹⁴ **Turn taking:** "*An instance of the one participant taking control of some interaction, usually two-party, such as a conversation, from another*". (from, <http://www.yourdictionary.com/turn-taking>).

In relation to Second Language Acquisition, Canale and Swain (1980:35) proposed their model of communicative competence outlined as “*the underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication*” Canale (1983:22). They postulated that communicative competence encircles four elemental sub-competencies known as grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse sub-competencies. The grammatical competence, within this vista, parallels Chomsky’s linguistic competence; however, the rest of the skills within Canale and Swain’s model are not unavailable in Chomsky’s theoretical landscape. Unlike the antecedent models of communicative competence that outlined the competence in amorphous terms, this panorama accentuates the fact that communicative competence encompasses skills needed for communication, and which diverges from “actual communication, outlined as “*the realization of such knowledge and skill under limiting psychological and environmental conditions such as memory and perceptual constraints, fatigue, nervousness, distractions, and interfering background noises*” (Canale,., *ibid.*). Canale and Swain (*ibid.*) outlined their four competencies within communicative competence as:

- Grammatical competence represents dexterity in relation to L2 phonological and lexico-grammatical rules and rules of sentence formation. That is, to be able to express and construe literal meaning of utterances (e.g., acquisition of pronunciation, vocabulary, word and sentence meaning, construction of grammatical sentences, correct spelling, etc.).
- Sociolinguistic competence epitomises efficiency in relation to the socio-cultural rules of appropriate use of L2. That is, how utterances are manufactured and comprehended in miscellaneous sociolinguistic contexts (e.g., understanding of speech act conventions, recognition of norms of stylistic appropriateness, the use of a language to signal social relationships, etc.).
- Discourse competence entails the mastery of rules concerning cohesion and coherence¹⁵ of various kinds of discourse in L2 (e.g., use of appropriate pronouns, synonyms, conjunctions, substitution, repetition, marking of congruity and continuity, topic-comment sequence, etc.).

¹⁵ Coherence in linguistics includes all the elements that make text semantically meaningful. Per contra, cohesion is the grammatical and lexical ties within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. In linguistics, both coherence and cohesion are interrelated Retrieved from [http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/cognitive-behavioral + therapy](http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/cognitive-behavioral+therapy).

- Strategic competence obligates the mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in L2 used as an alternative to compensate for shortcomings in the grammatical and sociolinguistic competence or to intensify the effectiveness of communication (e.g., paraphrasing, how to address others when uncertain of their relative social status, slow speech for rhetorical effect, etc.).

Truly, communicative competence theory came as a reaction towards Chomsky's linguistic competence which both Habermas (1970: 137-138) and Hymes (1972:280) consider irrelevant in relation to real-life communication. By the same token, communicative competence had been chastised at divergent planes, including the idealization of the "speech *situation*"¹⁶, in the same way Chomsky described "*an idealized "speaker-hearer"*". The decontextualisation of both linguistic and communicative competencies is illuminated in the following passage:

Above all, communicative competence relates to an ideal speech situation in the same way that linguistic competence relates to the abstract system of linguistic rules. The dialogue constitutive universals at the same time generate and describe the form of intersubjectivity which makes mutuality of understanding possible. Communicative competence is defined by the ideal speaker's mastery of the dialogue constitutive universals irrespective of the actual restrictions under empirical conditions (Habermas, *ibid.*).

Beyond shadow of a doubt, the mastery of linguistic forms is paramount in learning English as a foreign language. Learners need to use what that have learnt in real communicative situations. Unquestionably, communicative competence qualifies them to engage in communicative events as it provides them with strategies and skills that unmistakably enhance a successful exchange of information. However, this would be workable in situations where the interactants have more or less the same cultural patterns. Per contra, communicative settings do not always work this way; in some situations, learners may find themselves dealing with persons from heterogeneous cultures. Under such a perspective, their linguistic competence as well as their communicative

¹⁶ **Idealization**, in relation to communicative competence entails the fact that the communicative situation should be deprived of all contextual variables which may hinder the communicative activity.

competence do not abet them delve into cultural differences and mutual understandings. Undoubtedly, learners need cultural knowledge that excels a mastery of mere linguistic forms. Ergo, intercultural communicative competence is a pressing skill learners need to develop so as to communicate worldwide.

1.6. Intercultural Learning:

One pertinent aim behind learning a foreign language is to develop one's linguistic competence. By means of developing such a skill, an individual may dive in the multifarious meanings communicated via texts, articles and news delivered in the target language. Be that as it may, learning a foreign language also delineates dealing with people from heterogeneous cultures. Within this vista, developing a cultural knowledge is urgently required. More important than this, communicative processes metamorphose from one situation to another, and hence embrace divergent panoramas, purviews, and world views. In relation to that, cultural knowledge occupies a paramount role in the success of these communicative events. Ergo, developing learners' intercultural communicative competence is considered as a cardinal goal of teaching a foreign language. After all, before dealing with intercultural communicative competence as such, one needs to differentiate between overlapping concepts affiliated with the concept of culture outlined in the following statement '*the scope of cultural studies includes the self, the group, and the communicative situation...*' (Bernaus , Andrade ,Kervan , Murkwoska, and Saez (2007 :11). The sequel of such conceptual activity had been displayed in the emanation of miscellaneous concepts, videlicet pluriculturalism, multiculturalism and interculturality.

To begin with, plurilingualism excels the mastery of a set languages to account for individuals' experiences in divergent situations. D'Alfonso (2006:248) maintained that plurilingual speakers should actually reconcile heterogeneous cultures as they move across them. This concept, he goes on to state, eschews any account of territorial boundaries. Likewise, the interface between the experienced cultures brings about other cultures that embrace them all. He

illuminated this point saying: “*however, once this jump over territorial culture occurs, one should not expect either the culture of the origin or the culture of the adoption to remain, in essence, the same*” (ibid.). By the same token, pluriculturalism, according to the Council of Europe (2001:168), is related to plurilingualism. Positively, the association within the two constructs emanates from the very affiliation of both language and culture:

In a person’s cultural competence, the various cultures (national, regional, social) to which that person has gained do not simply coexist side by side ; they are compared contrasted and actively interact to produce an enriched, integrated pluricultural competence, of which plurilingual competence is one component, again interacting with other components. (Council of Europe, ibid., cited in Bernaus ,Andrade ,Kervan ,Murkwoska, and Saez, ibid.).

Multiculturalism is related to multilingualism due to some intricate associations. Both Aronin and Hufeisen (2009:12) speculated that the understanding of multilingualism has brought about a set of divergences and controversies in relation to the body of knowledge. One pertinent reason among many others is said to centre on the unintelligible languages the speaker calls upon in certain situations as well as the intricacy of the situation itself. Consequently, pluriculturalism had been the nucleus of manifold disciplines and fields of study including psychology, in particular. Ergo, from a psychological perspective, multiculturalism is one of the four elemental psychological theories: psychodynamic theory ¹⁷ , existential humanistic theory ¹⁸ , and cognitive

¹⁷ **Psycho-dynamics** hinges on in the idea of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. According to Freudian perspective, *psychodynamics* is the study of transformations and exchanges of “psychic energy” in the personality. In the same line of thought, the psychodynamic model explains behaviours through the interactions of Freud’s innate emotional forces, the *id*, *ego*, and *super-ego*. (Retrieved from PsychCentral (encyclopedia of psychology, from [http ://psychCentral. com/encyclopedia /2009 /psychodynamic-model/](http://psychCentral.com/encyclopedia/2009/psychodynamic-model/)).

¹⁸ **Humanistic psychology** is a kind of psychology that supports the belief that humans, as individuals, are unique beings and should be recognized and treated as such by psychologists and psychiatrists. Humanistic psychology came a reaction the two mainstream 20th-century trends in psychology, behaviourism and psychoanalysis.(Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britannica, from ([http ://www. Britannica .com /EBchecked /topic/ 27 6011/ humanistic -psychology](http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/276011/humanistic-psychology)).

behavioural theory¹⁹ (Pedersen, 1998: 113). Other understandings of the concept embrace attitudes of integrity and constructions of individual's identity. Berry contends:

Multiculturalism is meant to create a socio-political context within which individuals can develop healthy identities and mutually positive intergroup attitudes ...some consider diversity to be valuable and seek ways to maintain or enhance it; those we call multicultural or integrationists. (Berry, 1991: 24).

Multiculturalism is oftentimes misconstrued, if not mistakenly used in incongruous ecologies. This phenomenon prioritises diversity and differences amid ethnic groups. Be that as it may, unlike intercultural communication whose boons are acknowledged worldwide, multiculturalism generates juxtaposing views as to its advantages and drawbacks (Arends-Toth and Van de Vijver, 2003:255). As to the individuals who harmonize within minority groups, this process is propitious as it aids them safeguard their own culture, identity and concept of self. As to the individuals who represent the majority, divergent points of view in relation to multiculturalism effects can be distinguished. Some conjectured that cultural diversity subsidizes their countries economically. While others contend that that multiculturalism is a threat as to the status quo of the dominant culture. In the same line of thought, these attitudes towards difference and heterogeneity have given birth to what is known as "*multicultural ideology*", understood as "*overall evaluation of the majority group addressing the degree to which they possess positive attitudes toward immigrants and cultural diversity*" (ibid.). Likewise, multiculturalism had been fomented by means of the miscellaneous forms of media that, according Bailey, and Harindranath (2006:229), created

¹⁹**Cognitive-behavioral therapy** is "*an action oriented form of psychological therapy that assumes that maladaptive, or faulty, thinking patterns cause maladaptive behaviour and negative emotions*" (*Maladaptive behavior is behavior that is counter-productive or interferes with everyday living.*) (Retrieved from [http : // medical- dictionary .the free dictionary.com/cognitive-behavioral+therapy.](http://medical-dictionary.the-free-dictionary.com/cognitive-behavioral+therapy))

atmospheres “enabling a dialogue across and within cultures-both minority and majorities on what constitutes such shared values and rights, and for the redefinition of the identities of multicultural nations in the West”.

Intercultural learning endeavours developing a shared sphere between learners’ culture and the target one. Intercultural approaches to learning have been implemented in educational settings in order to dwindle learners’ negative attitudes by means of developing knowledge about the target culture as well as theirs. Researches carried in this field have brought a pertinent metamorphosis in relation to language and culture teaching, as a set of models grounded on developing cultural skills and knowledge in classrooms, had been advanced. By the same token, these models have been propitious when assessing learners’ intercultural competence. Be that as it may, for one to deal with intercultural models and assessment of intercultural learning, interculturality needs to be explicated.

Positively, interculturality stands antithetically to pluriculturalism and multiculturalism. In a way, it intermediates individual’s cultural identity and other cultures. Likewise, it designates coexistence between ‘*self and otherness*’. This concept is believed to be omnipresent and progressive since it limns reality as metamorphosing across time. This reality embraces heterogeneous groups and communities with divergent identities. By the same token, Camilleri and Affergan (1995 :135) outline interculturality as a process that bridges two prima elements: ‘*assimilation*’ and ‘*differentiation*’.²⁰ This, they carry on, represents a kind of a mutual influence of the self and the Other (cited in Leclercq, 2003:72).

Bernaus, Andrade , Kervan , Murkwoska, and Saez (2007 :12) speculated that interculturality can not be objectively construed if not affiliated to the befitting communicative situation. According to them, an intercultural individual is the one who implicates themselves in a communicative interactive

²⁰ From anthropological and sociological perspectives, **cultural assimilation** is the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. This process outlines taking on the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society. (from (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/39328/assimilation>)).

process. This, they suggest, establishes one aspect of this equivocal concept which does not necessarily imply a communicative event. Other aspects of interculturality mirror the employment of multifarious strategies in communication. Lusebrink (2008:33) contends that in certain situations, interculturality is one of the outcomes of intercultural communicative situations. He describes interculturality as an aesthetic domain where divergent 'elements' from heterogeneous cultures are melted together. These cultural variations are due to the intercultural encounters and communicative processes (cited in Sembdner, 2011 :40). Under the same spirit, Welsch (1995:40) postulated that interculturality is not that investigated as it is mainly constrained to what he calls '*traditional concepts of culture*'. He insinuates that modern approaches to culture do not bring innovative improvements to the concept culture itself, and ergo deal with interculturality in a stationary conventional way (cited in *ibid.*).

1.6.1. Some Understandings of Human Communication

Beyond shadow of a doubt, probing into the multifarious understandings of intercultural communication and intercultural competence necessitates some explicative grounds of the commonest traits of communication as such. Communication is among the labyrinthine concepts that scholars until now, find predicaments in tailoring befitting understandings to. In contempt with the mentioned claim, Frank Dance²¹ has been one of the prominent scholars to set forth various understandings to the concept debated. Be it as it may, despite the fact of the ubiquity of active endeavours to outline capacious understandings of communication, coining one definition that suits all contexts and fields remains the challenge of future research works. Ergo, the understandings of the concept had been an interpretation of the set of benchmarks that delineate communication. Howbeit, conventional understandings of communication outline it as an indispensable means that human life bottoms on. Undoubtedly, life without communication would be a chaotic jungle. This ability that symbolises

²¹ **Frank Dance** is an American communication professor, the one who compiled a list of 98 different definitions of communication. A few years later, Dance and Carl Larson advanced a listing of over 125 definitions of communication. (cited in Neuliep, 2005).

human language use is vital in relation to lubricating and subsidizing people's needs and relationships. Most importantly, it “..separates humans from animals. Communication with others is the essence of what it means to be human” Neuliep (2005). He (ibid.) illuminated such an understanding of communication as he outlined that:

Through communication people conduct their lives. People define themselves via their communication with others. Communication is the vehicle by which people initiate, maintain, and terminate their relationships with others. Communication is the means by which people influence and persuade others. Through communication, local, regional, national, and international conflicts are managed and resolved (Neuliep, ibid.).

Positively, the capacious nature of communication cannot be confined to a set of features; nevertheless, the eight provided touchstones illuminated in the table below, are amid the phenomenal features of communication. To begin with, communication is a process that carries metamorphosis and vulnerability in relation to the content and strategies of the interactive processes. In addition to the antecedent dimension, communication is a dynamic activity that necessarily entails adaptation, flexibility, and fluidity. Neuliep (ibid.) contends that “communication is a dynamic process and hence is impossible to identically replicate in a picture, drawing, or model”. Moreover, for a communicative act to befall, there should be an active participation of people. Under this spirit, the individuals involved in the conversation commute messages, ideas and information while talking to each other, leading to what scholars of communication call “transactional and interactive” features of communication”. Thereupon, the process in question is a two-way process that actually obligates a sender and a recipient, including a message to be commuted.

Ergo, human interactions are symbolised messages that people communicate to one another. A symbol is “an arbitrarily selected and learned stimulus that represents something else” (Neuliep, ibid.). The linguistic symbols people actualize carry miscellaneous meanings and thoughts that end up as meaningful messages. Thereupon, “Interaction, then, is the process of encoding and decoding messages. People

who speak different languages are simply using different codes” (ibid.). Within the same line of thought, the concept of communication has polarised scholar’s views: while some of them underscore the significance of intentional communication, others accentuate the significance of unintentional interactions. The line of demarcation between the two types of this intricate process bottoms on consciousness. That is, when people thoughtfully engage in an interaction that is purposeful, they are representing an intentional interaction. Per contra, the second type epitomises the interaction where people are not aware of the intent of the talk or conversation. Likewise, the content as well as the way the communicative act is managed, highly hinge on the context of occurrence. Contexts are cardinal as they typify multifarious backgrounds for the interactive process, including the cultural, physical, relational, and perceptual ecologies. Most importantly, these contexts, undoubtedly, determine the success as well as the failure of the whole process.

The ensuing peculiarity in relation to this process is ubiquity. By such a trait, scholars denote that communication is almost everywhere. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1972) contended that humans are not able not to communicate. They speculated that communication is parsimoniously affiliated with behaviour, and which aims at sending and receiving messages among individuals. They claim that behaviour is communication, and since people are unthinkable without it, communication is also a human yardstick. Last but not least, communication is a cultural process. In relation to the context that bounds the communicative act, cultures have phenomenal duty as to lubricating the process when the individuals involved share common cultural grounds. However, it may obstruct the process when cultural misunderstandings, fuelled by prejudices and stereotypes, are the lens whereby the individuals perceive the other counterpart (Neuliep: 2005). The table below summarizes the eight discussed features of communication:

Process	<i>“Communication theory reflects a process point of view . . . you cannot talk about the beginning or the end of communication.”</i> (Berlo, 1960:30).
Dynamic	Communication is a transaction among symbol users in which Meanings are dynamic, changing as a function of earlier usages and of changes in perceptions and metaperceptions. Common to both meanings is the notion that communication is timebound and irreversible. (Bowers and Bradac, 1979:260).
Interactive-Transactive	<i>“Communication occurs when two or more people interact through the exchange of messages.”</i> (Goss, 1982).
Symbolic	<i>“All the symbols of the mind, together with the means of conveying them through space and preserving them in time.”</i> (Cooley,1993).
Intentional	<i>“Communication has as its central interest those behavioural situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver(s) with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviour.”</i> (Miller, 1988:111).
Contextual	<i>“Communication always and inevitably occurs within some context.”</i> (Fisher, 1992:42).
Ubiquitous	<i>“Communication is the discriminatory response of an organism to a stimulus.”</i> (Stevens, 1950).
Cultural	<i>“Culture is communication... communication is culture.”</i> (Hall, 1994).

Table 1.1.: Features of Human Communication

1.6.2. Intercultural Communication:

Bennett has once noticed:

If we look to our species' primate past and to our more recent history of dealing with cultural difference, there is little reason to be sanguine. Our initial response to difference is usually to avoid it. Imagine, if you will, a group of our primate ancestors gathered around their fire, gnawing on the day's catch. Another group of primates comes into view, heading toward the fire. I wonder how often the first group looked up and said (in effect), "Ah, cultural diversity, how wonderful." More likely it was fight or flight, and things have not changed that much since then. We flee to the suburbs or behind walls to avoid cultural difference, and if we are forced to confront it, there often is a fight (Bennett, 1998).

The concept of intercultural communication, before it had been attired a global panorama, had been confined to national cultures only. Nations and cultures had been the prevalent dichotomies to be used in most of the conceptual landscape of the bygone time. Cultures in relation world relations had been a mere curiosity researchers kept esoterically and within intended future research works (Samovar and Porter, 2004). Per contra after some years, scholars started launching new prospects in relation to the globalised features of cultures. In this line of thought, Hannerz (1992) contended that the body of knowledge in relation to culture needs to overcome the narrow unreliable foregoing perspectives, and that cultures should be seen as "*creolised societies*". Truly, globalisation as a phenomenon had been quintessential in relation to the advent of new perspectives about cultures. On the one hand, it abetted lubricating contact among cultures as distances among nations had been reduced. On the other hand, it gave rise to the process of "*localisation*²²", the process of preserving one's identities and ethnicities (Featherstone, 1990; Hylland, 1993). Nevertheless, the gloomy side globalisation had been displayed in some prejudiced divisions within societies (Bauman, 1999). Hence, intercultural communication had been

²² **The process of localisation** is similar to the differentiation, explained in the following paragraphs, as both of them denote the process of preserving and keeping lines of demarcations and boundaries between their native culture and other cultures.

epitomised in Western discourse, “*The discourses telling whom to include and whom to exclude, which I find is a social practice crucial to research in intercultural communication*” Jenson (n.d.). In addition to this, in multiethnic nations, intercultural communication entails the stratification of individuals into who belong to the majority culture and who do not (ibid.).

The ramifications of coining a holistic understanding for intercultural communication had been identified in the set of implied, in most cases, shadowy understandings of the discussed concept. Ergo, common understandings construe this complex process as mere “*communication between people from different cultures*” Gudykunst (1983:55), and in some other research works as “*communication across cultures*” (Asante, et al., 1979, cited in Pinto, 2000). Pinto (ibid.) maintains that the two aforementioned understandings fall within denotative understandings of intercultural communication, and hence provide superficial conceptualizations. There are, however, connotative understandings of the process that take into account the approach or the discipline that tackles intercultural communication. Positively, intercultural communication, nowadays, permeates miscellaneous fields such as anthropology, economics, marketing, etc.

Barnett and Kincaid (1983:45) contend that any understanding of intercultural communication necessitates an understanding of culture. Likewise, researches about culture have given birth to miscellaneous terms that, in most cases, are used interchangeably, if not mistakenly. Cross-cultural communication has always been used dichotomously with intercultural communication. Gudykunst (2003) posits that cross-cultural communication is but a part that affiliates to intercultural communication, as it incorporates the cultural milieu of intercultural communication. He expounds this idea claiming that cross cultural communication that “*traditionally implies a comparison of some phenomena across cultures*”, entails ideas about what some cultures consider valuable and irrelevant. Thus, when engaging in any intercultural communication, individuals resort to such cultural knowledge to interact (ibid.). In the same vein, Gudykunst (ibid.) maintains that a diaphanous understanding of intercultural communication obligates discrimination between cross-cultural communication

and intercultural one, which some researchers use interchangeably. He expounds the dissimilarities between the two deluding concepts as follows:

Cross-cultural and intercultural are often regarded as interchangeable. They are, nevertheless, different. Cross- cultural research involves comparing behaviour in two or more cultures (e.g. comparing self-disclosure in Japan, the USA and Iran when individuals interact with members of their own culture). Intercultural research involves examining behaviour when members of two or more cultures, interact (e.g. examining self-disclosure when Japanese and Iranians communicate with each other)... Understanding cross-cultural differences in behaviour is a prerequisite for understanding intercultural behaviour (Gudykunst, *ibid.*).

In the passage above, Gudykunst (*ibid.*) translucently emphasizes the fact that intercultural delineates the interaction of people from divergent cultures, whereas cross-cultural stands for communication within the same culture, e.g. Algerian culture. Likewise, he considers cross-cultural communication as part of intercultural one, as he states that the cross-cultural behaviour is a prerequisite of the intercultural behaviour, simply because the former represents the local side of communication, whereas the latter epitomises the cosmopolitan one (Oatey and Kotthoff, *ibid.*).

Intercultural communication is construed as a multidisciplinary academic field of research and study that targets understanding how people from divergent countries and cultures behave, communicate and perceive the world at large. Positively, foregoing researches constrained the process of intercultural communication to face-to-face communication only (Gudykunst, *ibid.*). Per contra, other understandings of this process have swelled the purview of intercultural communication to account for all forms of interactions, including verbal and non-verbal types. Likewise, other understandings of the process prioritise the significance of meaning negotiation and sharing among individuals. According to Lusting, and Keoster (1999:44), “*intercultural communication is a symbolic process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings*”. Unquestionably, there are many researchers and academics of note within the intercultural domain that who have unintelligible understandings of 'intercultural communication'. For

example Karlfried Knapp (1978) outlines it "*as the interpersonal interaction between members of different groups, which differ from each other in respect of the knowledge shared by their members and in respect of their linguistic forms of symbolic behaviour*" (cited in Mirić, 2007:80). Likewise, intercultural communication is a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual activity in which the rate of divergence between people is large and significant enough to bring about dissimilar interpretations and expectations about what is acceptable as behaviour and what is deemed intolerable. Interestingly, the most salient characteristic of intercultural communication embodies the denial for ethnocentrism.

Other distinctions between cross-cultural and intercultural interactive processes spring from the panoramas they adopt in dealing with cultures. While the former processes culture from an "*Etic*" perspective that is conducted at a remove from the process itself, the latter proceeds via an "*Emic*"²³ prospect that emanates from a participation in the interactive process (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997). Hofstede (2001) had carried on a cross-cultural study where he accentuated the commonalities and the divergences within the cultures investigated. He contended that intercultural communication had never been a new phenomenon; it emerged as early as when divergent tribes came into contact. Ergo, for an intercultural communication to befall there should be some traits of diversity among the interactants. Samovar and Porter (2004:12) conjectured that: "*intercultural communication involves interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event*".

Beyond shadow of a doubt, there are multifarious kinds of cultural communication. While some of them subsidize diversities and heterogeneities, others accredit room for shared cultures only. Undeniably, the latter epitomises

²³ **Emic and Etic:** Inspired from anthropological research, emic and etic outline two broad approaches to dealing with language and culture. The emic–etic duality had been applied to various fields as diverse as personality psychology, consumer behavior, organizational science, and intercultural communication study. In Linguistics, these two approaches are applied to the problem of how and why language usage varies within and across cultures (The International Encyclopedia of Communication, from [http:// www. Communication encyclopedia.com /public/tocnode?id=g_9781405131995_yr_2013_chunk_g978140_51319_951_0_ss18-1](http://www.Communicationencyclopedia.com/public/tocnode?id=g_9781405131995_yr_2013_chunk_g978140_51319_951_0_ss18-1)).

mono-cultural communication, the process that bottoms on individuals' cultural similarities, including "*common language, behaviour patterns, and values form the base upon which members of the culture exchange meaning with one another in conducting their daily affairs.*" (Bennett, 1998:36). These cultural common grounds authorise the individuals to get a prior knowledge about fortuitous understandings and expected reactions. Mono-cultural communication, unlike the other types of communication, hinges on the preconception that, in conversation, all the individuals involved are predisposed to have "*some basic shared assumptions about the nature of reality*". Unquestionably, intercultural communication withstands the very infrastructures of mono-cultural communication, since it hinges on the diversified nature of cultures. Actually, the continuous metamorphosis within cultures, norms, traditions and behaviour embodies the fact that predicting others' reactions and to taking shared assumptions as the grounds for the interactive process, is fallacious and dysfunctional. Per contra, intercultural communication galvanizes differences. Barna (cited in Bennett, 1998) states that intercultural communication is nurtured within difference-based approaches to communication. Be that as it may, in such a kind of process, similarities also reconcile the cultural gaps that fuel conflicts and misunderstandings.

Intercultural communication can be discriminated from social sciences in relation to the way each discipline treats cultural differences and diversities. As to the former, the focus is on the interactive process. Within this panorama, interculturalists admit that intercultural communication befalls only when human presence is identified. That is, individuals need to engage in a give-and-take process, including a feedback. In relation to this, intercultural communication does not provide descriptive picture about cultures. These depictions of culture are the essence of cross-cultural studies. Another point of distinction in relation to intercultural communication and social science relates to the differentiation between cultural interaction and cultural comparison. Social sciences conduct comparative studies on some cultural aspects across cultures. However, one objection to this assumption springs from the fact that even in intercultural communication cultural comparisons are utilised. Per contra, interculturalists focus more on how these cultural differences and

similarities affect intercultural processes, what is termed “intercultural *interaction*”. Ergo, interculturalists are predisposed to conduct comparative studies across culture, as Bennett explains in the following quotation:

This emphasis on interaction does not mean that interculturalists neglect knowledge about specific cultures. On the contrary, it is considered a prerequisite for interculturalists to have expert knowledge of at least their own cultures (an often-neglected skill in other academic fields). Most interculturalists are particularly knowledgeable about one or more cultures in addition to their own. (Bennett, 1998).

In relation to intercultural communication, two distinguished panoramas can be identified: the functionalistic approach and the post-structuralistic approach. The former had been founded on the basis of the assumption that culture affects communication at multifarious planes. Ergo, the emphasis was on the negative influence of norms traditions and beliefs on the interactive process. Differently put, the stress had been put on the cultural barriers of communication (Samovar and Porter, 2004). In addition to this, intercultural communication within such a perspective investigated individual’s development of a competence that embraces a set of criteria that accredit them to communicate with others successfully (Gertsen, 1999:330). Likewise, the functional aspect of intercultural communication is displayed in the dialogic nature of the process where individuals address others (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997:14). Howbeit, what the advocates of such a perspective seem to eschew is the notion of power in relation to intercultural communication. Jenson (n.d.) postulates: *“you could however argue that the aspect of power could be in every part of the model, but somehow it’s not mentioned at all.*

The post-structuralistic approach to intercultural communication had been a turning point towards new understandings of culture, though it seems less useful if contrasted with the functionalistic approach. This approach to intercultural communication lucidly accentuates individual’s agency and duties in relation to the debated concept. Collier and Thomas approached the issue of intercultural communication from the individuals’ perspectives. They outline intercultural

communication as the process that embodies individuals “... *who identify themselves as distinct from one another in cultural terms*” (Collier and Thomas, 1988: 100). Withal, one objection to such a view may be easily drawn from the fact that an individual’s perspective is highly subjective since the focus is on the persons involved rather than culture as an active agent.

Undoubtedly, there are manifold features that discriminate between intercultural communication and other forms of cultural communication. Under this spirit, Neuliep (2005) observes that intercultural communication is a tangled phenomenon, and ergo may have some peculiar traits and shortcomings that can be summarized in a set of assumptions below:

- During intercultural communication, the message sent is usually not the message received ;²⁴
- intercultural communication is primarily a nonverbal act between people;
²⁵
- intercultural communication necessarily involves a clash of communicator style;²⁶
- intercultural communication is a group phenomenon experienced by individuals; ²⁷
- intercultural communication is a cycle of stress and adaptation.²⁸

²⁴ Gudykunst, W. (2003) speculated that in intercultural communication, culture operates as a filter through which all messages, both verbal and nonverbal, must pass.

²⁵ Despite the fact that languages are momentous in relation to these process, nonverbal cues outnumber the verbal codes individuals use in interactions of such a kind. (ibid.)

²⁶ In intercultural communication, individuals employ distinguished styles of communication in accordance with the norms of their cultures. These styles include the length of the speech and silence too. (ibid.).

²⁷ This assumption delineates the fact that individuals, when interacting with people from heterogeneous cultures, are likely to judge other individuals hinging on a description of the group that they belong to. Parallel to this, individualistic features of the judged persons are discarded (ibid.).

Elemental to intercultural communication, is the belief that it is via cultures that people learn to communicate. A Chinese, an Egyptian, or an Australian, for example, learns to communicate in the same way other Chinese, Egyptians, or Australians do. Their behaviours communicate common meaning because it is learned and shared. In other words, it is culturally determined. Ergo, the ways in which people communicate, their language patterns, style, and nonverbal behaviours are all culturally conditioned (Klopf and Park, 1982). Beyond shadow of a doubt, intercultural communication is cardinal as to lubricating interactive processes among individuals. This is true since intercultural communication accentuates the fact that cultures are the backgrounds of communication (Klopf and Park, *ibid.*). Samovar and Porter (2004:12) believe that intercultural communication is concerned with the interactive processes that befall between people from heterogeneous cultures. In relation to this, individuals bring divergent views about the world, and in some cases the coded meaning is entirely metamorphosed as it reaches the recipient. The following figure illuminates the route meaning crosses within intercultural communication:

²⁸ Individuals come across stressful situations when interacting with people from different cultures. Nevertheless, they may adapt their messages and style to the setting to lubricate the interactive activity. (*ibid.*).

Culture “A”

Culture “B”

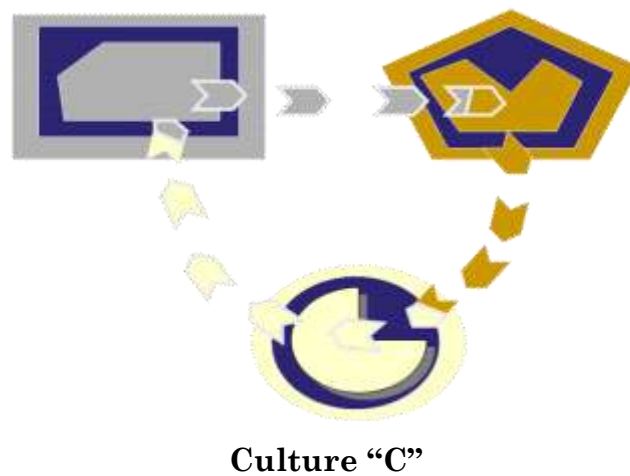


Figure 1.2: Samovar and Porter's (2004) Model of Intercultural Communication

Lucidly, the figure showcases three elemental cultures that differ on divergent grounds and rates. Conspicuously, the shape of the first culture (Culture “A”) approximates the second one (Culture “B”). Withal, the third one (Culture “C”) deviates from the touchstones of the antecedent cultures. Likewise, the arrows epitomise how the meaning metamorphoses from one culture to another. Unquestionably, meaning transmission may be trammelled by means of a set of misunderstandings, notably when cultural dissimilarities are noticeable, as it is the case between cultures “B” and “C” (Samovar and Porter, 2004).

Barnet and Lee's (2003) “Structural Model of Intercultural Communication” is another paramount illustration of how intercultural communication functions. The intercultural architecture they advanced springs from the contact between two groups, labelled as “A and B” that are heterogeneous in terms of cultural traits and backgrounds. Both groups embody different individuals with divergent ambitions and pursuits, who are likely to leave their groups to seek distinguished aims. They are named “a and b”. Systematically, the first contacts among these individuals entail the fact of commuting cultural traits with one another. The outcome of these interactions is the creation of another group, named “c” that

shares the cultures of the different individuals involved, and which is more likely to foment mutual understanding and intercultural communication. The model discussed also falsifies the claim that intercultural communication is bound to face-to face communication. Barnet and Lee (ibid.) contend that intercultural communication can be mediated by all forms of media and international organisations. Under this spirit, media convey cultural information to group “B” , in addition to the third group “C”. Undoubtedly, media here relates all the groups via an exchange of cultural information.

Inconvertibly, the need to communicate is an existential aspect of all human beings that follows the emblem “*isolated cultures stagnate; cultures that communicate with others evolve*” (Sowel, cited in Novinger, 2013:4). Truly, most of people’s communicative practices are expressed via behavioural interactions. Ergo, all forms of behaviours whether intercultural or ethnocentric pour in the stream of communication. Briefly put, all behaviours are communication. Unquestionably, learning another language in relation to another culture has become a platitude in current research. The issue that is debated in recent studies centres around the predicaments learners find in approaching another culture, sometimes opposing cultures. In the process of learning languages, the difficulty of acquiring the linguistic side of the learning process may obstruct the intercultural educational spectrum; however, cultural differences clog, if not break down whole communication. Novinger states:

Speaking a different language is an obvious obstacle to intercultural communication, but a greater and more difficult hurdle is to speak a different culture. Even though we may learn the words, the grammar and the recognizable pronunciation of a language, we may still not know how to navigate around the greater obstacles to communication that are presented by cultural difference (Novinger, ibid.).

In contempt with the fact that the study of intercultural communication has been adopted by miscellaneous disciplines such as psychology and sociology, a descriptive understanding of what intercultural communication is, remains the challenge of future body of knowledge. Knapp, Enninger and Patthoff (1987)

claim that both the concepts of culture and communication that are the infrastructures in relation to intercultural communication are taken as “*passe-partout concepts*”. That is, all human actions and behaviours are explained from a cultural perspectives and hence anything can be communicated is deemed to be cultural. This claim is briefly explained by Hall’s (1959) statement “communication *is culture, culture is communication*” (cited in Knapp, Enninger and Patthoff, *ibid.*). Other quandaries can be retrieved from the body of knowledge in relation to intercultural communication, videlicet the semantically divergent concepts that are oftentimes used interchangeably, including “*intercultural, interethnic, and cross-cultural*”.

1.6.2.1. Cultural Conditioning Versus Culturing

Another issue of relevance to intercultural communication is cultural conditioning²⁹. The latter is exemplified in the way society indoctrinates the set of norms and values in relation to persons’ behaviours. This one-way cultural perspective can be a ban since it accompanies individuals’ socialization processes, and thus is taken as the only possible lens with which reality can be digested and conceived. Other obstacles in relation to cultural conditioning emanate from the nature of acquiring the social and cultural norms. Novinger (2013:4) explains that individuals learn the set of norms and values right from their early childhood. Consequently, in daily practices, individuals tend to use these backgrounds subconsciously and take them as natural behaviour. He states: “*we operate in great part on this elaborately written subconscious program, leaving only a small percentage of our actions to be governed by conscious choice and thought*” (*ibid.*5).

²⁹ **Cultural conditioning:** It is a social process whereby certain social authorities like the parents , politicians , teachers, and many others contribute in shaping one’s beliefs and views about the world. It is stated that cultural condition hinders critical thinking. Retrieved from <http://www.newgrounds.com/bbs/topic/1271292>).

Howbeit, prevailing understandings of intercultural communication have come as a reaction towards the foregoing researches on culture that mainly centred on the fact that cultures are homogenous and stationary social constructs (Belay, 1993:436). In addition to this misrepresentation of reality, cultural conflicts among individuals had been veiled as something that is disadvantageous in relation to social prosperity. Likewise, cultural divergences had been dichotomously stratified as either a ban or a boon in relation to intercultural communication. Dervin (1991:60) postulates that this one-way cultural view obstructs us from *“moving toward multiple perspectives that might inform each other in a dialogue of differences”*. In relation to cultural diversity, Said (2001) has once noted that: *“There isn't a single Islam: there are Islams, just as there are Americas.”* Such panorama of cultural diversity is embodied in the concept of culturing, outlined as *“our proclivity to construct new and different meanings, understandings and practices so as to reckon with the world's infinite ambiguity and quantum nature that constantly destabilize existing meanings, understandings and practices”* (Rodriguez, 2002).

Beyond shadow of a doubt, culturing is momentous in understanding cultural diversity, since it provides approximate descriptions of how cultural reality may look like in terms of homogeneity and divergence. Parallel to this, it questions the claim of uniformity and stability of culture. Mirić (2007) postulates that *“Culturing gives us a moral direction rather than a moral destination. It promotes communication practices that stress diversity, sensitivity and other ways of being that make or intend for no harm to others and the world”*. Admittedly, not only does culturing accentuate cultural differences among individuals, but it also underscores the common grounds that interactants share, and hence tightens relationships worldwide. More important than this, *“culturing demystifies cultures without destroying or infringing on their inherent complexity”* (ibid.).

Positively, cultures metamorphose across time and within divergent milieus. The set of norms, attitudes and behaviour, are believed to be practised as individuals seek understanding world's ambiguities and meaning knots. The interplay of both meaning and ambiguity fosters the process of culturing. For cultures to evolve, *“this requires cultures realizing those rhythms that promote new*

*meanings and interpretations while simultaneously allowing for the devolution of current meanings and interpretations” (Mirić, ibid.). Cultural meanings are communicated among individuals. Under this spirit, a distinction between communication as transmission and interpretation needs to be expounded. Culturing as it promotes cultural diversity overshadows mere transmission of views and cultural facts, and counts for meaning interpretative processes. Communication as transmission“ *helps perpetuate the view that cultures are stable and homogenous and thus amenable to reductionistic methodologies that strive to make complete and absolute claims” (ibid.).**

Communication as transmission entails the fact that individuals are phlegmatic beings who are utterly manipulated by the world’ laws. In relation to this mode of transfer, individuals are shaped by means of manifold discursive practices. This also generates the assumption that culture relates to communication in a causal and deterministic way (Martin and Nakayama 1999:23). In the same vein, acknowledging the passivity of communication would delete the quintessential aspect of individuals’ construction and re-construction of the self. The sequel of such idealised communication is a probable depoliticized version of the self that systematically misses the intervention of various elements such as identity formation, ideological ecologies and meaning creation processes. Per contra, Dervin (1991:60); Martin, and Nakayama (ibid.) outline communication as “...*dialogic, collaborative constructions of self, other and the world in the process of making collective decisions.*” More than this, communicating abets us to generate and reflect about world experiences. By means of communication, one is able to preserve some facts and alter others, and thus creating new meanings, if not novel truths. (Arthos, 2000:18). Last but not least, communication positions individuals within the world as it affiliates the two partners to each other. Thayer (1995) comments , " *In naming the world, we name ourselves; in explaining the world, we explain ourselves; in defining the world, we define ourselves*"(cited in Mirić,2007).

1.6.2.2. Barriers in Intercultural Communication:

Intercultural communication has become one of the necessary touchstones of today's conflict-loaded world. Neuliep (2005:3) postulated that these conflicts are originally politicised under the emblem of ethnic and religious differences. Thus, he argues, "*national conflicts within our own borders, often ignited by racial and ethnic tensions, underscore the necessity for skilful intercultural communication*". Neuliep (ibid.) maintains that intercultural communication lead to:

- Healthier communities,
- increased commerce,
- reduced conflict,
- personal growth through tolerance.

Despite the fact that intercultural communication is momentous in lubricating conflicts and misunderstandings, this process can be hindered by means of manifold barriers that spring from divergent sources, notably positions of experience, cultural presuppositions cultural self-perceptions and cultural fixed points.

"*Position of experiences*" is a concept that links both positions and experiences to each other. The afore-mentioned concept had been grounded on the idea of positioning outlined by Davies and Harré as:

Positioning, as we will use it, is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines. There can be interactive positioning in which what one person says positions another, and there can be reflexive positioning in which one positions oneself... (Davies and Harré, 1990, cited in Neulip, 2005).

Positions of experiences delineate how both experiences and social positions merge and affect meaning interpretation and understanding. Individuals' experiences are believed to be quintessential in relation to interactive processes. However, in intercultural communication individuals need to be aware of the fact that the other individuals involved in the interaction do not necessarily share the same experiences (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Gadamer (1975) contends that interpretations are highly affected by experiences. Positions of experiences are also affiliated with other concepts such as Gadamer's concept of "*horizon of experience*", outlined as "*...the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point*". (cited in Neulip, *ibid.*) These horizons are used to interpret the world. Therefore, as stated by Jensen (n.d.): "*In relation to intercultural communication this means that we cannot only see cultural differences as the only differentiation to interpretation, but we have to take the horizon into account.*"

Positioning in relation to cultural contacts is conspicuous in the situations where heterogeneous ethnic groups co-exist in a particular common place. In such a context, an interactive positioning is enacted by the majority ethnic group upon the minority group (Hussain et al. 1997; Jensen 2000, cited in Jensen, n.d.). In intercultural communication, positions of experiences should subdue to social norms. In the opposite case, that is when they are left unbridled, the whole communicative process is endangered. However, despite the set of bans that emanate from the positioning, it can be used as an analytical lens as it:

- Generates an awareness of the significance of positions in relation to the interpretation of communicative acts;
- gives the individual the chance to position themselves differently, depending on the context.

The second obstacle that can obstruct intercultural communication relates to “*cultural presuppositions*”, outlined by Jenson (ibid.) as “... *knowledge, experience, feelings and opinions we have towards categories of people that we do not regard as members of the cultural communities that we identify ourselves with*”. They are believed to be elemental in relation to intercultural communication, as they infiltrate all kinds of understandings. Bukhdal (1967, cited in Jenson, ibid.) comments that “*All understanding is a matter of presuppositions*”. Under this spirit, the knowledge that springs from an individual’s cultural presuppositions is influential in relation of how they perceive and categorise others. More importantly, the discourse that dominates a given society will, to a great extent, serve as hotbeds for the creation of cultural presuppositions. However, cultural presuppositions expound some partisan stratification, namely the West as ideal world and the Orient as “the Other³⁰, uncivilised world. Jenson (ibid.) maintains that: “*Cultural presuppositions are a very simple but practical tool to be aware of the discourses and discursive formations in everyday life.*”

In addition to the antecedent cultural barrier, cultural self-perception, construed as “*the ways in which an actor expresses a cultural community as the one he or she identifies with,*” shares some common grounds with cultural presupposition, since it delineates how individuals construct their own selves in relation to the others. Self-identification with a particular community limns a kind of idealisation for the simple reason that, as individuals develop cultural self-perception, they are likely to see their culture as the only right way to perceive the world. Parallel to this, this trait abets developing ethnocentric attitudes that bottom on the uniqueness of one’s culture. Per contra, cultural self-perception can be useful, especially for studies conducted about intercultural communication, since it portrays how individuals comprehend their own cultural communities (Jenson, ibid.).

³⁰ The concept of the Other is detailed in Chapter Two.

Culturalism³¹ is a significant aspect of the process of otherization since it prioritises the locus of culture in relation to judging people and prejudicing them. Certainly, those individuals who have been othered are believed to share common cultural backgrounds. In the process of otherization, the issue goes beyond mere cultural differences, *“the problem is that “we” can very easily take this too far and allow the notion of “culture to become greater than the people themselves”* (Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman, n.d.). The danger, here, lies in the fact that the individuals who do the othering are likely to reify the concept of culture and consider it as ordinary object that can be taken as a standard to judge others. The sequel of culturalism is essentialism³². The figure below expounds the idea:

³¹ **Culturalism** denotes that individuals are determined by their culture, that these cultures establish closed, organic wholes, and that the individual is unable to leave his or her own culture but rather can only realise him or herself within it. <http://www.opendemocracy.net/page/jens-martin-eriksen/culturalism-culture-as-political-ideology> .

³² **Essentialism** *“the practice of regarding something (as a presumed human trait) as having innate existence or universal validity rather than as being a social, ideological, or intellectual construct”* (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/essentialism>).

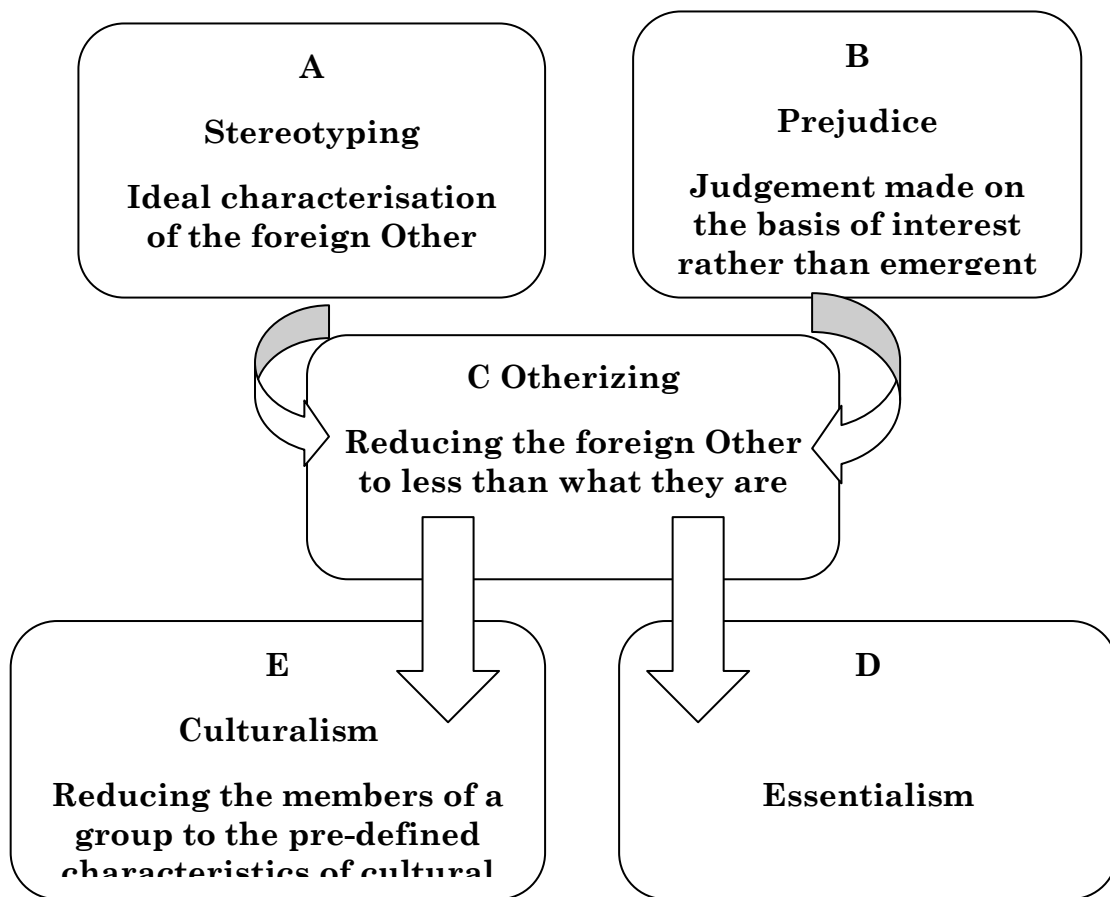


Figure. 1. 3: Constituents of Otherization (Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman

Positively, intercultural communication has never been immune in relation to conflicts and problems (Jandt 1995, cited in Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman, n.d.). Conflicts in such processes emanate when individuals think that they identify themselves with a particular topic such as gender, marriage, etc. In developing such an identification, they are likely to develop what is known as “cultural fix points, outlined as: *“the focal points that arise in the communication between two actors. For a topic to be seen as a ‘Cultural fix point’ it requires that both actors identify with this topic, and that they position themselves in a discussion”* (Jenson, n.d.). Nevertheless, these cultural traits can be advantageous in conducting research works, as they reveal the recurrent conflict-patterns in a given period of time.

Peck considers communication, outlined as the basis for all human relationships, to be a reconciliatory process where culturally-counterparts exchange ideas and views. Thus, for a communication to be successful, all kinds of barriers, especially the cultural ones, need to be substituted for tolerance and mutual understanding. Intercultural communication is the feature that characterises healthy communities. (cited in Neuliep, 2005). [The latter, Joan England](#) (cited in *ibid.*) contends, decrease their shields and defences and embrace diversity and dissimilarities. He admits the fact that intercultural communication has never been solely concerned with the set of commonalities that bring people together, what is called “sameness”. Rather, differences in relation to race, gender, etc are the engine that operates the whole communicative process. Neuliep (*ibid.*) embodies healthy communities in the frame of “... *individuals working collectively for the benefit of everyone, not just their own group. Through open and honest intercultural communication people can work together to achieve goals that benefit everyone, regardless of group or cultural orientation*”.

Beyond shadow of a doubt, intercultural communication, before it necessitates some knowledge about other cultures, obligates the availability of certain communication skills, a communicative competence. The body of knowledge that had been advanced in relation to communicative competence stressed the significance of helping learners to become intercultural speakers. Hence, as stated by (Neuliep, *ibid.*), “*The interculturally competent communicator is motivated to communicate, knowledgeable about how to communicate, and skilled in communicating*”. Neuliep (*ibid.*) outlines the features of an interculturally competent interactant as follows:

- A competent communicator needs to be cognizant of the ecology where the interaction befalls, including the ability to adapt the message to fit the setting;
- they should be conscious as to the norms and the expectations that chart the communicative process;

- they should develop a positive motivation³³ in relation to the others (Neuliep and McCroskey, cited in Neuliep, *ibid.*);
- they need to develop a communication knowledge that embodies a set of information that abets the individual to adapt their behaviour to the situational variables (*ibid.*).

1.6.2.1. Intercultural Competence:

There are some scholars who formulated their thesis in relation to intercultural competence, claiming that this new competence had been the consequence of the “conceptual *chain reaction*” that had been pioneered by linguistic competence. Others, howbeit, substantially admit that intercultural communicative competence is a mere articulation of communicative competence (Deardorff, 2004). Beyond shadow of a doubt, in the globalised 21st century, an individual needs more than language skills to communicate interculturally; they need knowledge, attitudes and behaviour that an intercultural competence nurtures and develops. Under this spirit, Taylor describes intercultural competence as the “*transformative process*” that modulates and adapts individuals’ behaviour and attitudes to fit the cultural context. Chen (1990) offers the following understanding of communicative competence: “*the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviour to elicit a desired response in a specific environment*”. Within this line of thought, one can lucidly identify intercultural competence as Chen pointed to, as the individual’s capacity to transfer their ideas and to achieve their communicative needs. Likewise, Chen, and Starosta (1998:12) have portrayed an intercultural competence that embraces the aforementioned competencies. Intercultural communicative competence for them is “*the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviours that negotiate each other’s cultural identity or identities in a culturally diverse environment*”. In addition to the knowledge and the skills that an

³³ Spitzberg contends that motivation increases in parallel with confidence. Therefore, as confidence increases, intercultural communication competence also is likely to be energised.

individual develops along an intercultural communicative competence, Wiseman (2001) underscores the significance of motivation in relation to the competence in question.

Intercultural communicative competence, Oliveras (2000) postulates, designates the development of one's cognitive qualification induced by the appreciation of diversity, recognition of critical awareness and analysis as a means of communication in a heterogeneous society. Likewise, Oliveras, (ibid.) condensed his understanding of the debated concept under two terms: intercultural competence as '*appropriate behaviour*' and as '*appropriate attitude*'. In defiance with this fact, other scholars accentuated the difficulties of outlining befitting understandings to intercultural competence. Meyer offers this comment:

Intercultural competence, as part of broader foreign speaker competence, identifies the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures. Adequacy and flexibility imply awareness of the cultural differences between one's own and the foreign culture and the ability to handle cross-cultural problems which result from the differences. Intercultural competence includes the capacity of establishing one's self-identity in the process of cross-cultural mediation, and helping others stabilize their identity (Meyer, 1991:137, cited in Grosman, 1998:17).

According to the above-cited passage, intercultural communicative competence limns a person's behaviour in communicative situations. It embraces knowledge about the occult meanings interactants bring to the communicative event. This competence also outlines person's inclination to acknowledge and tolerate diversities. Intercultural competence, Spilzberg and Changnan (2009) claim, mirrors an interactive process whereby persons interact with each other. These persons epitomise divergent cultures, since they have unintelligible '*affective, cognitive, and behavioural*' ways of perceiving the world (cited in Deardorff, 2009:7).

In Gerstein's view (1990), intercultural competence embodies three cardinal dimensions: affective, cognitive and communicative behavioural aspects (cited in Rosenhaue, 2007:82). The affective dimension can be detected in a person's personality as it approaches one's attitudes and interactive skills. Bolten (2003); stress the following traits that are believed to be outstanding for interculturally competent persons: "*self-confidence and self-consciousness, patience, self-disclosure, behavioural flexibility, interaction involvement, optimism, and independence*" (cited in Rosenhaue, ibid.). The second dimension, Rosenhaue (ibid.) contends, is rather cognitive and represents the interplay between knowledge and cognition. Deresky (1999) postulate that this aspect embraces two prevailing processes. While the first one is preoccupied with the information acquisition and its use in current situations, the second one is rather organizational as it puts raw information in order. (cited in ibid.). Last but not least, is communicative behavioural dimension that mirrors one's behaviour in interactive situations. Under this spirit, Ruben (1983) maintains that intercultural competence is person's capacity to behave in a way that leads to mutual satisfaction (cited in ibid.).

In the review of the literature in relation to intercultural communication, the concept of intercultural competence and that of intercultural communicative competence are used interchangeably. Howbeit, some scholars thoroughly admit that intercultural communicative competence overshadows the antecedent one. According Bennett, Bennett, and Allen (2003:239), intercultural competence is "*the general ability to transcend ethnocentrism, appreciate other cultures, and generate appropriate behaviour in one or more different cultures.*" Likewise, intercultural communicative competence is capacious and inclusive as it:

encompasses intercultural competence and focuses attention on communicative competencies, especially the sociocultural element. It also highlights the need to acknowledge the diverse perspectives, practices, and products of cultures that are an integral part of being a multicultural society. The intention of ICC is to blend understandings of the linguistic and cultural knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes that each individual brings to the ESL classroom (Bennett, Bennett, and Allen, ibid.).

Inconvertibly, the concept of intercultural communicative competence has brought about a wide range of altercations over the foregoing years. While some scholars acknowledged its utility, others unveiled some shortcomings in relation to the objectives it targets. The novel model of intercultural communication had been reprimanded on the basis of the goal it may achieve, the culture in centres around, and the situations that trigger it off. Gardner (1962: 241) has once noticed: “[. . .] *to what degree is it actually possible, for an expert from one culture to communicate with, to get through to, persons of another culture*”. Gardner (ibid.) had been among the social psychologists who tackled the issue of intercultural communicative competence. According to his panorama, intercultural individuals, what he calls “*universal communicators*”, should be able to display a readiness in relation to intercultural communication and a personality that hinges on attitudes of integrity, stability, extroversion, socialisation in universal values and telepathic abilities.

Beyond shadow of a doubt, intercultural communicative competence is quintessential in relation to any kind of language and culture learning; since it betters learners’ behaviour and abets them develop an inclination and flexibility that accredit them to interact easily and effectively (Laopongharn, and Sercombe, 2009:60). This competence aids the learners to become intercultural speakers, using Byram and Morgan (1994) words, as they do away with ethnocentric attitudes and opt for global interactions. Meyer elucidates these salient intercultural properties of the competence in question as she offers the passage below:

...the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures. Adequacy and flexibility imply an awareness of the cultural differences between one’s own and the foreign culture and the ability to handle cross-cultural problems (Meyer,1991:137, cited in Grosman, 1998:17).

The purview of intercultural communicative competence has polarised scholars' opinions. While some of them confined the concept to particular cultures, others claimed the concept to be felicitous for unrestrained and unfathomable contexts where multitudinous cultures are involved. To begin with, culture-specific competence had been the first model that bottomed on the idea that intercultural competence represents the knowledge that an individual develops in relation to one or two cultures only. However, Herzog inspects the very nature of intercultural competence as he speculated "*how exactly a "bi-cultural competence" can be understood as an expression of "intercultural competence", or even how one idea can follow from the other*" (cited in Rathje, 2007:258). In the same vein, Rathje chastised this approach of intercultural competence as she stated:

Approaches that equate intercultural competence with a specific cultural competence, however, immediately render the term obsolete and enforce narrow categories of competence such as (at the level of national cultures, for example) 'USA competence' or 'Switzerland competence' (Rathje, 2007:257).

By contrast, modern purviews of intercultural competence tend to describe it in terms of cosmopolitan skills and abilities that overshadow one or two unrepresentative cultures. This panorama is stimulated by the scholars who, as discussed earlier, position intercultural competence within the scope of individual's personality and self development. Wierlacher (2003:216) postulates: "*intercultural communicative competence seeks to promote and facilitate a new system of orientation among people of different cultures*". Mecheril (2003: 198), in the same line of thought, outlines intercultural communicative competence as the capacity to "*handle unfamiliar situations*" or to engage in "*reasonable interaction "in unfamiliar contexts"*" (cited in Loenhoff, 2003: 193).

Within the same prospect, however, intercultural competence is construed as action competence. The latter, embraces all the skills that the individual possesses and can use in intercultural communication, including expertise, strategic, and social competencies (Bolten, 2003: 157). Inconvertibly, an individual who lacks, for example an expertise in a given field, is likely to fail in communicating with others who are from heterogeneous cultures, and who

possess the adequate expertise. Undoubtedly, these miscellaneous skills and abilities embodied under the heading of intercultural competence have set up room for bewilderment and misunderstanding in relation to the very nature of the concept. However, to obviate such wrangle, Rathje offers the following suggestion:

Instead of attempting to integrate all possible action competences into a single definition of intercultural competence, one might instead define intercultural competence itself as a competence necessary if participants in an intercultural context wish to make the most of their potential action competences (Rathje, 2007).

Beyond question, the concept of intercultural competence, like other concepts that stem from culture, has created disputes among scholars of miscellaneous disciplines. Howbeit, the grounds of disagreement do not emanate from the advanced stratifications, as discussed previously, but the supplier of disagreement springs from the very contentious nature of culture, leading to two cardinals and juxtaposing views: culture as coherence and culture as cohesion. The former entails the fact that cultures function as a coalescing grounds that set up a sphere of commonality for its individuals. Thomas (2003a:138) subsidizes this claim as he speculated that culture is '*universal and quite typical orientation system for a society, organization or group*'. By the same token, Rathje (2004: 52) conjectured that this understanding of culture triggers off a sense of homogeneity and coherence in relation to individuals' beliefs traditions and values. Feldtkeller (2003:163) also chastised this assumption as he acknowledged that in an age dominated by technology and globalisation, the existence of a homogenous culture is mythical. Per contra, the panorama that came as a reaction to the antecedent one hinged on the fact that cultures are established on grounds of difference and diversity. The cohesive perspective of culture merges between both diversity and unity. This view had been anchored in Hansen's (2000) arguments that claimed that culture forms part of "*human collectives, covering all kinds of individuals and practices.*"

The figure beneath contrasts between coherence and cohesive panoramas of culture. It translucently accentuates the cohesive aspects of culture and unveils the precarious issues in relation to coherence-based approaches to culture. In the cohesive approach, culture connects heterogeneous cultures and individuals, and ergo leads to the process of familiarity and normality in relation to diversity. Per contra coherent views of culture stress the unifying role of cultures that confine their scope to adaptation and integration. Consequently, in case the individuals involved do not share common cultural grounds, they are exposed to the centrifugal³⁴ cultural processes.

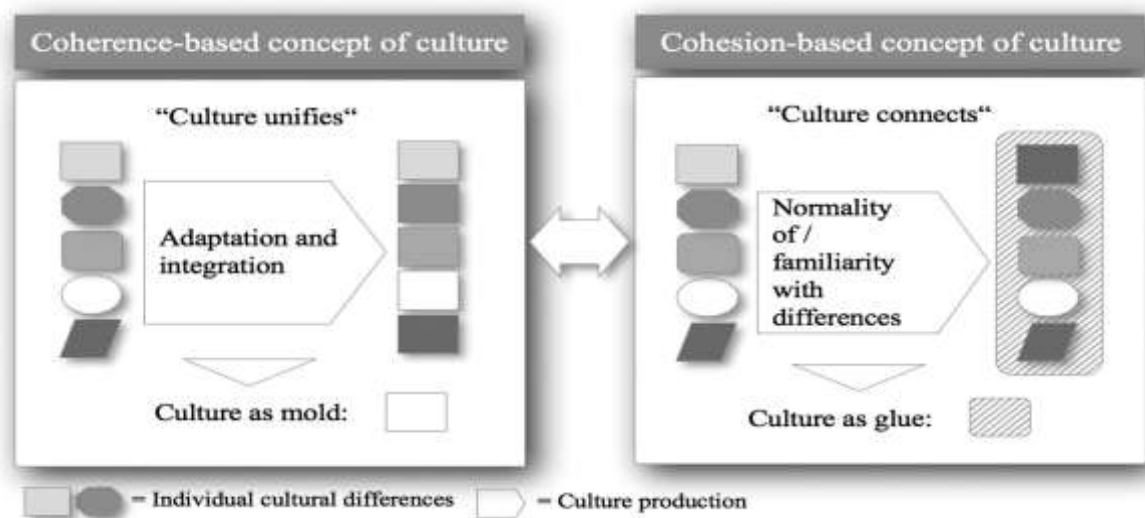


Figure 1.4. : Coherence and Cohesion based Concepts of Culture, cited in Rathje, 2004: 301)

In relation to intercultural communicative competence, each perspective about culture approaches it antagonistically (see figure below). The cohesive prospect entails the fact that individuals in intercultural communication call upon divergent cultures, and therefore lead to the creation of a new culture where they share their commonalities and differences (Wierlacher, 2003: 216). Wierlacher (ibid.) galvanizes such a purview as he outlined intercultural competence as *“creative ability that seeks to promote and facilitate a new system of orientation among people of different cultures”*. By contrast, the coherence-based perspective accredits room for the creation of an *“interculture”* characterised by

³⁴ **Centrifugal cultural process** is delineates the process of culture excluding individuals who do not share the same cultural patterns.

uncertainty. It is worth mentioning that this prospect presupposes that the interactants communicate across cultures, but do not create a common culture as the previously discussed panorama entails.

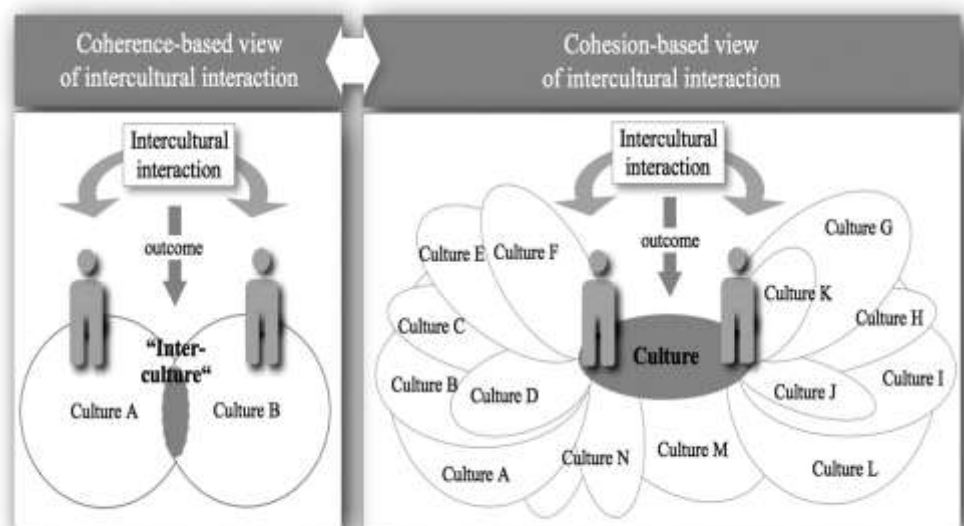


Figure 1.5. : Coherence and Cohesion based Concept of ICC (Rathje,S., 2004: 301).

According to Deardorff (2004) intercultural competence “*is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, based on specific attitudes, intercultural knowledge, skills and reflection*”. She posits that intercultural competence embraces attitudes, intercultural knowledge and skills, and two elemental outcomes known as intercultural reflection and constructive interaction. Within this prospect, an intercultural communication should lead to successful outcomes, labelled by Deardorff (ibid.) as external and internal outcomes. The external outcomes embody the fact that individuals who are part of the interactive process should respect other cultural rules. Positively, the achievement of a constructive interaction obligates the development of positive attitudes towards other cultures and positive motivation in relation to intercultural situations. These attitudes hinge on the perspective of valuing

cultural diversity and tolerating ambiguity³⁵. Deardorff's model is presented below:

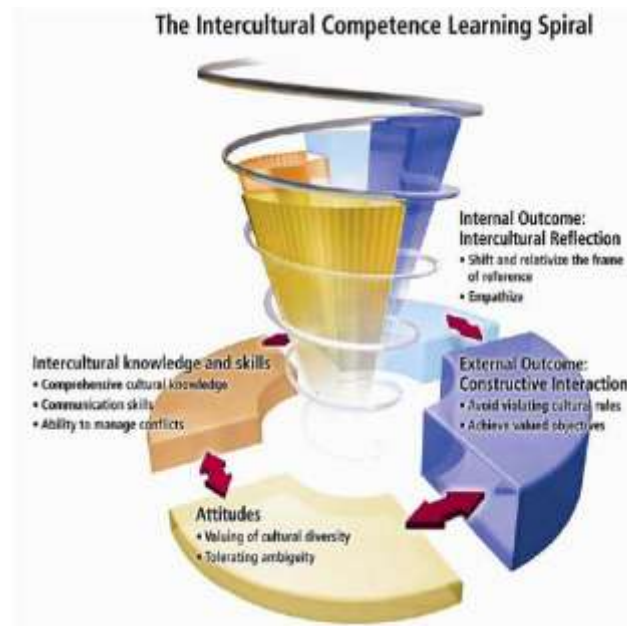


Figure 1.6: Deardorff's (2004) Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Deardorff's (ibid.) model also incorporates intercultural knowledge and skills. Both of these constituents abet the individual to develop a comprehensive cultural knowledge, communication skills, and the opportunity to administer conflicts. As to the part of knowledge, individuals are predisposed to develop knowledge about their own culture and the target's. Nevertheless, interculturalists maintain that knowledge about other cultures is not sufficient in relation to intercultural communication. Individuals need to develop some skills. These skills also allow the individual to subsidize their intercultural cultural knowledge by listening to the other counterparts, observing, interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and relating cultural elements. The external outcome identified in this model of intercultural competence embodies the fact of

³⁵ **Tolerance for ambiguity** is "the capacity to deal with ambiguous circumstances in a sensible and respectful way.² It is context-bound—meaning that the same situation may be ambiguous in one setting and not in another". (Retrieved from (<http://www.ftpress.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1315268&seq Num=2>).

managing cultural conflicts. Augsburger (1992) comments “[f]rom culture to culture, each has developed its unique patterns of managing differences and resolving conflicts. (cited in Christopher and Seberich, 2006). The internal outcomes of intercultural competence embody the individual’s ability to metamorphose and modulate their attitudes and behaviour to fit in the intercultural context. This delineates the ability to develop empathy and flexibility towards other cultures. Additionally, the individual who develops an intercultural competence is likely to abdicate their ethnocentric views that fuel one’s self-disclosure in relation to their own culture, and to adopt ethnorelative panoramas and analytically perceive all cultures.

Interculturalists, though they approached intercultural communication from multifarious prospects, concurred that an intercultural competence orchestrates a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes. However, these constituents had been first identified by Byram (1997) in his model of intercultural communicative competence. Byram (ibid.) outlines the five components of the debated competence as follows:

- ❖ Attitudes (*savoir être*): of curiosity and openness, willingness to procrastinate disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.
- ❖ Knowledge (*savoirs*) :embraces social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in the interlocutor's , and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.
- ❖ Skills of interpreting and relating: (*savoir comprendre*): embody the dexterity to construe a document or event from another culture and to explain and relate it to documents from one's own culture.
- ❖ Skills of discovery and interaction: (*savoir apprendre/faire*): entail the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices, and the capacity to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.
- ❖ Critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) presupposes an ability to critically gauge on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Jones (2000:160) postulated that cultural awareness is one of the cardinal components of intercultural competence that actually excels knowledge of one's own culture and the target one(s). Being culturally aware presupposes a kind of knowledge about others' practices in relation to rituals, norms, traditions etc.,. Cultural awareness, ergo, is necessitated in language classrooms since it gets learners to know how communicative practices are handled in divergent cultures. Baker (2008) conjectured that cultural awareness can be developed as learners become cognizant about the interconnectedness of culture and communication, the similarities as well as the differences across cultures in relation to the norms and traditions, and the unfathomable relationship amid individuals across cultures. Not only does cultural awareness galvanize the process of intercultural communication, but it also betters learners' linguistic knowledge, since cultures are affiliated with all articulations of language, including written and spoken forms of language (Kramsch, 1993). Additionally, such awareness may subsidise one's intuitions about possible misunderstandings that may befall during communication (Laopongharn and Sercombe, 2009:60). Per contra, the lack of cultural awareness may lead to misunderstandings and conflicts among the interactants. Wannaruk (2008) in one of her studies expounds the effects of the lack of cultural awareness on Thai learners. She revealed that these learners when communicating with the Americans, their interactions are obstructed by a set of "*socio-pragmatic failures*". She observed that Thai learners do not master using speech acts of refusal, and therefore are in most cases, understood as impolite interactants.

Despite the fact that the models of intercultural competence embrace skills, attitudes, and knowledge that accredit the individual to interact globally, they do not portray a cosmopolitan understanding of the competence in question. Christopher and Seberich (2006) elaborate this claim stating that the models that have been advanced by scholars bottom on Western perspectives about intercultural communication, namely Anglo-Saxon views that naturally differ from Arabs' perspectives. Ergo, the conceptual landscape would become richer and more comprehensive in case other cultures contribute to theoretical grounds in relation to intercultural competence. Christopher and Seberich chastise the advanced models of intercultural communicative competence stating that:

The drawback of intercultural competence as depicted here is that it does not do away with cultural differences, but maintains and, to some extent, even reinforces them. By demanding an ethnorelative view and shift of reference in intercultural situations, the model does not generate or develop a commonly shared set of values that is valid for interactions between participants, values that would then be generally binding (Christopher and Seberich , ibid.)

Broadly speaking, intercultural competence had been established on mere economic grounds. Ergo, an individual who has intercultural qualifications and skills of interaction is more inclined to achieve their communicative goals, in most cases economic profits. The multifarious panoramas that adopt such of materialised view of effective interaction, underscore the productive aspect of intercultural competence in relation to successful communication. This aspect of intercultural competence is elucidated in Thomas'(2003) conceptualisation of the competence in question as the ability *"to (help) shape the process of intercultural interaction in a way that avoids or contextualises misunderstandings, while creating opportunities for cooperative problem solving in a way that is acceptable and productive for all involved"*. Schönhuth elaborates the view as she pictures intercultural competence to the ability:

...within an intercultural context to establish contact in an appropriate way and to establish conditions that are acceptable for the free expression and effective exchange of all involved'. Consequently, 'a level of cooperation is achieved that is agreeable to all participants . . . allowing the existing diversity . . . to be exploited for the achievement of common goals (Schönhuth , 2005: 103).

The prospect that positions intercultural competence within the framework of efficiency and success had been chastised on the basis of a set of shortcomings in relation to myriad variables, including power practices and ecological traits. Aries (2003:153) maintains that intercultural competence would be pejoratively described, as it is attached to selfish goals, notably when the individuals involved

are disproportionate in power. Other flaws that spark from the efficiency model³⁶ relate to the fact that advocates of such a perspective seem to use intercultural competence with performance interchangeably (Herzog, 2003: 179). Howbeit, intercultural competence should be envisaged as the set of skills that may abet the interactive process and not as the outcome of the interaction, known as performance. In this line of thought, Rathje rebuked the model of intercultural competence that hinges on economic aims as she articulated:

It is clear, then, that goal- oriented definitions that privilege criteria of efficiency place excessive demands on the concept of intercultural competence. Following this model, any potential result arising from intercultural interaction _ including negative results _ would be attributable to intercultural competence. Additionally, the model ignores the myriad external conditions that can also influence the eventual 'success of the interaction. Such variables include the strategic target of the interaction itself, the practicality of the cooperation or the relative power structure of the participant groups (Rathje, 2007: 257).

The view that runs counter to the efficiency model, discussed above, embodies the belief that human beings are the substance of any intercultural communication. Within this vista, intercultural competence is not construed as the end or the outcome of communication, but rather as the aids that abet individuals to construct their personalities along the interactive activities. Wierlacher (2003:216) formulated his understanding in relation to this panorama of intercultural competence. He postulated that this competence is significant and valuable in relation to individual's growth. Likewise, he outlines the personal development and growth as "*establishment of discrete commonalities upon a certain plane of significance*". Howbeit, Thomas, (2003) acknowledges that this understanding is too ample and idealistic, and hence accredits room for animadversion at miscellaneous planes.

³⁶ **Efficiency model of intercultural communicative competence** delineates the economic goals the competence targets in intercultural communication.

Agar (2007) stressed the interplay of both culture and communication as he argued that “*communication is inseparable from culture*”. This interconnectedness renders successful communication bottom on a development of an intercultural competence, since the latter provides learners with the knowledge and the skills they employ in order to reach positive communicative goals. The common grounds that relate both communication and culture also instigate “*communication with others who do not share our background*” and “*exposure to and contact with other modes of thinking*”. (Cook-Gumperz, 1986:30). Briefly put, both culture and communication should be fused in learners’ development of an intercultural communicative competence.

Laopongharn and Sercombe (2009:70) accentuate the fact that instructors should be cognizant about the significance of intercultural communicative competence in relation to language learning. Thus, their objectives should excel learners’ linguistic shortcomings, and that the cultural information provided in classrooms should epitomise heterogeneous cultures, since in doing so, learners will develop a cosmopolitan view about how things may be conceived in divergent cultures. Additionally, teachers should be preoccupied with their learners developing a kind of cognizance in relation to the norms of intercultural interaction, as they inform them about anomalous norms and interactive skills across cultures. Inconvertibly, an understanding of the nature of intercultural communicative competence would “*make learners envisage the cultures that are mediated by means of English language*” (Bowers, 1986:405). By the same token, language learning should be parsimoniously affiliated with culture learning, and that language leaning should be preoccupied with the development of learners’ intercultural competence. Studies conducted in relation to learners’ performances in classrooms have shown that learners may fail in their exams not only because they have linguistic deficiencies, but because they fail to penetrate the target culture they study (Xiao, and Petraki, 2007:15).

1.6.2.2. Third Culture

Interacting with people from heterogeneous cultures would positively bring divergent purviews, panoramas and perceptions into contact. Within these settings, the individuals who do not possess intercultural skills (explained in the previous sections), would find it arduous to manipulate the communicative activity successfully. They are predisposed to garrison their cultures against the foreign cultures they come across. In some cases, these individuals establish lines of demarcation between their cultures and the target ones. Per contra, the individuals who are interculturally competent are able to reconcile divergent cultures as they virtually construct the third space, what is known as “third culture”. It is worth mentioning that the notion of “*Thirdness*” permeates basic concepts and constructs such as meaning, interactive dialogues, and language learning, most importantly. The very coinage of concept had been due to the set of dualities in relation to cultural diversities, namely the self and the Other³⁷. Karmsch expounds that as she states:

In both cases, there might be a conflict between the needs of the individual and the group, the demands of the self and the other. It is to break out of these dualities – individual– social, self–other, native–non-native speaker, C1–C2 – that the concept of ‘third culture’ was conceived (Karmsch, 2013).

Meaning is omnipresent in relation to words, sentences and utterances. Thirdness, in this regard, is no exception. In his seminal work “*The Third Meaning*” (1977), Roland Barthes discriminates between two categories of meaning: referential and conventional symbolic meanings. The former is the meaning that images, settings, speeches, etc, project. The latter is the meaning conceived by the individuals from the images, and the settings they come across. Nevertheless, in between the two divergent meanings, Barthes locates a third meaning, he describes as “*evident, erratic and obstinate*”, that bottoms on the

³⁷ **The dichotomy self-other** is detailed in the third chapter in relation to online representations and stereotypes.

individuals' conceptualisation of the signifier³⁸. Bathes names this type of meaning significance, which Widdowson (2003) perceives as “*fleeting, subtle, and escapable*”. In other words, the third meaning, using De Saussure's dichotomies, does not exist either within the realm of the signifier or the signified, it occupies a remote place, known as significance.

Unquestionably, the third meaning that Barthes formulated as the meaning that links the individuals emotionally to the signifier via significance is chimerical and deluding. Kramsch (ibid.) articulates that significance resides in between the individual and the object. In the same vein, Pierce, the American semiotician evoked the idea of the Thirdness of meaning in relation to individuals' creation of a set of signs in their minds to interpret reality. The signs that Pierce calls “*the interpretants*” mediate between the individuals and the object viewed in a sphere of “*Thirdness*”. While Firstness and Secondness³⁹ contribute to meaning shaping and understandings, Thirdness mediates both of them and moulds the final phase of meaning interpretation. Kramsch (ibid.) claims that “*All three modes of being coexist at any given time, but only Thirdness is able to make meaning out of the other two and to build a sense of identity and permanence*”.

Bakhtin (1981) approached the concept of Thirdness in relation to the interactive processes that affiliate the self to the Other. He contended that percolating the meaning of the self would necessitate the understanding of the meaning of the Other. Likewise, this understanding of Thirdness had been elaborated by Holquist (1990:37) who named it “*dialogism*”, the process that bottoms on relations of divergences and diversities that connect individuals to each other. Within this vista, dialogue is epitomised in three cardinal elements: the Self, the Other, and the “anticipated and remembered Self and Other”.

³⁸ **The signifier**, a part of De Saussure's dichotomy that represents the linguistic label used to denote something or somebody.

³⁹ Pierce's (1898/1955) 'theory of signs comprises three modes of meaning construction and interpretation. Firstness, is entails the apprehension of reality and the development of immediate consciousness via bits of information. Secondness reflects the process of individuals' reactions to the information used during interaction with others in different settings. Thirdness, is a relational process constructed and reconstructed within social norms, habits and time, and that permits generalisations and identifications (cited in Kramsch n.d.).

Within the third element, one may include past information related to both the Self and the Other, and expectations about both of them. Dialogism, Bakhtin (ibid.) postulates, is a process whereby one can understand themselves translucently, since it galvanizes individuals to scrutinise reality from an insider and outsider panoramas. Ergo, as individuals attire the outsider's perspective, they are within the realm of "transgredience, identified when *"speakers develop a distance to themselves and their words, i.e. an awareness of stylistic variation and an ability to subvert the 'unitary' language of political and marketing discourse"* (Kramsch, n.d.). Holquist reformulated the tight connection between Thirdness and transgredience as follows:

The thirdness of dialogue frees my existence from the very circumscribed meaning it has in the limited configuration of self/other relations available in the immediate time and particular place of my life. For in later times, and in other places, there will always be other configurations of such relations, and in conjunction with *that* other, myself will be differently understood. This degree of thirdness outside the present event insures the possibility of whatever transgredience I can achieve toward myself(Holquist, ibid.38).

While structuralists had conspicuously identified the multifarious grounds that discriminate language from reality, poststructuralists were preoccupied with the effects of contextual variables in shaping individuals as well as their speeches. Within this category, the work of Bhabha (1994:35) is worth mentioning, since it deepens Pierce and Bakhtin's understandings of thirdness. According to Bhabha (ibid.), communication notably with persons from heterogeneous cultures, hinges on the interpretation of meaning coded by the sender and decoded by the recipient. Ergo, the third place is quintessential in relation to the process of meaning interpretation. Bhabha comments:

The pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and the You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which it cannot 'in itself' be conscious (Bhabha, *ibid.* 36).

Third places, according to Bhabha (*ibid.*) position individuals in a given social structure. Within this vista, both the individual and the utterance produced during conversation are nurtured by the world outside. In this way, this process enables the individual to become “*a subject of enunciation*”⁴⁰, whereby the individual become a social agent. As to intercultural communication, the space of enunciation functions as the source of persons' ideas, perceptions and thoughts about others, since “*cultural difference gets articulated in the 'highly contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation'*”. Kramsch(1995) explains the cardinal role that individuals' social positions occupy in relation to communication. She speculated: “*We always say more than we think we do because part of the meaning of what we say is already given by our position in the social structure, by our relative power, and by the subject positions we occupy in social encounters*” (*ibid.*).

The afore-mentioned theories advanced by the scholars had mainly focused on comparative studies in relation to native and non-native speakers. Interestingly, the differences among the natives and non-natives are identified in antithetical structures within the frame works explained. However, in relation to the educational ecologies, the third culture does not propose to eliminate these dichotomies, but it suggests focusing on how heterogeneity can be used as reconciliatory grounds for intercultural communication. The third culture, is therefore a symbolic place that is by no means unitary, stable, permanent and homogeneous (Kramsch, n.d.). Weedon (1987) postulated that the third culture is a residence of individuals' conflicts and misunderstandings, since it mediates the individuals' culture as well as the learned one. Kramsch (n.d.) has summarised the features of the third culture in the following points.

⁴⁰ **Enunciation** means an articulation or pronunciation of words and utterances.

- *Popular culture*: third culture represents a ground whereby a learner constructs their meaning in relation to the meaning acquired from the other cultures⁴¹.
- *Critical culture*: the third culture galvanizes learners to inspect their own culture as well as the target culture.
- *Ecological culture*: In relation to the third culture, the setting is quintessential. It is highly context-sensitive and adapted to the demands of the environment.

Bhabha (ibid.) pointed to the fact that the third culture is a hybrid culture, a place that invigorates a reconstruction of novel identities. In third places, dualities of the self and Other are abandoned in favour of cultural mediation that nurtures “*the process of cultural hybridity that gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new era of negotiation and representation*” (Rutherford, 1990: 211). In the same line of thought, Kostogriz (2002) accentuates the tight affiliation between the third place and the process of translation. He expounds his view stating that the process of translation, undoubtedly, brings different cultures into contact, with each culture having its boundaries. Despite the fact that the product of translation is not faultless, it establishes a hybrid of new meanings. The process of translation guards against the rigidity of those cultural boundaries as it destabilizes them to create room for novel identities and meanings. In this connection “*third space acts as a type neutralizing zone where conflicting assumptions may collide but no single view or act is privileged or prioritized*” (Wernicke, n.d.).

Beyond shadow of a doubt, the third culture has a cardinal role in relation to the realm of language learning. Kostogriz (ibid.) admits the fact that this new cultural process that enlivens diversities and differences metamorphoses language classrooms into “*a space of effective learning.*” Within the same line of thought, Kramsch (1995) maintains that the third culture is momentous in the

⁴¹ **De Certeau (1984)** outlines third culture as “*way of using imposed systems’, of making do with resources acquired from others, such as foreign grammars and vocabularies. “Making do” (or bricoler) means constructing our space within and against their place, of speaking our meaning with their language*’ (1984: 18).

process of learning about other cultures, since it abets the learners probe into a stream of cultural differences. She states that the third culture locates the learner “*at the intersection of multiple social roles and individual choices*” (Kramsch *ibid.*). The teacher is an outstanding factor within the process of cultural mediation. Kramsch (*ibid.*) postulates that teachers are asked to engage their learners in an atmosphere of cultural understandings and conflicts. However, these learners are encouraged to solve out these conflicts without the intervention of the teacher. Interestingly, the concept of third culture had been a transition in relation to language learning as “*it has changed from a place, space or status that learners occupy, to an oppositional way of being,*” that it “*has become located in language itself*” (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, Kramsch (*ibid.*) warns that the third culture should remain a space for negotiation and change. She says: “*it should not be “essentialized into a stable third culture which in turn also includes and excludes” instead of remaining focused on “the internal conflictual plurality of the object of study”*” (*ibid.*).

Intercultural communication as it brings divergent cultures in to contact, establishes distinguished attitudes, behaviour and reactions among the individuals involved, notably when a person finds themselves with an anomalous Other. Systematically, this would accredit room for uncertainty and expectations, what Holmes (2005) calls the “*formation of fictions*”. Parallel to this, they would develop some simplified versions about the counterparts via lens of prejudice, stigmas, etc. Howbeit, when communication is not obstructed by cultural differences, the Other would be tolerated and understood.

Individuals are predisposed to pinpoint to the Other when referring to the concept of culture. But, it is improbable that they would admit the fact that their identities can be shaped by cultural values, biographical backgrounds and personalities, too. Holmes (*ibid.*) comments: “*What these people, usually strongly individualist, may not be aware of is that deep, tacit basic assumptions or values which make up a part of a person’s identity can be cultural, biographical, and related to personality at the same time*”. As interactants become cognizant of their cultural differences, they co-construct another culture based on cultural commonalities, called the Third Culture. However, Dodd (1998) postulates that these understandings are indefinite and shadowy as they do not take into account

other variables that are decisive in forming the alternative culture. He claims that in such a space, there should be the intervention of culture, personality and personal relationships. The figure below elucidates Dodd's model:

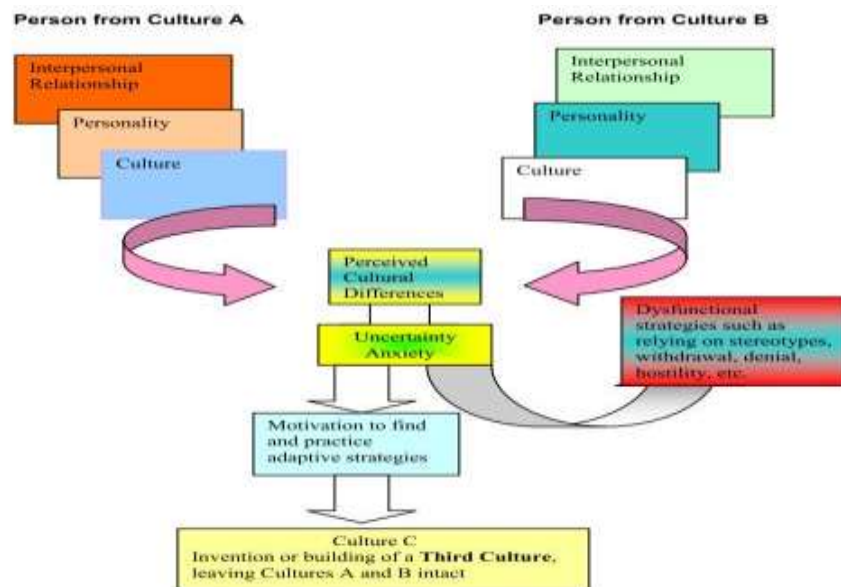


Figure 1.7. Dodd's (1998) Model of Third Culture

Dodd's (1998) model of third culture can be supported on different planes. It unfolds the scope of intercultural communication as it accentuates diversity and complexity in relation to individual's cultures, identities and personalities. Holmes contends that the concept diversity of communication is more befitting as to describing the intercultural process than intercultural communication. This argument can be backed up by the fact that diversity, unlike intercultural communication that presupposes contacts within cultures only, is not constrained to cultures, but overshadows that to encompass all the variables that contravene or lubricate the interactive processes. Dodd (ibid.) conjectured that the contact between cultures, before pouring in the stream of the third culture, goes through what he labels "*perceived cultural differences (PCD)*". Likewise, he stresses the role of perception, the percolator through which individuals stratify points of commonalities and differences as well. Perception can be either positive or negative towards the cultures and diversities involved. In some cases, it leads to

“uncertainty and anxiety “. These perceptions will end up as functional or dysfunctional behaviours among individuals. The former, he states, display a sense of readiness to tolerate and a motivation to carry on communication. Individuals are prone to form a *“common ground for relationship-building strategies.”* Per contra, the latter creates *“stereotyping, withdrawal, denial and hostility”*. The interactive process ends up in a creation of a novel third culture, outlined by Casmir (1999:92) as the *“construction of a mutually beneficial interactive environment in which individuals from two different cultures can function in a way beneficial to all involved”; it is “communication-cantered” and focuses on “long-term building processes....”*

The third culture seems to be similar to the ‘*culture of dealing*’ whose duty is to infiltrate cultural misunderstandings and conflicts. Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (n.d.) contend that the culture of dealing occurs:

- When people from divergent backgrounds meet, a middle culture of dealing is set up within which they interact, which in turn is influenced by respective complexes of cultural baggage;
- what people see of each other is influenced by the middle culture of dealing, which may be very different to what they think they see.

The diagram advanced by Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (ibid.) about “*culture dealing*” sheds light on the complexities of intercultural communications, and which excels both culturalist and essentialist views⁴² of the process. It also limns two kinds of cultural information: one that is individualistic (represented in bubbles “b” and “d”, see graph below) and broader cultural entities (represented in bubbles “A” and “E”). The contact of both the individual’s culture with another culture is distinguished from the source culture (A). Under this spirit, individuals adapt to the novel cultural circumstance (culture “B” and “D”). The same process befalls in relation to culture “D”. In the middle of the diagram, lies the essence of intercultural communication, culture of dealing. The latter, is the bridge that reconciles all the cultures involved in the interactive process. Holliday, Hyde,

⁴² These two concepts are explained in the section of barriers of intercultural communication.

and Kullman (ibid.) comment “ *this is the culture of dealing because it is set up between the two interactants who enter into a relationship of culture-making*”. The culture of dealing, in addition to this, affects individuals’ behaviour and life perspectives. It does so, since it opposes both individuals’ negative behaviour. Holliday, Hyde and Kullman (ibid.) argue that “ *it would be argued that in this new culture their behaviour becomes intercompetent-anomalous, sometimes mixed up..... put more simply, they see each other very much out of character in this clumsy new culture.*”. The figure below illuminates the concept of “*culture of dealing*”:

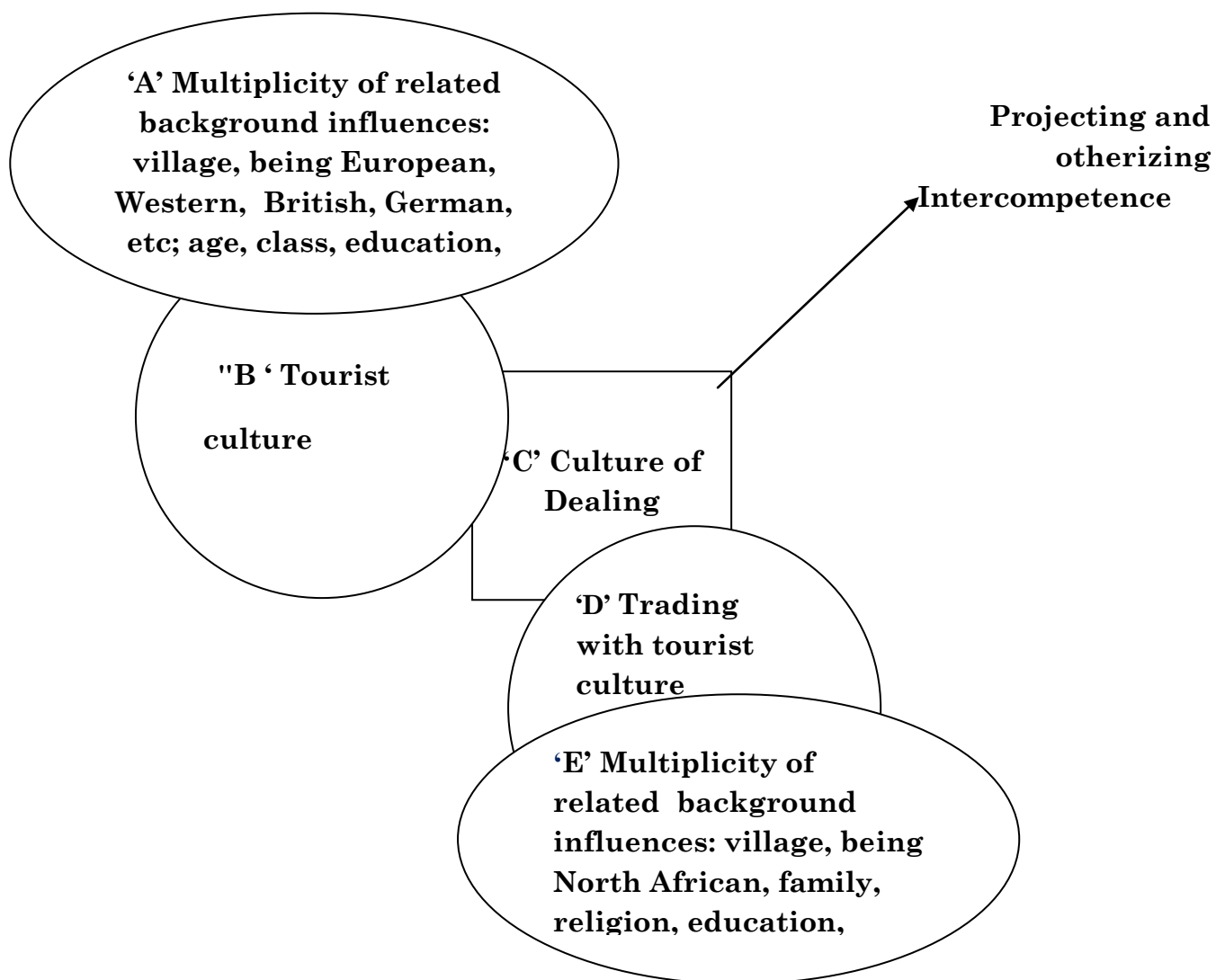


Figure 1. 8.: Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman’s (n.d.) Model of Culture of Dealing

1.7. Virtual Communities:

Prior to the nineteenth century, the concept community had not been given due interest, as only few scholars investigated its underlying meanings and understandings. Per contra, it started gaining momentum by the year 1910, when the first understanding to the concept had been introduced by Galpin. For that time on, a stream of miscellaneous understandings of the concept garnished the intellectual scene. Community was approached from divergent panoramas in relation to geographical locations, people's amassing around common sites, and shared practices among members (cited in Frazer, 1999: 76).

Community, according to Frazer (ibid.), can be identified in terms of a set of distinguished values such as solidarity, commitment, mutuality and trust. Other markers of community had been epitomized in a "*descriptive category of a set of variables*". These vacillating criteria are three-fold: place, interest and communion (Willmott, 1986). The first variable affiliates to the geographical boundaries of community, often known as territorial or place community. The second element within the current identification matches people's interests and preoccupations such as religion, sexual orientation, occupation, and ethnicity, thus creating heterogeneous elective communities such as Islamic community, Christian community, Women community and Algerian community. Last but not least is communion, one of frail features on which communities can be judged. It typifies the set of encounters; here, these gatherings not only do they befall between people, but they also embrace spiritual contacts within religions (ibid.). That said, Smith. (1994) postulates that the aforementioned markers are not clear-cut criteria. In fact, they are ubiquitous and interconnected in an intricate way. Ergo, to confine community to particular features would be iniquitous to the very understanding of what a community is, and not representative to reality as well.

Another issue of relevance to the concept of community is the frontiers that indicate the beginning of a community and the end of another. Cohen (1985: 12) posits that members of the same community are more predisposed to share common features and practices than others who are not part of it. Boundaries, he argues, are of divergent categories; they could be identified by means of maps, law, geographical places or religious beliefs. However, amid all boundary markers, Frazer accentuates the religious aspects of community, as he commented:

the Christian ideal of the communion of saints and the congregation and the Eucharist as forms of community; the centrality of umma or community in Islamic traditions and contemporary practice and theology; community is prominent theme in Judaism, and in Buddhism. (Confucianism is not, of course, a religion, but neo-Confucianism is closely intertwined with Buddhism and with traditional religious cults of the family and ancestors, and Confucian norms of family and community life are politically significant in many contemporary contexts (Frazer, 1999:24).

Blakely and Synder (1997) stress the way in which the terms “communion and community” that figure in the above quotation can be used interchangeably, emphasizing at the same time the interrelation of both constructs. In this respect, the communion aspect “*has centrifugal and centripetal*” duties as it embraces those who have communion features and exclude those who do not have. In addition to the abovementioned criteria of community, scholars have supplemented other touchstones which, they thought would be decisive for the identification of such a concept. They claim that any community is supposed to have what de Tocqueville (1994: 287) calls “*habits of the heart*” ascribed to the set of norms and habits within these groups. These qualities embrace: tolerance, reciprocity, and trust. While tolerance typifies respect, forbearance, and unbigoted behaviour (Walzer, 1997: 11), reciprocity epitomizes the mutual practices people do as favours (Putnam, 2000). Lastly, is the quality of trust. It entails the utter belief that treatment and cooperation amid agents and

institutions would be submitted to the deontological qualities of reliability, honesty and credibility. Actually, these norms and habits are to a given extent innate, and therefore need not be foisted upon people. This argument is elucidated in the passage beneath:

Our minds have been built by selfish genes, but they have been built to be social, trustworthy and cooperative'. Humans have social instincts. They come into the world equipped with predispositions to learn how to cooperate, to discriminate the trustworthy from the treacherous, to commit themselves to be trustworthy, to earn good reputations, to exchange goods and information, and to divide labour... Far from being a universal feature of animal life, as Kropotkin believed, this instinctive cooperativeness is the very hallmark of humanity and what sets us apart from other animals. (Ridley, 1997: 249).

Connell (1971:300) speculated that though the concept "community" got its share as far as the review of the literature was concerned; most of the understandings ascribed to it limn superficial denotations. Likewise, community accordingly was restrained to scant descriptions of settlements; the oceanic meanings of community were discarded. Thus, Connell (ibid.) stratifies two juxtaposing approaches to the concept of community as either: first-order object of study or second –order object⁴³. In the same vein, Bernard (1973) and Wilkinson, (1970:320) maintain the fact that theories advanced as an endeavour to conceptually ground the term community had been more unfathomable than the concept community itself. Bernard goes on to picture that theoretical basis as "*passé*", for the simple reason that it did not cope with the technological boom known lately. Hence, the adequacy of these theories to reflect modern communities pours in the stream of unreliability. Under this spirit, Wilkinson (1991:7) stated: "*what is needed is a conception of community that recognizes its complexity*". These conceptual backgrounds typify the first order. The second order is an immediate reaction to the failure of the first conceptualizations of the word community. Scholars who boost such an approach think that this fresh look at

⁴³ Here, Connell refers to the forgoing understandings of communities (first order) and modern views of communities as (second order).

community is more insightful as it portrays people's gatherings within a world invaded by technological blossoming (ibid.).

Truly, the electronic boom has, to a great extent, metamorphosed our conception of community, as limitations of time and space had been abolished from the denotations that the debated concept used to trigger off in the bygone years. Consequently, the communities have been substituted for other labels, videlicet "*global village*" and virtual communities, most importantly (McLuhan, 1964). By the same token, Boorstin (1978) emphasized the inevitable mutation that a novel industrialized world witnessed, and which has created what he calls "*Republic of Technology*". He further discusses his claim stating that: "*this community is one of shared utopian experience; 'with crushing inevitability, the advance of technology brings nations together and narrows the differences between the experiences of their people'*". Meyrowitz subsidizes the effects of technology on the understanding of community as he asserts:

Many categories of people women, ghetto dwellers, prisoners, children were once "naturally" restricted from much social information by being isolated in particular places. The identity and cohesion of many groupings and associations were fostered by the fact that members were "isolated together" in the same or similar locations. . . . Now, however, electronic messages . . . democratize and homogenize places by allowing people to experience and interact with others in spite of physical isolation. As a result, physical location now creates only one type of information-system, only one type of shared but special group experience (Meyrowitz, 1985, 143-144).

Rheingold (1987:80) maintains that the emanation of virtual communities within cyberspaces was due to the dearth of places where people can informally interact. More important than this, Netsurfers who spend most of their times connected to the Net urged the creation of a novel community that corresponds to their metamorphosing virtual needs. Per contra, he stresses the fact that virtual community should not be seen as a set of technological devices that bring people around them for certain periods of time. In doing so, users of the Net would be

living in what Mills (1959) calls “ *the second hand worlds*” . On the contrary, virtual communities epitomize a sense of intimacy, friendship and collaboration among users. He outlined these features in the passage below:

People in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and lose them, play games, flirt, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk. People in virtual communities do just about everything people do in real life, but we leave our bodies behind. You can't kiss anybody and nobody can punch you in the nose, but a lot can happen within those boundaries. To the millions who have been drawn into it, the richness and vitality of computer- linked cultures is attractive, even addictive (Mills *ibid*: 3).

Memmi (2006) contends that understanding the nature of virtual communities is momentous since such an understanding permits divulging the processes of online communication, and hence designing appropriate communication systems. As to the nature of virtual communities, Kollok and Smith (1996:117) contend, the label “*virtual*” explains the whole story of these social gatherings that do not make use of physical properties. Virtual communities are used to refer to all the types of computer-mediated communities. According to Memmi (*ibid.*), virtual communities are not the extension of traditional communities, but novel forms of communities with new features. He comments: *On the contrary, we will argue here that it is generally a mistake to equate virtual communities with traditional communities, because computer-mediated groups actually show novel characteristics and tend toward looser, more impersonal forms of interaction*” (*ibid.*).

A virtual community typifies a sense of “*place*” as it constitutes one of the three common locations identified by Oldenburg (1991): a living place, a working place, and a place where people gather for conviviality. The third place is reserved to the construction of communities. Moreover, Rheingold pictures these places to coffee salon where people discuss various topics ranging from casual speech to academic concerns. According to Rheingold (*ibid.*), these discussions exemplify the “*social glue*” that transmutes a group of individuals into a

community. Indeed, the concept community has been, for a long time, affiliated with spatial denotations, called “*locales*”. Per contra, Bernard (1973) contravened that claim as he suggested that people form miscellaneous types of communities may form groups by means of sharing common interests or mental resemblances. Ergo, some people may have the same “*locale*”, but “divergent social worlds. These worlds form “*locale-independent relationships*”. He (ibid.) supplemented that today’s research landscape prioritizes such understandings of communities rather than the previous antiquated trend.

According to Rheingold (1993) virtual communities do bottom on individuals’ meeting one another in off-line milieus. Howbeit, they come into being when a group of individuals share common interest, and when they engage in reciprocal processes of commuting their ideas, feelings and stories online. These features had been anchored in the Licklider’s (1956) prediction about the potential for such communities to appear in the era of the technological boom, as he stated “*What will on-line interactive communities be like?*” Licklider (ibid.) added that “*In most fields they will consist of geographically separated Members, sometimes mess grouped in small clusters and sometimes working individually, They will be Communities not of common location, but of Common interest*”. However, his preconception about the nature of virtual communities had been ample, if not romantic. In the same line of thought, Rheingold offers the following understanding of the debated concept:

A virtual community is a group of people who may or may not meet one another face to face, and who exchange words and ideas through the mediation of computer bulletin boards and networks. Like any other community, it is also a collection of people who adhere to a certain (loose) social contract, and who share certain (eclectic) interests (Rheingold , ibid.).

Premature understandings of virtual communities were colligated with business affairs. Such communities would systematically limn an economic content mediated by communication means in a particular cyberspace⁴⁴ (Hagel and Armstrong, 1997). Howbeit, these communities constitute a new blossoming of the very nature of communities themselves. Rheingold (1993) lucidly mentions the impenetrable affiliation between technology and the creation of communities as he conjectured: “*whenever computer mediated communications technology becomes available to people anywhere, they inevitably build communities with It*”. It follows from this that Rheingold adopts a technological determinist view of computer mediated communication. Rheingold (ibid.) puts the following understanding of virtual communities forward:

Virtual communities are social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace (Rheingold ,ibid.5).

Additionally, the label “virtual” itself tells the whole story of the computer-mediated communities⁴⁵. The beforehand usages of the term had been grounded in the Latin culture, where the term virtual stood for “*excellence and goodness*”. Howbeit, its meaning has been metamorphosed in relation to English culture, to mean something “*effective*”. In contemporary discourse, however, virtual is used to denote things that are effective and abstract. Under this spirit, current usages of the term virtual have been attired new meanings, namely the contrastive link between effectiveness and unreality. In relation to this, virtual communities are believed to be effective but unreal. Undoubtedly, the term virtual had been altered from its early usages due to the technological boom and the advance of

⁴⁴ **Cyberspace** is “*the notional environment in which communication over computer networks occurs*” .Retrieved from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/cyberspace.

⁴⁵ **The concept computer-mediated communities** are used synonymously with virtual communities, to denote members who construct and preserve certain communities online.

the ICT's⁴⁶ (Averweg and Leaning, 2007). The technological blossoming had been so influential that it led to the emanation of a kind of social gathering that does not bottom on physical dimensions, and which polarised views as to what distinguishes modern communities from traditional communities. Within this vista, Averweg and Leaning comment:

Indeed electronic media are now so extremely pervasive in contemporary social life that a number of academics argue that the idea that we can effectively demarcate on- and offline relationships is fallacious" It is perhaps more accurate to consider on- and offline communication and community as points on a continuum rather than entirely separate 'realms' or worlds (Averweg and Leaning, *ibid.*).

Positively, some scholars contravened the existence of such a thing as "*virtual communities*". Weinreich (1997) postulates that in today's world, the concept of virtuality has been ornamenting modern conceptual landscape. People, according to him, use CMC⁴⁷ to subjugate issues of time, remoteness and other differences. To his point, there is no such a concept "Netizen"⁴⁸ that describes people living in virtual worlds. Actually, virtual communities are a utopian concept. Part of the reason why virtual communities are utopian, lies in the fact that these kinds of gatherings are, to a great extent, based on off-line meetings and discussions. Weinreich (*ibid.*) conjectured: "... *the idea of virtual communities is wrong. I point out that communities rely on interaction on a face-to-face basis, and that one can't get to know one another when people are limited to mediated contacts*" (*ibid.*).

⁴⁶ **Information communication technology** represents the deployment of technology in dealing with information and lubricating information. The concept goes back to Stevenson in his 1997 who suggested that this approach encompasses all types of technologies used in the targeted process. (Retrieved from [http://dictionary .reference.com/browse/information+and+communication +technology](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/information+and+communication+technology)).

⁴⁷ **CMC** stands for computer mediated communication.

⁴⁸ **Michael Hauben** coined the term Netizen, to describe people who "*populate*" the virtual rooms of the Net. The term citizen represents any person living in a certain town. Thus, being a citizen means membership to a given state which suggests having full rights. (in Weinreich, 1997).

Weireich's (ibid.) questioning the existence of virtual communities has been backed up and detailed in the paper "*Utopian Promises: Net Realities*", by Critical Art Ensemble, where a set of pledges affiliated with the Net transmuting the world, had been unaccomplished. These scholars identified five main unfulfilled promises in the aforementioned paper: new body, convenience, community, democracy and new consciousness.⁴⁹ As to the promise of a novel community, they speculate that the concept itself is vacuous of any clear-cut denotation. In most cases, it reflects social gatherings. Connotatively, it exemplifies affinity to given groupings. Actually, the coinage of such a concept is motivated by bureaucrats whose main goal is to alienate people and to keep them as far as possible from physical social gatherings so that unconsciously, these people find themselves enclosed in their workplaces. The true function of the Net is rather information delivery rather than creating communities. According to them: "*Community is a collective of kinship networks which share a common geographic territory, a common history, and a shared value system, one usually rooted in a common religion*" (Critical Art Ensemble, n.d.).

Blanchard (2008:111) posits that for a community to be virtual, a number of criteria should be available. He outlined them in the following quotation: "*virtual communities can be as groups of people who interact primarily through e-collaboration technologies and who have developed feelings of belonging, identity, attachment, and influence (i.e., a sense of virtual community) with each other*. Among the quintessential elements for the existence of virtual communities, are e-collaboration technologies, divided into synchronous and asynchronous systems.

⁴⁹ **New body Promise** : this new body enables users a set of options whereby they have the chance to manipulate codes, systems and identities. It permits novel body configurations which are impossible in the organic world. However, the dark side of this body is manifested in the loss of people's sovereignty (Critical Art Ensemble). Convenience Promise: technological boom had been brought so as to meet manifold necessities. One substantial reason was to intensify human labor so as to approach the efficiency of robots, to be convenient with what the "bureaucracies" require in terms of efficiency and rapidity (ibid). Democracy Promise: The Internet is a space where issues of gender, race, and ethnicity are irrelevant. All these features are the pillars of democracies, yet as it comes to the use of the Net, users are not free to 'act upon the information they retrieve in a loose manner (ibid).

New Consciousness Promise: Technological blossoming was intended to instigate various forms of consciousness, yet by mean of practice, this idea became the zenith of technological utopia. "*If new consciousness is indicative of anything, it is the new age of imperialism that will be realized through information control*" (ibid).

The former hinges on instant messaging and includes chatrooms,⁵⁰ video chat⁵¹, etc. The latter, however, represents the delayed communication via services like e-mails. These technologies also typify two other kinds of communication: one to one communication such as instant messaging, and one to-many, such as blogs⁵² and Web pages⁵³(Blanchard, *ibid.*). The figure below expounds the idea best:

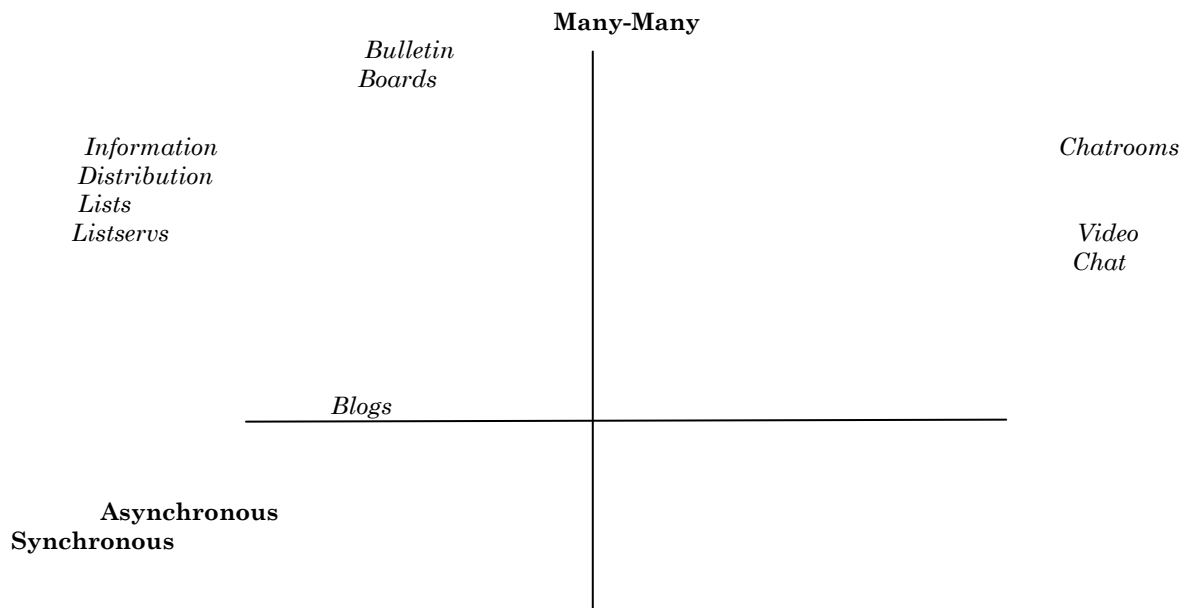


Figure 1.9. : Types of E-collaboration Technologies by Communication Timing and Number of Communication Partners (Blanchard, 2008).

⁵⁰ **chat' room`** “In Computing, “it represents a branch of a computer system in which participants can engage in live discussion s with one another”. (Retrieved ([http ://www. The freedictionary .com/Chat+rooms](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Chat+rooms)).

⁵¹ **Video chat:** refers to video calling or video messaging, including divergent types pf social media such as “ Facebook, Skype. This visual chat is similar to text chat in the sense that both of them hinge on sending and replying to messages (Retrieved from Encyclopedia , from [http:// www.pcmag .com/ encyclopedia /term/53830/ video-chat](http://www.pcmag .com/ encyclopedia /term/53830/ video-chat)).

⁵² **Blog**“A website that displays postings by one or more individuals in chronological order andus ually has links to comments on specific postings”. (Retrieved from [http://www .the freed ictionary. com /blog](http://www.the freed ictionary. com /blog)).

⁵³ **Web page:** It is HTML page that provides similar information for all Internet users. Despite some updates, it remains intact as users retrieve information from it. (Retrieved from [http://www. pcmag.com/encyclopedia/ term/52045/static-web-page](http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/ term/52045/static-web-page)).

Gensollen (2004) has outlined a set of common features that limn the nature of virtual communities. Per contra, he admits that not all the kind of virtual communities hinge on such features:

- ✓ Members are oftentimes occasional, or a one-off occurrence;
- ✓ members are frequently anonymous or use pseudonyms;
- ✓ groups may involve hundreds or thousands of participants;
- ✓ there are active participants, but also many passive readers;
- ✓ group membership is often temporary;
- there seems to be little group cognizance;
- ✓ group architecture is highly malleable;
- ✓ contributions to the discussion are often addressed to no one in particular;
- ✓ many contributions are apparently discarded;
- ✓ there are few unstable personal relationships;
- ✓ the discussion style is usually cold and unemotional;
- ✓ interactions are not between persons, but revolve about a common object, goal or task;
- ✓ interactions enhances the construction of a common workspace;
- ✓ contributions are motivated by certain goals.

Not only did Weinreich (1997) falsify the existence of online communities as such, but he also doubts the dichotomy “*real vs. virtual*” that most scholars of CMC employ in their research works. He coins other concepts which, according to his beliefs, portray the two worlds in a realistic way. “*Sensual*” epitomizes computer-mediated communities realistically, he stated. His objection towards the use of virtual lies behind the fact that this term is closer to non-existing world rather than the actual world that is mediated by technology. Per contra, he accentuates the fact that the computer-mediated communication has not the duty of constructing entire communities; rather, “*as a communication form, CMC should enable people to stay in contact, to work more efficiently together, to organize opinions and actions, and lessen social and economic differences through equalized means of participation*” (ibid). In contempt with this fact, some scholars contravened the utility of CMC in lubricating social interactions among people. Allies of such a view accentuate the role Internet plays in widening distances among interactants. This has been translucently explained in the following statement:

The compulsive efforts to 'overcome the barriers between the 'people', the verbal torrents now flooding online channels, and the reconceptualization of these torrents as information streams look very much like symptoms of the rapidly increasing distance between us. [...] Our lives no longer interpenetrate [...]. So we throw more and more words across our new, ever more remote communication channels, hoping we might finally connect. But the distance between us cannot be bridged in this way. [...] Our instruments of communication only increase the distance. Our real need is to rediscover what it means to participate in each other's lives and worlds. This requires attention to precisely those potentials of human exchange our efficient technology is teaching us to ignore. (Talbot, 1995, 278-279, cited in Weinreich, 1997)

In the same vein, Averweg and Leaning (2007) inspect the very nature of virtual communities. They postulate that these communities are loaded with political, social and economic hierarchies and disproportionate power practices. They maintain that “*If we think of the various ways in which social pressures and constructions such as class, gender and ethnicity impact upon communication offline,*

then perhaps these and other factors influence online communication". This claim had been subsidized by the studies conducted on computer-mediated communication, where most of offline negative features, including prejudice, stereotypes, and representations, predominated such online platforms. Likewise, Van Vliet and Burgers (1987) conclude that it is mythological view, if one considers virtual communities as ideal places deprived of economic, social, and political variables. Other negative views about virtual communities are formulated in relation to the pseudo nature of these online gatherings that instead of elevating people's daily life conditions, contributed to the decline of social ties and solidarity. McClellan details this idea stating:

[R]ather than providing a replacement for the crumbling public realm, virtual communities are actually contributing to its decline. They're another thing keeping people indoors and off the streets. Just as TV produces couch potatoes, so on-line culture creates mouse potatoes, people who hide from real life and spend their whole life goofing off in cyberspace. (McClellan,1994: 10).

Computer-mediated communication , though it enables people share their interests, discuss their topics and expand their friendship zones, it addresses a particular social category, consisting mainly users who have a certain intellectual backgrounds and an economic easiness that allow them afford , if not a computer and the like, casual visits to cyberspaces. Consequently, such a type of communication turns to give birth to selective virtual communities, that Luke (1993:212) calls "*New Class of information elite*". In connection with this, other scholars provided a set of dichotomies so as to delimit the vagueness of the concept virtual communities. Stone (1991:82) proposes that for a better understanding of the concept, one should connect the understanding of communities to two opposing eras in human history: "textual age versus electronic age". Virtual communities turn to be either textual virtual communities or electronic virtual communities. The former depicting the 1960's society while the latter referring to period that followed the advent of the telegraph.

1.7.1. The Boons and the Bans of Virtual Communities:

Inconvertibly, virtual communities like the other categories of social gatherings, have a set of advantages and drawbacks. To begin with, these kinds of communities are believed to more advantageous than the traditional physical communities, since they do not bottom on individuals' prejudicial and stereotypical judgments in relation to meeting and interacting with people online. Rheingold (1997) puts it this way *"because we cannot see one another, we are unable to form prejudices about others before we read what they have to say: Race, gender, age, national origin and physical appearance are not apparent unless a person wants to make such characteristics public"*. Another boon in relation to online communities hinges on how individuals get to know each other. In physical communities, one is predisposed to meet another one, then deepening their knowledge and relationship with them. In computer-mediated groups, the same process takes place, however in the opposite way: people know another then meet, if they decide to do so. Likewise, friendship is said to be fostered in such kind of communities due to the easiness of sharing common interests and passions with others. The significance of virtual communities is even accentuated in relation to learners' researches and studies. Since the Internet has lead to information overload, learners are none the wiser about what to choose and what to consider irrelevant. Here, comes the role of virtual communities which, via the members who share common interests, abet the learners to percolate the information they come across while surfing on the Net (ibid.).

Rheingold (ibid.) admits the fact that virtual communities are somehow a double-edged sword. The drawbacks of such communities are identified at multifarious planes. Beyond shadow of a doubt, eliminating factors of race, gender and sexuality in the interactive process would be salubrious; however the exclusion of such features goes hand in hand with the absence of non-verbal communication, including paralanguage, body language, etc. Ergo, the meaning within such online gatherings would be interrupted by misunderstandings and misinterpretations. In addition to this, in traditional communities, the individuals are in direct contact with the persons they communicate with.

Therefore, in case of a misunderstanding, an immediate clarification is provided. In virtual communities, and asynchronous communication especially, the rate of uncertainty in relation to the other person getting the intended meaning is high. Rheingold (ibid.) adds that in online interactions, the responses that the individual gets from the others are unpredictable due to the technological inefficiencies that foment misunderstandings.

Virtual communities are believed to share some grounds of commonalities with traditional social gatherings, some scholars suggest. Per contra, some other views embody the fact that online communities have come as a reaction towards the conventional systems of communication. Arteaga and Ing (1999) speculate that though , to some extent, both types of communities share common grounds, they differ in some aspects. The first grounds of distinction spring from the nature of communication that virtual communities bottom on. To begin with, the electronic context that represents these grounds of difference fuels these kinds of gatherings and permeates the very understanding of virtual communities, outlined by Rheingold (1993) as: *social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace*".

There had been a set of other novel features that had become quintessential in relation to virtual communities due to the effects of media. The latter have metamorphosed the ecology of communication and individual's perception and thinking. McLuhan (1974.) admits this fact as he states that " *Media, by altering the environment, evoke in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. The extension of any one sense alters the way we think and act - the way we perceive the world. When these ratios change, Men Change.*" The change that these media brought has altered elemental customary features of communication, too. Consequently, in online communities " *physical interaction*" is substituted for " *abstract representations*", including the reduction of social cues.

Virtual communities, unlike traditional ones, are not nurtured by physical foundations. The absence of physical features has extended the functionality of communication within these communities. Arteaga and Ing (ibid.) argue that

“constructed on a base of information technologies, virtual communities can support functions not previously possible”. Likewise, virtual communities’ personal traits are not that significant in the construction relationships. On the contrary, individuals may use fake or pseudonyms in their online interactions. Consequently, communicators online would hinge their processes of knowing one another in relation to the style and the content of communication (ibid.).

The subsequent point in relation to virtual communities has brought about heated debates amid intellectuals and ordinary people as well. Within this perspective, the views had been polarised into two cardinal panoramas: those who claim that online communities are founded on the purpose of constructing relationships, and those who postulate that these kinds of gatherings are set up so as to develop and spread knowledge among members. In relation to the second view, Arteaga and Ing (ibid.) admit that virtual communities have transmuted the traditional ways of knowing and developing knowledge. They claim that these communities have metamorphosed the three elemental pillars of knowledge that the ancient books of knowledge “Vedas⁵⁴” have outlined: circumstance, time, and object. First, the circumstance of virtual communities is handled via linguistic backgrounds. As to time, knowledge is available at any time. Likewise, the object of knowledge is no longer dependent on a single individual; all the members can contribute to the process.

Schwartz (1994) accentuates the negative traits of CMC in narrowing the scope of friendship, trust and interactions, most importantly. He posits that CMC by means of its miscellaneous devices *“add the final mechanism needed to insure that we never talk to people beyond our immediate friends and family on a personal level about anything. The global community, linked by terminals, replaces community where we are”* (Schwartz, ibid.). Nevertheless, CMC can be advantageous tool whereby physical encounters can be invigorated. Still, according to this understanding of

⁵⁴ **Veda**, from Sanskrit, meaning Knowledge, is a collection poems and hymns. The latter had been used in rituals and ceremonies, most of them are related to praising God (Retrieved from Encyclopedia Britanica, from <http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/624383/Veda>).

virtual communication, physical contacts among people are more than necessary in online interaction. Per contra, antagonists of such a view postulate that that contacts can be carried on by means of spiritual and emotional common traits among interactants . Ferguson (1994) argues: *"We are social creatures and we long for contact; I don't think it matters that contact is via phone, Net, or face-to-face if it promotes and reinforces understanding, action, and human connections."* Rheingold shares this idea arguing that:

When a group of people remain in communication with one another for extended periods of time, the question of whether it is a community arises. Virtual communities might be real communities, they might be pseudocommunities, or they might be something entirely new in the realm of social contracts, but I believe they are in part a response to the hunger for community that has followed the disintegration of traditional communities around the world (Rheingold, 1993:4).

However, virtual communities as providers of knowledge may be contravened by the following technological shortcomings, illuminated by Mitroff and Linstone's model of knowledge processing in virtual communities. The machine, in this case, the computer percolates the knowledge to be considered valid for consumption. In connection with this, Mitroff and Linstone (ibid.) inspect the neutrality of technology⁵⁵. The figure below elucidates the point discussed:

⁵⁵ The neutrality of technology, in particular the Internet will be debated and analysed in chapter two.

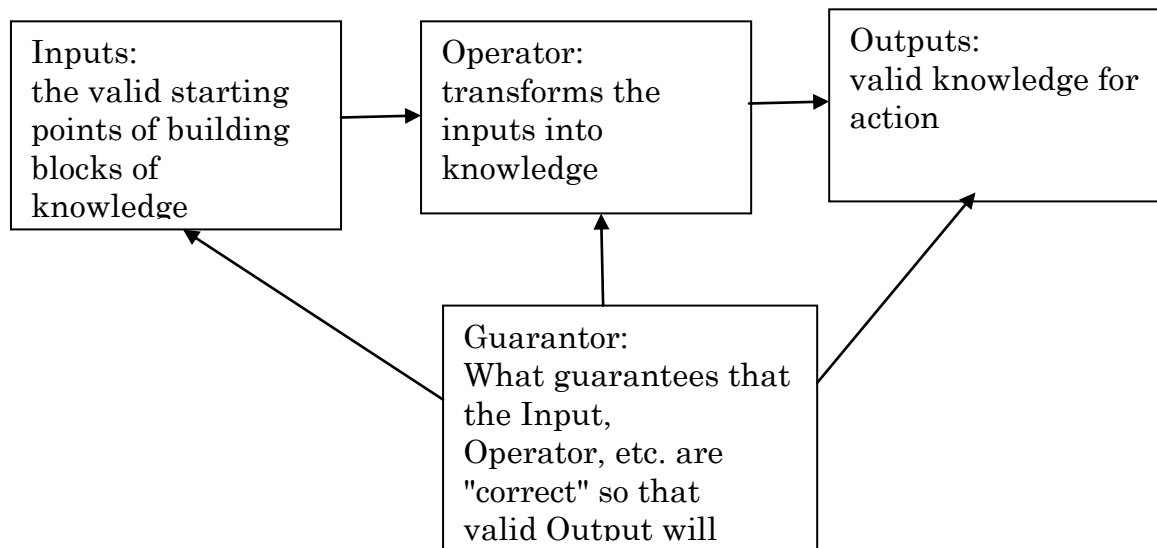


Figure 1.10: Mitroff and Linstone’s Model of Knowledge Processing in Virtual Communities

Virtual communities are advantageous due to some features that positively influence the individual ethically and intellectually. Putnam (2000) suggests that within these online gatherings, people are likely to develop their social and intellectual capitals. While the social capital entails the norms and trust among the members, the intellectual capital represents the knowledge that is shared and developed during online interactions. However, like the other typologies of communities, virtual communities may succeed as they may fail. Blanchard (2008) defines the success of a virtual community as *“the ability for the virtual community to sustain itself while meeting its members’ needs and maintaining member satisfaction within the community”*. Jones (1997) had been the forerunner to identify the dimensions of successful virtual communities, what he called “virtual settlement”. He outlined the following criteria: a minimal level of interactivity by a variety of communicators with a minimum level of sustained membership, and interacting in a common public space.

White (2001) summarizes the advantages as well as well as the drawbacks of virtual communities as follows:

- ✓ It is a place where people and information can be accessed anytime throughout the day or night, no matter what day of the year;
- ✓ participants and experts from throughout the world can connect to orchestrate brainstorming sessions;
- ✓ virtual communities are cost effective as most of them are free;
- ✓ virtual communities can be organized and conducted in most and in multiple translations;
- ✓ many virtual communities are thought to have motivated renewed interest and action in citizenry, advocacy, and volunteerism.

White (ibid.) mentions the following drawbacks that virtual communities may be featured with:

- ✓ In public virtual communities, you sometimes may not know exactly with whom you are really interacting;
- ✓ some participants may have hidden agendas or ill-conceived motivations for participating in a virtual community;
- ✓ navigating through more intricate communities or communities that are allowed to grow too large can be chaotic and confusing;

- ✓ some would argue that virtual communities contributes to a growing problem of social isolation;
- ✓ although much easier today, one needs a relatively sophisticated level of technological expertise to create and participate in a virtual community;
- ✓ public communities may preclude more sensitive, yet needed interactions;
- ✓ potential members may not have the requisite hardware or software (e.g., webcam) to fully participate.

The context of learning languages and about cultures had been redefined in relation to other variables. Virtual communities, undoubtedly, is one of these spaces. Modern trends in teaching have recognised the significance of the context in relation to learners' achievements in classrooms. Here, we find the concept of "*situated learning*" used by many scholars, including Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989); McLellan (1996), and which stands for the belief that any kind of learning is bound to some physical and social settings. Situated learning perspectives elucidate the fact that the process of learning is not a neutral process that can be entirely detached from contextual variables. In this line of thought, virtual communities with their e-collaboration technologies and various contexts enrich the learning process (Swan and Shea, 2005). Kassop shares this view as he comments:

An intimate community of learners: Strange as it may sound, one instructor after another notes the surprisingly close relationships that they have developed with their online students. They say that it is common for participants in online courses to develop a strong sense of community that enhances the learning process (Kassop, 2003).

1.7.2. Cyberculture:

Golubev (n.d) postulates that the advent of technology and Internet, in particular has urged the establishment of new interpretations of social orders, cultural practices, and novel cultures, most importantly. Cyberculture, like the concept of culture, has been the supplier of heated debates over the past years due to the divergent meanings it covers. In relation to the review of the literature, the concept relates to technological cultural practices, products, and novel cultures, to boot. Cyberculture had been tightly affiliated with cultural practices of cybernetics⁵⁶, computerization, etc (Macek, 2004). It also limns the emergence of subcultures due to the technological boom, that goes back to the 80s and the 90s, and which consists of a group of individuals within a given virtual community. Howbeit, other understandings of the concept accentuate the fact that cybercultures are “*the cultures that emerge from the use of computers for communication and entertainment and business*” (Manovich and Lev, 2003.). Silver (2008) supplemented that cyberculture consists of multifarious cultures which are established within virtual spaces. Additionally, for cybercultures to be identified as such, the members within such cultures need to share stories and cultural products. Beyond shadow of a doubt, all these attempts to approach the concept explicitly underscore the enigma that conquers the root of cyberculture. Withal, studies conducted on cyberculture have broadened the purview of culture, leading to the creation of novel methods, panorama, and philosophies in relation to the intricate relationship between technology and culture. (Goi, 2009).

Cyberculture as a concept triggers off the idea of futurism. Hawks (1993) articulates that technology had been the driving force that gave birth to a culture that links the individual to the future. Cyberculture or “*information culture*” as some scholars call it, is characterised by the information activity that has taken the conventional means of information devices by the large margin.(cited in Arumpac, 2006). Per contra, in relation to the review of the literature,

⁵⁶ **Cybernetics** is a computing format applied to complex computing system. It consists of comparisons between the models that are operated along some standards of normal functioning (Retrieved from [http:// www.britannica. com/EBchecked/topic/147802/ cybernetics](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/147802/cybernetics) <http://www.britannica.com/>).

cyberculture limns everything, but information processes. Hawks (ibid.) posits: *“cyberculture is probably most closely associated with the idea of future culture, yet cyberculture is often mis- and over-used. If you look at the meaning of the word “cyber”, basically “information” in an oversimplified context. it has little to do with frequently-used notions of cyberculture”*. (cited in Arumpac, ibid.).

Under this spirit, Bell (2001) admits that the understandings that most scholars give to the concept cyberculture are not representative and befitting. Cyberculture, according to him, embodies multifarious things at the same time. It is the culture that mediates between individuals and technological devices. He (ibid.) comments *“For me, cyberculture is a way of thinking about how people and digital technologies interact, how we live together – so the suffix ‘culture’ is used in that elastic way that one of the founding fathers of British cultural studies”*. Howbeit, Williams (1976) maintains that cyberculture portrays the whole new life determined by technology. He (ibid.) adds cyberculture is nurtured by culture itself, including practices, representations, behaviour, and stories. However, what distinguishes cyberculture from traditional views of culture, is that the former is practiced in virtual spaces and cyberspaces. Bell (ibid.) distinguishes between cyberspace and cyberculture as he states *“....where cyberspace is a matrix of embedded practices and representations”*. While cyberculture is certainly a *‘contested and evolving discourse’* (ibid.). Cyberculture also embodies a set of stories in relation to the past history of technology and culture, individuals’ online practices, and utopian stories. Utopian stories that emanate from the virtual nature of cyberculture that some people, until now, consider mythological. He adds: *“such utopianism, which is in itself multi-stranded, is an important thread of the various symbolic tales that have a key role to play in storying cyberculture”* (ibid.).

Within the conceptual landscape of cyberculture, two elemental views are identified: cyberculture as the product of technology and as an interactive behaviour. Advocates of the first panorama posit that cyberculture is a material culture that came to existence due to technological boom. However, others speculate that this novel culture occupies the behavioural dimension of interactivity that occurs in relation to the machine and the individual (Goi, 2009). Likewise, divergent fields of study have taken the concept of cyberculture

as their object of analysis. Howbeit, anthropology had been predominant in relation to how technology affects individuals' cultural practices. In the same vein Ardevol (2005) contends that cyberculture can be approached from four cardinal vistas: a new cultural model, an Internet culture, a cultural product, and a media form. She (ibid.) offers the following mental map to elucidate the dimensions of cyberculture.

A new cultural model	An Internet culture/s
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet as a technology - Emergence of a new society - Social and cultural change - <u>Culture as an adaptive strategy</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cyberspace as a new social context - Emergence of cultural forms - Virtual society, virtual communities - <u>Culture as a systemic whole</u>
A cultural product	A media form
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet as a tool - Creative and collaborative production - Digital culture - <u>Culture as symbolic production</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet as communication medium - Consumption habits - media form that challenges mass media - <u>Culture as social practice</u>

Table : 1.2. The Various Perspectives of Cyberculture (Ardevol, 2005)

To begin with, cyberculture as a new cultural model had been anchored in the technological boom during the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The claim that conquered the scene during such period centred around the potential for a new cultural model to come into being, and that this metamorphosis was about to transmute societies drastically. Parallel to this, the centrifugal function of technology had been accentuated, as the new mode of society membership had been identified, known as “digital divide”⁵⁷. The second panorama to cyberculture prioritises the interactive processes that individuals

⁵⁷ **Digital Divide:** “the socioeconomic and other disparities between those people who have opportunities and skills enabling them to benefit from digital resources, especially the Internet, and those who do not have these opportunities or skills” (Retrieved from [http:// dictionary .reference.com /browse /digital+ divide](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/digital+divide)).

engage in online. Ardevol (2005) argues that *“the important issue here is not the technology itself, but the social interaction that occurs in cyberspace”*. Within the same line of thought, Porter (1996) sheds some light on the interactivity within cyberculture as he mentioned that online communication can be identified as culture because it assembles traditions, values and beliefs. In contrast with the antecedent approaches to cyberculture, the prospect that labels culture as a product of technological activity, in this case the Internet, entails the fact that cyberculture embodies all the results of human technological creativity, including arts, literature, music , etc. It stresses the fact that Internet is the agent whereby these products are developed and commuted over remote distances. The fourth perspective of cyberculture is embedded in the communicative and informative function it serves. To put it differently, cyberculture is positioned within the scope of media, since it enables information distribution and communication development.

Silver (2008) points to the fact that cyberculture could not be easily defined, if not impossible to concur upon a one definition that assembles all the features of the concept. (cited in Arumpac,2006). Ergo, he postulates that it is better to design common features that are characteristic of cyberculture. Cyberculture, according to him, is *“broad, deep, and in constant state of flux”*. It is bread since it goes beyond one constrained contexts and accounts for various contextual variables, namely interactions and cultural practices. The deep nature of cyberculture springs from the complexity of the interactive processes within virtual spaces. Additionally, cyberculture develops over time and space, and hence it is in a state of flux. In the same vein, Goi (2009) outlines the characteristics of cyberculture as follows:

- ✓ It is a community mediated by ICTs.
- ✓ it is a culture mediated by computer screens;
- ✓ it relies heavily on the notion of information and knowledge exchange;

- ✓ it depends on the ability to manipulate tools to a degree not present in other forms of culture, even artisan culture, example a glass-blowing culture;
- ✓ it allows vastly expanded weak ties and has been criticised for overly emphasising the same;
- ✓ it multiplies the number of eyeballs on a given problem, beyond that which would be possible using traditional means, given physical, geographic, and temporal constraints.
- ✓ it is a cognitive and social culture, not a geographic one;
- ✓ it is the product of like-minded people finding a common place to interact;
- ✓ it is inherently more fragile than traditional forms of community and culture.

1.7. Conclusion

In the light of the afore-mentioned theories, discussion and debates, it becomes lucid that the ecology of learning about other cultures embraces miscellaneous variables, including namely the Self , the Other and online platforms. Within this vista, learners do not come to the classrooms as crude repertoires, but they come having peculiar understandings and representations about the world. Online learning is advantageous since it affords multifarious tools and links to the learners to retrieve information effortlessly. Howbeit, the neutrality of these online platforms is questioned due to the chauvinistic attitudes it scatter in the minds of the online members, in our case learners. Under this spirit, the learners are predisposed to affiliate to the Other stereotypically. In most cases, they deal with the other with cultural lens that had been loaded by negative attitudes and intolerance towards the Other. Claiming the seriousness of the situation discussed, classroom learning contexts are hindered by means of the negative attitudes learners develop outside the classrooms. The context of teaching about the other cultures if , it matches the needs of an intercultural world, would abet the learners decrease their negative attitudes. Learners' negative attitudes are reified in classroom contexts, notably in their oral interactions and writing performances. Beyond shadow of a doubt, the teacher occupies a significant role as to mediating between learners' cultures and the target one. Briefly put, as teachers reconcile between the online representations learners bring to the classroom, and the process of teaching about the target culture, the learning process would be successful and effective.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO: Learners' Online Intercultural Journey Torn between Arab's Culture Centeredness and Its Western Internet Representations

1.1. Introduction	120
2.2. Debating the Concepts of the Self and the Other⁵⁸	121
2.3. Learners' Online Community Questioned	128
2.3.1. The Exploration of Learners' Online Community	136
2.4. Online Representations and Stereotypes	141
2.4.1. Some Understandings of Representations	142
2.4.2. Some Understandings of Stereotypes	148
2.4.3. Methodological Framework	150
2.4.4. Online Representations of Abrahamic Religions⁵⁹	151
2.4.4.1. Online Representations of Islam	155
2.4.4.2. Online Representations of Christianity	158
2.4.4.3. Online Representations of Judaism	159
2.4.5. Online Representations of the Arabs, the Africans, and the Westerners	169
2.4.5.1. Arabs' Online Representations	169
2.4.5.1.1. Representations of the Arabs in Wikipedia	170
2.4.5.1.2. Arab Women's Online Representations	178
2.4.5.2. Africans' Online Representations	184
2.4.5.3. Westerners' Online Representations	188
2.5. Learners' Stereotypes about the Self and the Other	189
2.6. Learners' Attitudes towards the Online Stereotypes of the Self and the Other ..	204
2.7. Conclusion	210

⁵⁸ Both the concepts of Self and the Other are taken from two juxtaposing panoramas. The learners think of themselves as the self and the West as the Other. While the Western online representations describe the West as the self and the Arabs as the Other. Both perspectives are going to be elucidated along the chapter.

⁵⁹ **Abrahamic religions** “Of or relating to any of the faiths traditionally held to descend from the biblical patriarch Abraham, especially Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” (Dictionary.com, retrieved from “ (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Abrahamic+religion>).

2.1. Introduction:

In the bygone time, the ecology of learning had been parsimoniously affiliated with language classrooms, in most cases the teacher-students scenarios. Later in time, howbeit, the industrious interest in pedagogy had discredited teachers' centred learning in favour of learner's sovereignty. Notwithstanding, the advent of technology had been the most quintessential aspect of modern societies, as it metamorphosed all scopes of life, including the realm education. The pedagogical sequels of such a phenomenon had been typified in the set of the useful materials that had been invested in the process of teaching. More importantly, technology has redefined the process of learning as it stretched its areas. Now, learners can effortlessly retrieve information via Internet and other online sources. Consequently, the process of learning and its evaluation have become even more unfathomable, as learners come with a set of representations and stereotypes which unquestionably determine the success as well as the failure of the learning process.

The reciprocity between language and culture had become a boring platitude to be mentioned in any discussion that targets foreign language learning. Learners' language learning and their learning about other cultures, especially in online platforms have never befallen in neutral ecologies, including the classrooms and online platforms. One of the prima omnipresent aspects of technology is displayed in its deterministic nature, the way that technology affects learners' learning process, notably learners' perceptions of the world. Beyond shadow of a doubt, technology has never been a *sui generis* process, able to develop itself without the intervention of human beings. Ergo, online settings are considered as one the futile areas that can propagate a given group's representations and stereotypes. Under this spirit, learners of English are exposed to myriad kinds of reality distortion, namely those affiliated with their identity pillar, religion. On the one hand, learners' culture is in most cases affiliated with Islam, and hence considered as perfect and faultless. Consequently, any stricture about it is construed as a disavowal for their cultural identities. On the other hand, Western cultures are represented as ideal and

overbearing cultures. Accordingly, any online portrayal of their identities that does not go hand in hand with their native prototype would be considered as a menace for their own culture, if not their religion. Positively, these representations' hotbeds are one of the major reasons that lead learners of English to develop negative attitudes about the Other. These biased approaches of the self and the Other are expressed and brought about in language classes, namely in the subjects of literature where learners use their stereotypical lens to approach the literary texts (this idea is discussed in chapter three). Inconvertibly, learners' success in their intercultural journey, to a great extent, bottoms on learners' dexterity to cavilingly approach the culture involved and teachers' will to bridge the two juxtaposing extremes.

2.2. The Self and the Other

The concept of the Other has become one of the labyrinthine concepts that permeate current intellectual landscapes, and therefore tackled within heterogeneous cultures and within different communities. Likewise, in politics, one is likely to come across the '*the political Other*'. The same thing is applicable to the other fields such as religion and culture, where "*the religious Other*" and "*the cultural Other*" have become conventional words employed in all forms of speeches and writings (Almilad, 2013). Withal, the issue that obligates emphasis does not relate to the forms of the other, but how conglomeratic cultures chauvinistically approach it.

Positively, the concept of the other has never been confined to a particular field of study. Per contra, it appealed to sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and philosophers, in particular. As to Lacan, the discrimination between "the other and Other"⁶⁰ is paramount in diving deep in the true meaning of the concept (cited in Homer, 2005). The other (with small o) can be effortlessly identified in infants' behaviour. Infants are predisposed to face the other as they look at the mirror, and hence forming their construal of the other in a form of an ego that meets their desires. The sequel of that process manufactures a cognitive

⁶⁰ In this research work, the Other with capital "O" is employed, since it embraces perceiving individuals from heterogeneous cultures and from particular linguistic and cultural lens.

imaginary of the other that is preconceived as unified and coherent self-depiction. Most importantly, this egocentric representation of the other is likely to bring about in us a sense of complete human beings. As to the Other (with capitalised O), Lacan postulates, it excels one's utter subjective ego. The Other, he argues, epitomises the linguistic ecology that beleaguers us. In other words, this understanding of otherness limns individuals' using their language to express their desires. In the same way, it delineates how people's discourse is internalized within one's desires (cited in *ibid.*).

Sartre was amid the philosophers whose ideas had been cardinal in relation to the understanding of human existence. The existentialist view of the Other is reflected in persons' daily life. Likewise, to probe into the understanding of the Other, Sartre recounts the imaginative story of a person who, while listening through the door's key hole, got caught by someone else, who kept gazing at them strangely (cited in Priest, 2001). Under this spirit, the feeling of shame is contextualized within the presence of the Other. Unquestionably, the other, here, has negative connotations, mainly typified in forming preconceptions and judgments about the self. The negative aspects of the concept of the Other, expressed in most of contemporary European scholars' writings, Almilad (2013) speculates, are lucidly pictured in Sartre famous mantra "*hell is the others*". Be that as it may, the mammoth duties that the Other occupies, though they circumvent one's freedom, are a quintessential part of who that individual is. To cut it short, the self is part of the Other.

Foucault's (1980) philosophical vistas chiefly accentuated the ethical issues that bring people together. Though his critics chastised his philosophical panoramas, claiming that he confined his views to subjective individual features of ethics, Foucault stressed the role these ethics play in tightening the affiliation between the self and the Other (cited in Oksala, 2005:30). In other words, the care for the self, what Foucault (*ibid.*) terms '*souci de soi*' can be operational only in relation to the Other (cited in Pavie, 2009:233). Foucault (*ibid.*) translucently posits that the self is part of the Other, and hence the withdrawal of the former would lead to the exclusion of the latter. He further explains that within

contemporary societies, the self is always opposed to the Other, in a form of individual egoism (cited in *ibid.*).

Admittedly, in seeking an understanding of the features of both the self and the Other, the quintessence of each one should be conspicuously identified. In a way, the self can be recognised as such, given the fact that it displays some traits that make it peculiar and distinguishable. The two terms used by Said (1977): Orientalism⁶¹ and Occidentalism⁶² serve to illuminate this idea best. The Orient is identified as such, as it typifies certain elements that are absent in the Occident, and in this way the former considers the latter as the Other, as the first preconceives the second as the Other. Howbeit, the reciprocity between these two cultural constructs has never been established on grounds of similarities and divergences that can be reconciled; per contra, most of their contacts are ideologically loaded (cited in Ruwaili and Bazighi, 2002).

In addition to the afore-mentioned distinctions and similarities within the understanding of the self and the Other, ethical and epistemological references to the concepts need to be clarified. Ethically speaking, Almilad (2013) postulates that there is no Other as such, since all humans are created in the same way, no matter their tongues, colours and ethnicities. They all pour in the same category of “human being”. The ethical features of the association between the self and the Other is also expressed in religious texts. In Koran, for instance, the word ‘people’ (الناس)⁶³ is employed purposefully so as to address every human being on earth. This word, according to Almilad (*ibid.*), is intact as to grammar modifications; it does not have a plural form or any addition, unlike the other words such as community, audience, and nation, which can be altered by mean of inflection to form communities, audiences, and nations, respectively. Within the same line of thought, other discriminatory adjectives can be attached to them to

⁶¹ **Orientalism** is a concept employed to limn particular aspects of Middle Eastern and East Asian cultures Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3424300552.html>.

⁶² **Occidentalism** is used to describe the image of 'The West' in two elemental ways “stereotyped and sometimes dehumanizing views on the Western world, Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3424300552.html>.

⁶³ **The term ‘people’** had been used as a translation for the Arabic word ‘الناس’ for the reason that in English it is the only word that approximates the target word in meaning.

make a distinction between an Islamic nation and Western nation, leaving room for representations and ideologies to conquer one's brain-washed mind.

In defiance with the fact that many arguments can be provided in relation to the dissimilarities between the self and the Other, some other panoramas stress the fact that both constructs are of significance for a deeper understanding of each one. Almilad expounds this idea as he articulated:

Knowing the other is part of knowing the self, and that knowing the self would be incomplete unless linked to knowing the other ... because in a given time, we represent the other, and in the same way we represent the self. The other for us is the self for those to whom we gave such a description, and the self for us is the other for the ones who look at us (Almilad, *ibid.*).

A successful communication between the self and the Other bottoms, to a great extent, on the ability to put oneself in the position of another. Empathy, under this spirit, is the skill that teachers should be au courant of so as to be charted within their course objectives. In the same way, learners need to develop it to become intercultural mediators. Howbeit, the obstruction, here, resides in the fact that in looking at others, one is predisposed to use their own cultural lens, which prioritise the self and underestimate the Other. Paul Ricoeur in his analysis of the nature of the self, identified two cardinal relational features that lead to a better understanding of both the self and the Other. His hermeneutic⁶⁴ principles mainly embody: primacy of reflection before positioning any construct, opposing the selfhood to sameness, and finally drawing the dialectic ties between the self and the Other. Ergo, any study that calls upon the intervention of the three elements, Paul Ricoeur calls, and 'the *hermeneutics of the self through a triple mediation*' (cited in Ruwali and Bazighi). Likewise, the dialectic relationship between the self and the Other is more momentous than the antecedent two features, since it elucidates how the self relates to the Other in social settings. He claims that Otherness has never been autonomous in relation to the self; on the contrary, *it is part of the meaning and the ontological constitution of*

⁶⁴ **Hermeneutics** refers to: "the science of interpretation, especially of the Scriptures; the branch of theology (the study of religions) that deals with the principles of Biblical exegesis". (Dictionary.com).

the selfhood'. He further expounds that this relationship is mediated by the feature of '*passivity*'⁶⁵ that is shared by both the self and the Other. In other words, the self by means of passivity, in some actions, is the Other. Thus, the Other turns to be '*the variety of experiences of passivity intertwined in multiple ways in human actions*' (cited in *ibid.*). This feature also subsidizes the connection between both elements and obstructs them from founding autonomous juxtaposing grounds.

So far, only a set of understandings to the concepts of the self and the Other had been debated. Nonetheless, these understandings do not serve to permeate into how the self relates to the Other in social knotty settings and milieus. Chabbi (2013: 65) postulates that "*the relationship between the self and the other cannot be deep unless when studied from a social perspective*". Under this spirit, ontology serves as both anchors and lighthouses as it contributed noticeably to the elucidation of how the self relates to the Other in real ecologies. Within this ontological vista, the self is detached of all meanings of egoism and individuality. On the contrary, it is seen as inclusive and capacious concept that can have meaning only when mediated by two other elements: the other and the third. Levinas (1961) states that knowledge cannot be generated by means of leaving the boundaries of the self towards something called the Other; rather, it is developed in relation to how the other is included within the self. The process of moving from the Other towards the self, according to Levinas (*ibid.*), would positively devoid the Other from all connotations of remoteness and inferiority (cited in Stephen and Williams, 2009).

Additionally, the concepts of the self and the Other are liable to constant metamorphosis, given the period and the contexts they are utilized within. Almilad (2013) asseverates that "... *this does not mean that we can understand the other as we go back in time, history, and heritage only*". Inconvertibly, knowledge about past societies and cultures has never been advantageous to know the contemporary self and Other. Under this spirit, the West of the 19th century, the

⁶⁵ **The passivity** can be understood in three main forms : the experience one's body and it's relation to the world, the experience of the self and the foreign, and the experience of the link between the self and the self, what Ricoeur calls '*consciousness*'. (cited in Reagan, 1996).

West of Enlightenment, and the West of the 20th century epitomise divergent selves and Others. Beyond shadow of a doubt, counting on past intact information is going to expose the individual to the process of stereotyping, that not only portrays the Other, but distorts it in convincing and cogent ways⁶⁶. These stereotypes that are intrumentalised via religious ceremonies, speeches and the historical heritage are believed to represent the Other as extravagant individuals and non-believers, if not enemies of the world. Howbeit, this way of approaching the Other does not serve mutual understanding and cooperation. Amilad (ibid.) comments: *“the speech that excludes the other is not a good way to approach the contemporary era.... We have to know that as the other is not absolute evil, we are not absolute good either”*.

Levinas (1961) had been among the French philosophers who held a stiff position that the self and the Other are two autonomous entities, in most cases bring about meanings of opposition and contrast. Alterity⁶⁷, he maintains, is the conventional feature that affiliates the self to the Other. More precisely, the Other cannot be fully understood only with oppositional reference to the self and never in relation to it. The self and the Other, using Levinas' (1969:35) words are two constructs that cannot be *'totalized'*⁶⁸ (cited in Stephen and Williams, 2009). More important than this, knowledge, under this vista, is generated only when the distance between the self and the Other is maintained. Levinas (ibid.) argues that *“ themataization and conceptualization...are not peace with the other but suppression or possession of the other”*(cited in ibid.46). Knowledge, in the Levinasian perspective, includes the Other within the self, but in oppositional reciprocity. Wild (1996) speculates that the Other overshadows a mere object that can be stratified in a particular category. In case the Other is merged within the self, the potential of having dialectic associations between the self and the Other is not likely to take place (cited in ibid.). In contempt with the fact that Levinas (ibid.) views about the reciprocity between the self and the Other had been chastised on the basis of utter distinctiveness between both constructs, he interestingly elucidates the notion of the Other in relation to pedagogy. In

⁶⁶ The distortion of reality in online representations is going to be detailed along this chapter.

⁶⁷ **Alterity** is *“the state or quality of being other; a being otherwise”* (Dictionary.com).

⁶⁸ **Totalized** denotes the fact of merging both the self and the Other in one homogenous hybrid construct.

connection with this, teaching for Levinas (ibid.) is the process of lubricating the route between the self and the Other. Learning, according to him, is established as learners benefit from the knowledge of the Other more than taking from the self. He explains it as he states:

It is ...to receive from the Other the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity. But, this also means, to be taught. The relation with the other, or conversation, is ...an ethical relation; but inasmuch as it is welcomed this conversation is a teaching. Teaching is not reducible to maieutics; it comes from the exterior and brings me more than I contain (Levinas, ibid., cited in ibid.).

The altercations over the issue of the self and the Other are empowered, as both constructs have been attired ideological and political labels within technological and global ecologies. On the one hand these variables would enrich one's understandings of both concepts; however, cultural conflicts and misunderstandings would be the immediate sequels of some chauvinistic and negative attitudes in relation some cultures, and positive stereotypes in relation to some powerful cultures. The section that follows will cover the issue of the influence of technology on the intercultural learning process, as it permeates into the learners' construction of virtual communities within the social media "*Facebook*⁶⁹". Howbeit, before delving deeper into the online representations of the self and the Other, learners' construction of online communities will be scrutinized and inspected.

⁶⁹**Facebook:** A most popular kind of social media networking site, founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. It allows members to get friends by means of sending them invitations. It also offers instant messeging and photo sharing" (Retrieved from [http:// www.pcmag. com/encyclopedia/term/57226/facebook](http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/57226/facebook)).

2.3. Learners' Online Community Questioned

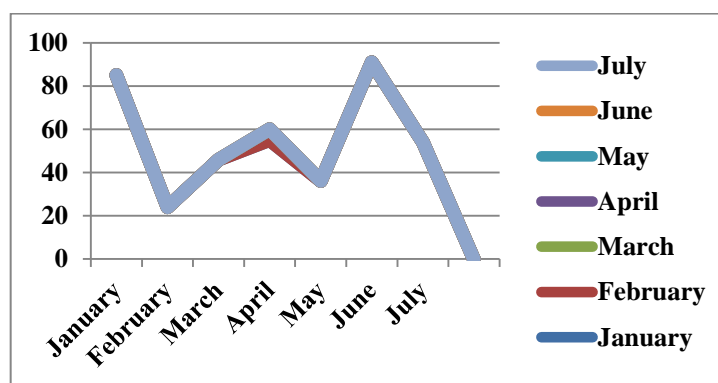
It is a hackneyed mistake to hear people talking about the fact that all people connecting to the Net constitute communities. Accordingly, in casual forms of thinking, an online community is simply a group of people who link to each other via Internet connection. Following such precarious understanding, those who share the same interest, the same levels of education and the same rate of connectedness, and those who are bypassers and sojourners are likely to be merged. For this significant reason, the community of learners that had been analyzed within this work had been studied in terms of a set of criteria ⁷⁰ that are believed to be the touchstones of any online community. Whether learners' online grouping really establishes a genuine community or only showcases random internet connection, this will be the first issue to be investigated from a netnographic panorama.

Nethnography, derived from the word "*ethnography*", is an approach that accommodates to the study of culture and behaviour within online communities. According to Kozinets (2002:1), this method is: "*faster, simpler, and less expensive than traditional ethnography, and more naturalistic and unobtrusive than focus groups or interviews*". What is significant about this approach is the fact that it gives researchers access to '*Naturally occurring behaviour*'. In doing so, the validity and the authenticity of the gathered data would be more reliable and trustworthy. In addition to this, participants would feel at ease as if they are home, unlike focus groups, and interviews where they are affected by the presence of the researcher. We performed the role of netnographers in analyzing learners' online community along six –month period of time.

Virtual communities are said to have a number of characteristics which demarcate between mere group of people interacting online and actual online communities. These attributes embrace participation, interaction, members' shared history, purpose and culture, solidarity, conflicts and their resolutions, group's self-awareness, and evidence of roles and hierarchy. All these touchstones will be checked within the online community questioned. Truly, participation is

⁷⁰ For more details about the characteristics of online communities, see chapter one.

one of the yardsticks in the construction of online communities. According to Herring, participation can be assessed via users' postings and responses during a particular period of time. A Six-month- period had been purposefully selected, so as to provide rigorous descriptions to the feature targeted. The figure below elucidates this idea best:

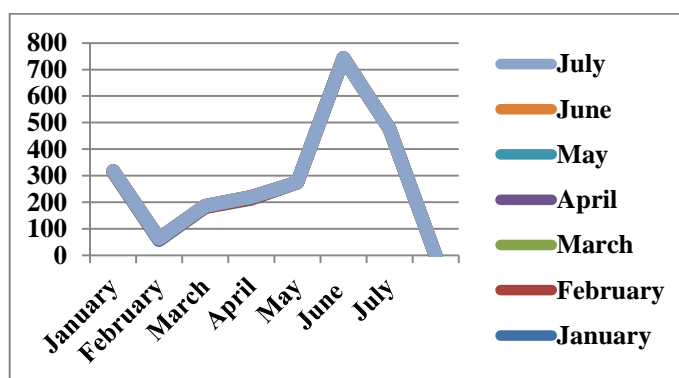


Graph 2. 1.: Learners' Facebook Online Participation

The figure 2.1 demonstrates students' participation over a six-month -period of time. The number of postings noticeably fluctuates from one month to another depending on miscellaneous factors. In the month of January, the rate of participation reached (**85 postings**) to attain its top in the month of June (**91 postings**), to drastically diminish in the adjacent month of February approaching (**24 postings**) only. Participation increases during the next months attaining close numbers of postings ranging from **46** to **55 postings**. Admittedly, the rate of participation within this online gathering matches the rate of participation within real online communities.

Interaction, too, is among the touchstones of virtual communities. Interactivity is a concept that is attributed to the scholars Rafaeli (1984) and Sudweeks (1994). They speculate that interactivity, as a process, limns the homogeneity of messages whereby each one anticipates the other. Sequential messages form the quintessence of interactivity (cited in Jones, 1997). Rafaeli (1988) states: "*Interactivity is an expression of the extent to which in a given series of communication exchanges, any third or later transmission is related to the degree to which previous exchanges referred to even earlier transmissions*" (cited in *ibid.*).

Accordingly, communicative processes include three main levels known as “two-way communication which refers to reciprocal messages’ flow, and reactive communication that embodies reciprocal interaction including responses to the previous messages. Fully interactive communication, howbeit, typifies responses to the previous messages with emphasis on the way the bygone messages are written (ibid.). Ergo, interactivity turns to have centripetal role in the discrimination between virtual communities and other forms of CMC⁷¹. E-mails are excluded since when emailing someone, the messages are stored in email box; the sender and the receiver cannot have an interactive communication via such a tool. Learners’ interaction is showcased in the graph below:



Graph 2.2.: Learners’ Online Interaction

Learners’ responses typify the rate of interaction within the online group. Responses to the participants’ postings reached their peak by the month of June (**744 responses**) to decrease by the month of February (**57 responses**). The rate of responses within the other months varies ranging from **181** to **477** responses. The two figures display the rate of participation within the online group. Fluctuations in learners’ postings and responses epitomize learners’ energetic participation in the group in question.

In addition to the afore-mentioned criteria in relation to online communities, shared history and culture constitute one of the grounds of commonality on which the continuity and the prosperity of online communities bottom on. Common

⁷¹ CMC stands for computer-mediated communication.

culture accredits the learners to express themselves freely, and most importantly it decreases misunderstandings. These criteria can be indexed via the use of group-specific abbreviation, jargon and other language routines (Baym, 1995a). The table below showcases learners' abbreviations and acronyms⁷²:

Abbreviations and Acronyms	Words They Stand For
Thankx, thnx	thanks
Lol, loool	Laughing out loud
u	you
r	are
n, &	And
2	too
hny	Honey
ya	you
cauz	Because
fx	For example
Ur, yr	You are
neva	never
plz	please
gonna	going
4	for
OMG	Oh my God
U'll	You will
nt	not
sth	something

Table 2.1: Learners' Abbreviations and Acronyms

The table above details significant yardsticks in the construction of online communities. Abbreviations and acronyms⁷³ provide background knowledge about members' common culture and history. Within the online group targeted in this study, a number of miscellaneous shortened forms had been identified during a six-month period of group's interaction analysis⁷⁴. Most of the learners, for instance, overuse the acronym LOL (which stands for laughing out loud). One

⁷² The abbreviations and the acronyms had been retrieved from the learners' online community.

⁷³ **Acronym** is "word (as NATO, radar, or snafu) formed from the initial letter or letters of each of the successive parts or major parts of a compound term". The abbreviation is "a shortened form of a written word or phrase used in place of the whole <amt is an abbreviation for amount>". MerriamWebster, accessed via <http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?AcronymVsAbbreviation>.

⁷⁴ The analysis of members' interaction had been analyzed every day during the period of six months.

objection to the use of such an acronym may be its availability in other online groups. Be that as it may, what makes this online group peculiar are the multifarious forms in which it is typed on the group's screen, sometimes as "lool, loool", in some examples, this acronym occupies a whole message. Learners also abbreviate phrases such as "Oh my God" as "OMG" and for example "as fx". Other examples are displayed in the table above.

Another outstanding feature in the erection of online communities embodies the use of common dialect intelligible for the group members. Learners remarkably employ miscellaneous forms of languages, dialects and foreign languages as well. The Algerian dialect is characteristic as far as the online group is concerned⁷⁵. This form of language functions as copulative means whereby learners' interactions are reconciled. Likewise, learners who belong to this online group often code-switch as they interact with each other. The Algerian dialect is jumbled with English. Part of the reason why they do so, is their attachment to the foreign language they study. A learner says "*ya riad khouya but after ftour*" (translated as "*my brother Riadh but after dinner*"). This linguistic diversity is peculiar to the online group since most of Algerian Internet users commingle the Algerian dialect with French. Moreover, using both Algerian dialect and English language, in this group, limns learners' educational orientation, and therefore stratifies them as learners of English. Classical Arabic, though rarely used, remains a verbal means whereby these learners interact online. This language is amalgamated with English to reflect learners' attachment to their native tongue, and at the same time to describe the influence of English on their online commute. Learners refer to Classical Arabic in cases where they back up their ideas using proverbs. In other cases, they use it when they mention religious statements. One of the examples that instance this idea goes this way " *الابتعاد عن الدين، believe me* " (translated as "*Staying away from religion, believe me*"). The table below elucidates learners' use of the Algerian dialect online:

⁷⁵ We are using the concept online group purposefully; we cannot use the world online community since many other features should be rigorously tested so as to confirm that the online gathering is a real online community.

Algerian dialect	Translation
ta3arfi sheh ?	Do you know?
hamdullilah	Thank God
sayé fhamna	Ok, we understood
F had denya !	In this life

Table 2. 2. Learners' Use of Algerian Dialect

Another peculiarity that can discriminate between online communities and mere online gatherings, is the practice of solidarity amid online users. Solidarity and support can be identified within users' interaction, in particular through the use of verbal humour and positive feedback. It is worth mentioning that verbal humour assembles a set of elements, including jokes, anecdotes, puns, etc. Learners are likely to reinforce their social ties as they commute jokes online. The following conversation portrays this idea best:



Figure 2.1: Learners' of English Exchange of Humour (retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/amira.chahrazed/?fref=ts>)

Online communities are not formed by support and positive feedback only. Members are likely to disagree on and oppose some views and ideas the same way they do when they are off-line. Consequently, conflicts do not always reflect negative aspects of human gatherings; on the contrary, they may be a good beacon to identify online communities. The following conversation showcases the idea best:

A: ⁷⁶ we dont⁷⁷ talk again when I'm talking Marshal Matherz :

B: Sorry Mama!

A: Marshal Matherz sayé fhamna ..one comment is enough

B : yep sure ! when are talking the shut up ! u see how im brillant ?

B: yep sure! When..... Are talking the Shut up! U see how im brillant ?

A: Very good son ! you've learnt it by heart this time..You'll have some time to watch your favourite.....on...as a reward !

B : most welcome mom! And i like ur gift.... hehe

B : May Allah bless u Mom

Figure 2.2.: Learners' Online Disagreements (Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/amira.chahrazed/?fref=ts>)

Group's self-awareness is another significant characteristic of online communities, since it develops in the online users the sense of belonging to the community, as it reinforces the social ties and exchange of solidarity and support. Self-awareness can be expressed indirectly via the use of pronouns like “we” and “us”. Here is an illustrative example retrieved from the online group:

⁷⁶ The real names of the learners had been substituted for letters for privacy reasons.

⁷⁷ The mistakes within the conversations had been kept as they were so as to preserve the originality and the authenticity of the data.

A : the truth ?!

B : yup ; it is shame when people whom are supposed to be mature enough in this era r affraid to see the light (Facts ; responsibilities; the way life shud be & so on) .. & this is a huge portion of the truth ^^

C :They cannot face the bitter truth

D:sure **we**⁷⁸ did,I like your way of thinking

E: **We'll** be holding the Japanese and the Algerian flags by the white pure hands.

F : good idea

Figure 2.3: Group's Self Awareness (Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/amira.chahrazed/?fref=ts>)

Among the common points that are common in both off-line and online communities is individuals' hierarchical relationships, whereby some roles are adopted and maintained. In Online communities, one is likely to identify these community patterns via "*speech act analysis*"⁷⁹ (Herring and Nix, 1997:112). Here is a conversation which highlights members' leadership statements and non-leadership responses:

A : This what Asma and Riadh have prepared
and I confess that it was honestly organized

B: Nice!!

C: thanks dear all what we did because of you
honey, **you are our leader**

A: oowh! i wouldn't reach this success without
your help of course

Figure 2.4.: Learners' Online positions (retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/amira.chahrazed/?fref=ts>)

⁷⁸ The use of the pronoun "We" represents the members' group self awareness.

⁷⁹ "**A speech act** *"in linguistics and the philosophy of language is an utterance that has performative function in language and communication."* (Retrieved from Encyclopedia.com).

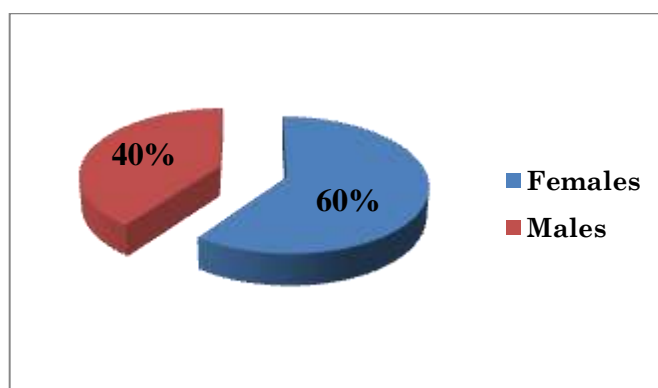
Lucidly, the six features that are quintessential in the creation of online communities do figure out in the online group analyzed in this part of study. To begin with, learners of English show a balanced rate of participation and interaction within the online group they are part of. Additionally, they have the tendency to use intelligible abbreviations and acronyms that serve as clues that distinguish their online group from others. Language choice and dialect are also part of learners' daily online interaction. Learners code-switch using both dialects and languages. However, what is particular to this group is the fact that they merge between the Algerian dialect and English language, which in other groups, is substituted for French, their second language. Likewise, members of this group foment their interactions via expressions of support and solidarity and positive feedbacks, too. The online community can be identified as such only when conflicts and disagreements are identified. Learners do go through some situations of misunderstandings and conflicts. In addition to this, learners are au courant of their membership within the community, as they in many cases, use the pronouns "us" and "we", as indicators for group belonging. Finally, learners are cognizant of the positions they occupy within the virtual space they share, and hence constitute a set of social hierarchies. Beyond shadow of a doubt, the availability of the features cited above demonstrates the fact that the learners are not only interacting online, but they are part of an online community that has its own laws, norms and touchstones.

2.3.1. The Exploration of Learners' Online Community

The online community that is analyzed through this section has been created by learners themselves in December 31st, 2012, under the name of "*The United Students of Abdelhamid Ibn-Badis*". At the beginning, it included 131 members belonging to divergent cultures and occupying heterogeneous social positions. The part below will investigate the online community from different angles, including members' gender, nationalities, occupations and use of social media. The founders of the community have underlined the norms to be respected by all members as follows:

- ✓ This group is made for 1st year English students;
- ✓ You can participate only with information or questions, and if the teachers whom are here want to help, they also have the right to add anyone to the group, and post e-book, links or websites;
- ✓ Any other participation which may not be about studying will be deleted and the member will be excluded immediately from the group.

The figure below epitomizes online participants' gender. The total number of the online users within UMBA⁸⁰ community had been **131**⁸¹. Female gender translucently outnumbers males', as the former constitutes **60%**, while the latter typifies simply **40%** of the whole community.



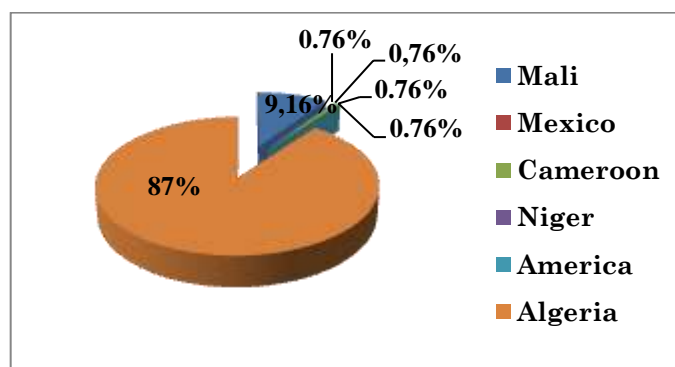
Pie-Chart 2.1: Members' Gender

The figure below represents members' nationalities. This online community embraces members of heterogeneous nationalities, with Algerian members outnumbering others (**87%**). Then, come Malian members who represent the second highest percentage (**9.16%**). However, Mexican, Cameroonian, Nigerian and American members epitomize the minority in terms of nationality (**0.76%**).

⁸⁰ **UMAB** stands for University of Mostaganem Abdelhamid Ibn Badis, the name of the online community.

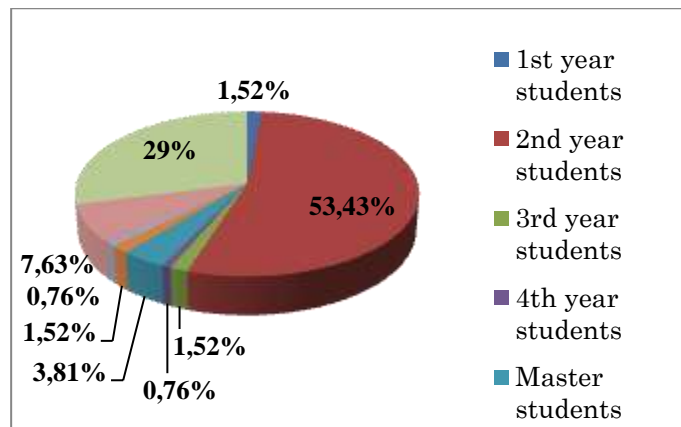
⁸¹ The number of the learners who belong to the online community is not static; each time other members join the community.

This online community is rich in terms of nationalities; ego, learners will benefit from these variations. Learners, coming from divergent countries and systematically having distinguished cultures, enrich intercultural interactions within this online community. These interactive processes give learners the opportunity to see how heterogeneous cultures conceptualize ideas and artifacts differently.



Pie-Chart 2.2 Members' Nationalities

The figure below presents of the online community members' occupations. The majority of the members are learners :first year learners **1.52%**, second year learners (**53.43%**) ,third year learners **1.52%**, fourth year learners (**0.76%**) , Master learners (**3.81%**), Ph.D. learners (**1.52%**),foreign learners (**0.76%**). **29%** of the online the community's members have divergent interests and exercise multifarious activities in their daily life. Teachers are also involved in this community (**7.63%**).



Pie-Chart 2.3: Learners' Occupations

The advent of social media has brought about a voluminous range of controversies over their use. Accordingly, these tools have been described as double-edged sword, having both negative and positive effects on users. As to the negative ones, some people believe that using such means of communication would probably "*deteriorate users' social skills and the ability to communicate*" Ryan and Xenos (2011:12). In addition to this, users' privacy is threatened as their accounts are being breached. However, other understandings of social media are anchored in the belief that their use is limited to chatting with friends and playing games online only. Ryan and Xenos comment:

To the average user, a social network is a simple application that lives within our desktop or Web browser. It consists of a log-in page, a user account, a profile, and a bunch of games and tools to make the time we spend with our friends (Ryan and Xenos, *ibid.*).

Per contra, social networking, according to Ryan and Xenos (*ibid.*) provides "*rich communication*" by means of the myriad services such as pictures, audio-recordings, video-recordings, that can be easily exchanged among the members. Social Media refer to the websites that nurture a set of services to their users, including namely sharing things, liking other members' postings, and interacting with others. As the name social media indicates, these novel forms of

communication “*socialize*” online users with friends and people from different walks of life, most importantly.

It happens that people have cramped understandings of social media. Ergo, one is predisposed to hear people talking about Skype⁸², MSN⁸³, Twitter⁸⁴, and Facebook, to point to social media. Be that as it may, online media overshadows this to include miscellaneous websites such as “You Tube⁸⁵, Flickr⁸⁶, Wikis⁸⁷, chatrooms⁸⁸, game sites, blogs⁸⁹, and others. While social media display a set of services, other forms of websites provide information that can be read on the screen. Undoubtedly, technology has been a driving force as to the invention of devices and new neologies as well. Thus, the word social media can be used interchangeably with social networking, known as Web 2.0⁹⁰, since both of them allow users to construct their webpages⁹¹ and profiles; in the same way they accredit them to deconstruct them Obee (2008: 201).

⁸² **Skype:** “a software application and online service that enables voice and video phone calls over the Internet”. (Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/skype?s=t>).

⁸³ **MSN** is Microsoft Network that includes news, sports, entertainment and research platforms. (Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/47358/msn>).

⁸⁴ **Twitter:** It is a message broadcasting platform launched in 2006, which affords sending and receiving messages and texts. It had been designed to inform friends and colleagues along the day. (Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/57880/twitter>).

⁸⁵ **Youtube:** The most popular site on the Web for videos founded in 2005. It serves many utilities, including uploading videos and sharing them among friends, family and viewers. (Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/57119/youtube>).

⁸⁶ **Flickr** “An image hosting and video hosting website, web services suite and on-line community service” (Retrieved from <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/submission/6415/Flickr>).

⁸⁷ **Wiki** “a Web site that allows visitors to make changes, contributions, or corrections” (Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wikinoun> wi'ki \ 'wi-kē, 'wē-\).

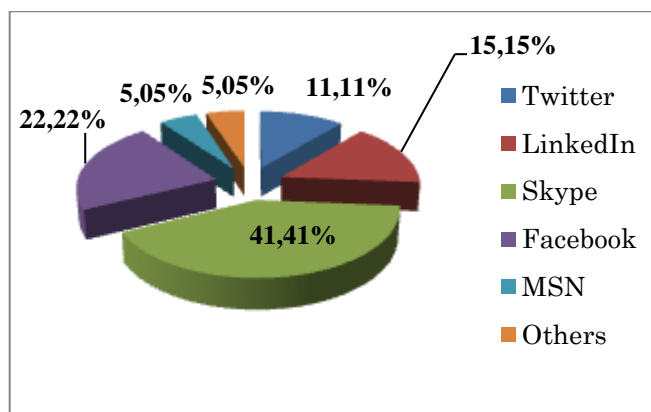
⁸⁸ This concept is defined in chapter one.

⁸⁹ This concept is defined in chapter one.

⁹⁰ **Web 2.0** It depicts the second wave of the World Wide Web. It is also called the New Internet. It is not a novel technology, but it refers to two major shifts: the first one relates to the users while the second one links to business domains (Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/56219/web-2-0>).

⁹¹ **Web-page** “A document on the World Wide Web, consisting of a hypertext file and any related files for scripts and graphics, and often hyperlinked to other documents on the Web”. (Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/webpage>).

The figure below showcases learners' use of social media. As it is shown, most of them use Skype and Facebook (**63, 63%**). Others use Twitter, LinkedIn⁹², and MSN. While the minority of them use other types of social media like Chatroulette⁹³ and Tagged:



Pie-Chart 2.4. Learners' Use of Social Media

2.4. Online Representations and Stereotypes

This part of the study is an attempt to draw a link between online representations and learners' development of negative attitudes towards the Other. It begins by analyzing online representations of, namely, the Arabs' image served via Internet services, and Westerners' images that are ideologically displayed within certain online platforms. It cavilingly sheds some light on particular online sites that learners of English access in doing their researches along other activities. Nevertheless, before deepening our analysis, some understandings of representations and stereotypes need to be elucidated.

⁹² **LinkedIn** This social networking site is mainly found on business grounds, since it allows the users to connect to their colleagues, look for jobs, and maintain business relationships (Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/60336/linkedin>).

⁹³ **chatroulette** "A live website where you connect with completely random strangers with a webcam and microphone" (Retrieved from <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=chatroulette>).

2.4.1. Some Understandings of Representations:

Baker (2007) highlights some cardinal aspects of media representations as he underscores the fact that online images , texts and information, though forsaken as being crystalline representations of reality, are" *someone's vision of it*". This claim accompanies the fact that those representations are subjected to many human variables such as thoughts and ideologies. Interestingly, media representation, unlike other types of it, is seductive and tempting. In this way, in media, as it percolates two divergent sides, "*place us at a remove from reality*". Baker maintains that:

Every time we encounter a media text, we are not seeing reality, but someone's version of it. This may seem like an obvious point, but it is something that is easily forgotten when we get caught up in enjoying a text..... The media place us at one remove from reality: they take something that is real, a person or an event and they change its form to produce whatever text we end up with. This is called mediation. You should be looking for this with any media text (Baker, *ibid.*).

Positively, there are multifarious forms of mediations and representations. Be that as it may, people are likely to be more cognizant of TV products' representations such as Films than others. As to the first category, people have ambient knowledge as to the divergent phases of film production, including acting, rehearsal, alternation, and all human agents who contribute to the film production. In connection with this, representation is operated by means of the knowledge persons develop or come up with as they watch the film. By contrast, news, that is hotbeds for representations and mediations, is profoundly persuasive since it penetrates persons' credibility. News is a spokesman of truth, one may argue; but in reality, it comes to be a mere form of mediation since, as clarified by Baker (*ibid*) "*...someone has decided that these are the few news items that are the most "newsworthy" and has chosen the shots that are used to tell the stories...*".

According to Baker (*ibid.*), mediation embodies of three elemental processes: selection, organisation, and focusing. Selection is the first step whereby the topic is chosen, its way of transmission and most importantly, the audience it targets.

Organisation is a debatable issue within the process of mediation since, according to some scholars, mediation is highly organised as compared to "*real life*", a mixture of organisation and chaos. Finally, focusing is charily fabricated for a studied audience since "*mediation always ends up with us*". Likewise, the interplay of the three processes is highly functional from selection to distribution. At the level of focusing, the audience is induced by miscellaneous means so as to delude and to guide persons' focus and attention to ponder about things and sidestep others. Under this spirit, Baker (ibid.) puts the following analogy forward: "*If you are walking through a field, you are unlikely to see a sign saying "look at this amazing tree."* You make your own decisions about what is worth our attention. The media text, through mediation, tries to do this for us". Ergo, the threat that any person can come across while watching a movie or surfing on the net emanates from the very nature of mediation that by means of its placidity, can delude any audience to blindly believe the mediated objects to be real. Baker (ibid.) warns us of the deluding nature of mediation as he comments "*all media texts involve mediation which you should train yourself to look for*". Therefore, representations turn to be one type of the miscellaneous forms of the mediation of reality. *Oxford English Dictionary* puts the following understandings of representation forward:

1- "*To represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal.....; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind*".

2- "*To represent also means to symbolise, stand for, to be a specimen of or to substitute for; as in the sentence, "In Christianity, the cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ."*

The understandings outlined above translucently indicate that representations are a set of processes that jumble various agents, including a representer, a message, and an audience. The first understanding embodies the fact that representations are highly efficacious since they typify a particular image about someone or something within the most susceptible place, the mind. In the second understanding, representations are a kind of model that serves as replacement of other existing patterns. Beyond shadow of a doubt, the common

feature that the two understandings pictures, is that representations via media are elemental agents instrumentalised for the "*business of describing things to us — they represent people and types of people to us so that we end up feeling that we know what they are like*" (Baker, *ibid.*).

Wagner (2013:12) maintains that communities have a kind of a shared identity that actually encapsulates a set of common meanings, what Durkheim (1897:77) calls "*collective representations*"⁹⁴. Nurtured by the long history of each community, including the cultural norms and the traditions, these communities prosper and undergo development. Howbeit, in the modern times, these social images have undergone noticeable metamorphoses due to the advent of technology and mass media. Thus, a new mode of representations has come to challenge the bygone cultural identities, as it diverges from the very stationary nature of Durkheim's concept of social representations. These new systems are surprisingly viral and permeable as to people's perception of the new world.

Hall (1997:121) maintains that representation is an ambivalent concept that triggers off two main distinguished meanings. The first meaning is "*to present*", "*to image*", "*to depict*" something. The second meaning triggers off the idea of something that is "*already there, and through the media, has been represented*". Representations, though, in most cases do not picture reality truly, represent us. Hall comments:

We probably don't say that very often these days; you may not think they represent us very well, but they're sort of *supposed* to represent us, and in that sense, they *stand in* for us. They are our representatives, and where we can't be, they can be. So the notion of something which images and depicts, and that which *stands in for* something else, both of those ideas are kind of brought together in the notion of representation (Hall, *ibid.*122).

⁹⁴ **Collective representations** are the set of ideas, beliefs, and values that result from the past activities of groups rather than certain individuals. These ideas are believed to be foments at their early stages by means of religious rituals. They contribute in making order and meaning of the world (Retrieved from http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/collective_representations.aspx).

Representations as a process operate at multifarious levels such as appearance, behaviour and prototypes. More important than this, these forms of manipulation influence the very nature of meaning itself before it reaches the audience. Cultural studies are noticeably involved in analyzing the differences between the meaning in reality and its distorted version delivered via media. However, the question of meaning is the source of the problem within representation, since meaning is bound to promiscuous variables, including the setting, the means available, and most importantly the agents who, by bringing divergent ideologies and conceptualization of the world, interpret the events differently, if not oppositely (Hall, *ibid.*). Under this spirit, representations should be understood as a mammoth process that vividly shapes events. In this sense, these forms of reality depiction are "*not an after-the event-activity*"; on the contrary, events stem their existential aspects from representation, and therefore an event "*has no fixed meaning, no real meaning in the obvious sense, until it has been represented*" (*ibid.*). Representations are a quintessential part of the events we are likely to encounter in our daily life, and hence, to use Hall's words, they are constitutive elements of a distorted reality.

Likewise, the context that shapes representations needs to be emphasized, including cultural, social, and historical backgrounds. Under this spirit, an understanding of representations would positively call upon the culture where they emerge and progress. Culture turns to be the primary element since "*Culture is a way in which we make sense of or give meaning to things of one sort or another*" (Hall, *ibid.*). In this sense, culture turns to be a uniting agent that, by means nurturing common understandings and interpretations of things, develops shared meanings and therefore makes sense of the whole world. Differently put, culture, as it brings about "*maps of meaning*", yokes people's visions of the world. Undoubtedly, culture "*is not just sort of the values and things which we happen to have been born into. It literally is the way without which we would find the world unintelligible*" (*ibid.*).

Representation is an intricate process that is affected and constructed by means of multifarious agents to serve miscellaneous objectives. Be that as it may, scholars identify three main views that jumble outstanding basis of

representations, known as reflective view, intentional view, and constructionist view. As to the reflective vista, advocates of it conjectured that reflective representations are cognitive since they form "*a replica*" of something that is fabricated. For instance, people usually have a given understanding of news which producers use to serve to the audience. By contrast, the intentional aspects of representations bottom on the agents who create them. Producers of such kind of representations intentionally alter some aspects of the idea they want to propagate and the things they want the audience to focus on at the expense of others. Baker (2007) comments: "*According to this theory, if you see a picture of an attractive person drinking a can of Coke in an advert, it will have the same meaning to you as the advertiser intended — go away and buy some!*" Constructivists' purviews about representation had been advanced as a reaction to the afore-mentioned understandings of the concept in question. Proponents of such a view sturdily argue that representations are not a process that can be confined to a mere view created by someone to picture reality in a given way, discarding persons' capacity to act upon representations captiously. On the contrary, representations are highly constructivist as they jumble representations themselves, the producers, the individuals, and most importantly, the social milieu (ibid.).

Incontestably, representations are supported by the social contexts that, to a great extent, pave the way for them to be efficacious and omnipresent. Representations take many forms, given the persons involved and the venue they befall in. Most importantly, they cannot disengage stereotypes, outlined in *Oxford English Dictionary* as: "*a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing*". These forms of thought come into being due to persons' attempt to simplify one's vision of something or somebody. Baker (ibid.) observes that stereotypes are "*natural*" activity that humans' mind is likely to produce, but what is worth noting are the sequels of these forms of representations that, if they do not lead to racist views about others, create unsolvable cultural conflicts.

Representations are par excellence a medium whereby ideologies are intrumentalised so as to meet the needs of a particular group of people at the expense of others. In media studies and representations' analysis, in particular,

talking about representations and ideology has become a boring platitude. What actually brings about heated debates, are the hegemonic and pluralistic traits of these forms of reality distortion. These two dichotomies explain two divergent ideological approaches to representations and media, more specifically. As to hegemonic representations, a given class, oftentimes the authoritarian class instrumentalises representations to juggle people's cultures and ideas in order to safeguard their own privileges. Hegemony noticeably differs from other kinds of dominance practices in its reliance on consensus rather than force. In such a way, manipulation permeates divergent kinds of media so as people, when they receive represented ideas, alter their views about the world, and hence develop a consensus that can match mighty class' needs. Within this vista, media purposefully smuggle their representations via "*normality*" that taken as normal behaviour, known as common sense. The latter would make people feel assured and therefore, do not question the ideas transmitted to them. Baker (ibid.) adds: "*you might think of it (hegemonic representation) as a kind of civil religion: a set of values that the majority of people subscribe to without thinking about it*".

The hegemonic view of media representation stresses the bans of the process in question. Incontestably, there are other perspectives to media that prioritize their boons. Pluralistic approaches to media representation emphasize the fact that media are so advantageous to human existence inasmuch as they are "*diverse, with a wide range of available choices for consumers*". Advocates of such a view postulate that people's consensus is the one that affects media representations. Thus, "*If particular representations are dominant, pluralists argue, it is because they are popular among the audience, not because powerful media institutions are 'pushing' a particular ideology*" (Baker, ibid.).

2.4.2. Some Understandings of Stereotypes

Stereotyping, it is momentous to note, is an inclusive process that, according to personality⁹⁵ theory, embraces knowledge, past experiences, categorization, prototyping, traits and modifications, to meet our fabricated expectations. Persons, oftentimes, judge others' behaviour hinging on their past experiences which are considered to be more 'truthful' than what the reality is likely to show, and a set of traits that *"exist more in the eye of the beholder than in reality"* (Baker, *ibid.*). In stereotyping, most importantly, persons do not share a standard common rule whereby they arbitrate things and beings; on the contrary, each one develops their own strategies and judgmental rules. Categorization is the next step in this process that stratifies people and things into groups to simplify one's perception. Likewise, all the previous phases pour into one organism known as a prototype, outlined as *"a set of linked traits which seem to us to go together, they form a pattern of connections"* (*ibid.*). Actually, prototypes differ from one person to another; given the fact each one brings their socio-cultural references into the field of representations. Generalisation cannot be disunited from the process of stereotyping as persons, when they come across some common traits, sturdily refer to the prototype they have in their minds, even if the thing or the being in front of them is remarkably different. Interestingly, persons who do the stereotyping are more likely to metamorphose many aspects of reality, given their contradiction with what they construe as a representative image of things and beings. More important than this, stereotyping is operated at the level of persons' minds where all forms of reality distortion take place. Unquestionably, media get the lion's share from this deluding process, as it beautifully and artfully distort truth its own way (*ibid.*).

⁹⁵**Personality theory:**

"A branch of psychology concerned with developing a scientifically defensible model or view of human—in the modern parlance, a general theory of behavior". (<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/personality+theory>).

Baker (ibid.) argues that stereotyping is an inescapable part of human existence, and hence teachers should be au courant of that as they plan and present cultural issues in classrooms. He adds:

If, for example, you were a teacher attempting to plan out a course which would be suitable for your class, you would need to work from the basis of a kind of stereotype of the needs of “typical” students. Having said this, even in cases where stereotypes are valuable like this, the good teacher would have then tried to go beyond the stereotype and looked for exceptions (Baker, ibid.).

Stereotyping is enhanced in today's technology-determined world. Media have a quintessential duty as to scattering these forms of representations to wider populations at an unchallenged speed. Positively, media take multifarious aspects into account when creating a stereotype, including appearance, behaviour, medium, and comparisons. Baker (ibid.) outlines the following touchstones in media stereotyping:

- ✓ *“Appearance — this can include physical appearance and clothing as well as the sound of the voice. e.g. “all teachers wear dreadful old clothes”.*
- ✓ *“Behaviour — typical things that people in this group might do. “Grannies like to knit”.*
- ✓ *“The stereotype is constructed in ways that fit the particular medium.”*
- ✓ *“There will always be a comparison whether real or imaginary with “normal” behaviour”.*

Media is one of the driving forces in scattering stereotypes over remote places and locations. However, media turn to have a set of bans and boons, most importantly. In relation to media's boons, Baker (ibid) postulates that they play a leading role in acting against ironclad stereotypes stored in persons' minds, as they develop a set of countertypes⁹⁶. In some films like *"Independence Day"*⁹⁷ and

⁹⁶ **Countertype** is “a positive stereotype and emphasizes the positive features about a person”. (Yourdictionary. com , accessed via <http://www.yourdictionary.com/countertype>.

*Mars Attacks*⁹⁸, the countertype is lucidly identified in the black actors who, usually represented in some stereotypes as "*criminals and animals*" , are countertyped as heroes who defend the sovereignty of the country they live in.

2.4.3. Methodological Framework

Dealing with cultural issues has always created problems for researchers, given the complexity of the concept studied. The advent of the Internet, though it abetted a lot in reducing distances among researchers and research participants, it made the study of culture more arduous as, in technological terms, one is likely to come across digital cultures⁹⁹ and online cultural identities. For this reason, this part of the study diversified its methodological tools so as when completed, it will hopefully pour in the stream of valid researches and studies that can enlighten some minds and initiate other future studies.

In this part, the most useful website used by learners of English will be analyzed from the vista of computer-mediated discourse analysis, with the emphasis on Western and European representations of different cultures. This section posits that these online platforms purposefully do not portray divergent cultures in the same way, mainly through the distortion of some susceptible parts of known cultures, and systematically the embellishment of their cultures and their allies'.

Beyond shadow of a doubt, the concept culture is rather an inclusive concept that depicts multifarious elements and behaviours, including technological boom, to boot. For such a reason, and since culture as a process cannot be encapsulated

⁹⁷ **Independence Day**: A film released in 1996 that recounts the story of the invasion of Alien Spaceship. The survivors after that invasion had been white American president (Pullman), an African-American fighter pilot (Smith) and a Jewish Computer genius (Goldblum) (Retrieved from Encyclopedia of science fiction http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/independence_day).

⁹⁸ **Mars Attacks**: A film released in 1996 based on Mars Attacks series. The Martians claimed that they "came for peace", the Martian ambassador then proceeds to slaughter the human greeting committee. The President restrains himself from counterattacking, reasoning that the disaster must have arisen from a cultural misunderstanding. These misunderstandings led to a war between the two races.(Retrieved from Encyclopedia of science fiction (http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/mars_attacks)).

⁹⁹ See **cyberculture** discussed in chapter one.

in this work, some aspects of cultures are going to be contrasted within online platforms, depicting ideological perspectives. These aspects are purposefully chosen since they are believed to be the pillars of any culture, and on which lot of controversies emanate, let alone their decisive roles in developing learners' negatives attitudes and stereotypes, that unquestionably obstruct the learning process. The following cultural aspects are going to be analyzed cross-culturally via Internet representations within the software Google¹⁰⁰:

- ✓ Religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism),
- ✓ behaviours,
- ✓ national identities, namely Arabs, European and Americans, Africans,
- ✓ customs and traditions.

2.4. 4. Online Representations of Abrahamic Religions

Positively, religions are among the issues that bring about debates and conflicts among people from heterogeneous cultures. Learners too, are prone to take part in this process within their online communities and language classrooms. Google is the website that all the learners that had been interviewed use in their studies and in doing research works, along other activities. It displays miscellaneous services for its users, including mainly web information, images, books and videos. However, for this part, only the images are going to be the source of data collection and analysis. The other services are displayed in the table below:

¹⁰⁰ **Google** is “*brand name of a leading Internet search engine, founded in 1998*” (Retrieved from Google ([http:// dictionary.reference.com/browse/google?s=t](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/google?s=t))).

Web	Images	Maps	Shopping
Actuality	Videos	Books	blogs
Flights	Discussion	Application	Brevet (patent¹⁰¹)
Others			

Table 2.3: Google Services

To reconnoiter the online representations of the Abrahamic religions, **100** images corresponding to each religion within the website Google had been researched. It is worth mentioning; however, that the data retrieved from the website had been collected by means of typing the concepts of Islam, Christianity and Judaism on Google research screen; no other descriptions had been added to those words in order not to influence the online data. Consequently, the information gathered from the online platform reflects the actual representations and stereotypes of the religions in question. But, before digging deeper into how the images represent the three religions, the significance of visual stereotyping needs to be explicated.

Unquestionably, human interaction bottoms on the speaking skill to a great extent. Nevertheless, visual appearances are also quintessential variables that cannot be boycotted within communicative settings. Static and dynamic aspects of visual appearance are said to influence individuals' behaviour and attitudes (Haake and Gulz, 2008:6). These physical aspects of human interactions are identified in settings whereby one deals with unconventional things and beings. In such a case, they are decisive in shaping persons' impressions and guiding the

¹⁰¹ **Patent** is software that enhances computer performance by means of a computer application. Among its various functions is the protection of abstract ideas that may have commercial value (Retrieved from Techno Pedia, from <http://www.techopedia.com/definition/22199/software-patent>).

interaction as a whole. Berscheid and Walster accentuate the significance of visual appearances as they state that:

....our appearance telegraphs more information about us than we would care to reveal on a battery of personality inventories, intelligence tests, and character scales. From flame-coloured hair through flat feet, few aspects of appearance fail to provide kernels of folk insight into another's nature (Berscheid and Walster, 1974:212).

Visual stereotypes are rooted in the term stereotype itself which describes '*a culturally shared socio-cognitive schema that summarizes our beliefs of other people and acting as a default setting in social perception processes*' (Haake and Gulz, 2008:8). In addition to the concept stereotype, visual ones are nurtured by visual traits which, by shaping a typical instance to be consumed, affect most of people's visions of the world at large. Visual input, according to (Haake and Gulz, *ibid.*) actuates expectations about persons' attitudes and behaviour. Interestingly, visual stereotypes embody the social baggage necessary for penetrating interactive processes. Smith and Medin (1981:66) stress their significance as they describe them as a social autopilot whose effective functions are identified in all kinds of human interactions.

Positively, what applies to stereotypes is even more accentuated when it comes to visual stereotypes, since both of them actually have deluding influences on the processes of meaning interpretation and representation. In defiance with the fact that these forms of reality distortion are cognitively created due to the frequency of events, interactions that individuals practise on a daily basis, and their experiences, they are statistical rather than real, and stratify them as mere preconceptions of what reality and its properties really are (Haake and Gulz, 2008:9). Additionally, visual stereotypes are to be highly functional as they establish prototypes that are taken as the standards for what is normal. Individuals, in this regard, make an analogy between the thing or the being they encounter and the stereotype they hold in their minds. Consequently, all

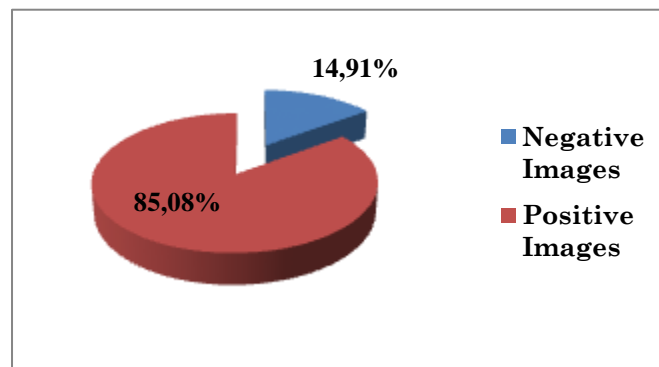
deviation from the static standard pours in the stream of oddness and abnormality.

The unlikeness between the effects of written texts on persons' perception of reality and pictures' lies in the rate of individuals' consciousness and chary exploration of either sources of mind manipulation. Seward (1997) articulates that *"visually the majority of us are still 'object-minded' and not 'relation-minded'... the language of vision determines, perhaps even more subtly and thoroughly than verbal language, the structure of our consciousness"*. As one reads texts, they are likely to question the author, the aim of the text and some other significant clues. In this way, readers cavilingly analyze what they read and receive as information. Per contra, as it comes to pictures humans have not been trained to evaluate images in the same analytical process they undergo in relation to written texts. Truly, they have learned to accept a picture or photograph for what it is (Sullivan, n.d.). Pictures, though they influence individuals' perception of reality more than other means, are eschewed.

Interestingly, studies on perception and cognition revealed that there is an undeniable affiliation between perception on the one hand, and emotions on the other. As to the mechanism of image processing, the human brain when analyzing images, it directly links them to emotions which end up in the stream of interpreting reality. Seward (1997) accentuates the fact that in going through such a process, the *'human brain has been taught to interpret the image as reality and react immediately with instinctive emotions'*. Likewise, manipulations of consents take manifold forms and instrumentalise divergent ways to reach the desired objectives. The perception of images, as it was argued, is tightly linked to two susceptible aspects of human beings: brain and emotions. As a matter of fact, the closer the image to reality, the less manipulative it will be for its consumers. In the opposite case, its effects will be patent as to brainwashing people's minds (Gross and Stewart ,2003). Adjustments on images are a common issue that can be noticed by every lay man, but there are some other ways that only a minority of intellectuals can penetrate their manipulative meaning. This embodies the image maker, artfully, making the viewer concentrate on a particular aspect of the image.

3.4. 4.1. Online Representations of Islam

As the graph below showcases, the number of positive photos about Islam outnumbers the ones that are negative. However, within the first category (positive images), most of the images are recurrent, displaying mosques and koranic verses. As to the second category, most of the images link Islam to terrorism, violence, and blood-thirsty activities:



Pie-Chart 2.5.: Positive and Negative Images about Islam in Google

Negative images in relation to Islam include connotations of terrorism, violence and aggression. Here are some examples:



Figure 2.5: Online Negative Representations of Islam (Retrieved from <http://www.google.fr/search?q=islam&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=pK3bUpmsHsqThgf8n4DQBg&ved=0CAcQAUoAQ&biw=1366&bih=667>)

Representations about Islam take multifarious forms, among which the threat to the West is the most frequent stereotype that Media and Internet in particular, do propagate and intensify. However, some scholars have been arguing against the mythological traits attributed to the targeted religion. Shadid and Van Koningsveld (2002: 4-5) vigorously accentuate the fact that the whole gossip about Islam is highly mythical for miscellaneous reasons. To begin with, there had been no proof of Muslims leading any terrorist actions in Western countries. By contrast, most of them are victimised by right-extremist groups'¹⁰² actions, as an attempt to force them to leave their country (Koningsveld and Shadid, *ibid.*122). Likewise, the fabricated set of concepts that mainly centre on the fact that Muslims cannot coexist with the natives subsidize the debated concept. This preconception, both scholars argue, is nurtured by reinforced stereotypes and prejudices and not factual events that can be objectively tested. Examples of these stereotypes embrace issues of veil and polygamy that vary and metamorphose within time and circumstances. Worse than this, the mythical identity attributed to Islam and its followers is subsidized by the argument that Muslims wherever they live, even if they live in a foreign country for a considerable time, remain loyal to their countries.

As to Halliday (1995:233), the whole idea of the threat of Islam is but an illusion manufactured to support ideological aims. The illusiveness of such a claim is so absurd that it cannot be believed. First, the Muslim world is far to be a unified world and hence, it is unable to confront the most powerful countries that are part of the West both economically and militarily. This issue has never been only a mythical set of stereotypes; all these ideas against these people pour in the stream of what Halliday (*ibid.*) calls anti-Muslimism¹⁰³, the movement that, if taken at face value, would appear freedom of expression, but deep down it

¹⁰² **Right-wing terrorism** are identified by the FBI as such since they are motivated by notions of white racial supremacy, as well as anti-government and anti-regulatory beliefs. They may also include extremist Christian groups. (Retrieved from <http://www.faqs.org/espionage/Te-Uk/Terrorism-Domestic-United-States.html>).

¹⁰³ **Anti-muslimism (Islamophobia):**

"In Psychology, it means *"hatred or fear of Muslims or of their politics or culture"* (<http://www.TheFreeDictionary.com/Anti-Muslim+sentiment>).

seeks Muslims and Islam. Vividly, it can be identified in all actions performed against Muslims worldwide.

While stereotypes against Islam multiply, scholars have not been as active as to provide balanced arguments that emanate from captious analysis of the whole story of Islam and the West. On the contrary, they abetted the creation and reinforcement of new stereotypes. Muños (1999: 5) articulates that the reason why studies about Islam and the West fail is because the West is taken as the touchstone in analyzing other cultures, including the Muslims'. Furthermore, these studies focus on the differences that demarcate between the two cultures and oversight the points of commonalities, and therefore stressing the unrivalled traits of the Western cultures. Be that as it may, even when making analogies, in most cases, they compare between unequal, if not opposing features. Hippler and Lueg comment:

[They] do not compare like with like: Christianity with Islam, or the realities of Europe with those of the Middle East. As a rule they are prone to comparing a religion (Islam) with a region (or society) (the west). And if you ask the wrong questions you do not get the right answers. (Hippler and Lueg, 1995: 156).

Some scholars argue that Islam has been stereotyped in a negative way due the use of religious backgrounds to serve political aims. The emanation of political Islam has been the sequel of “*the acts of violence of members of some extreme Muslim political movements, so called fundamentalist movements*” (Koningsveld and Shadid, 2002:136). Islam has been tightly related to most of the clashes and wars all over the world, including the Rushdie Affair¹⁰⁴ and the Algeria civil war¹⁰⁵. Muslims worldwide had been scathed, as all actions that took place within the Muslim countries had been subjectively connected to fundamentalism as being

¹⁰⁴ **Salman Rushdie** This issue relates to Ahmed Salman Rushdie (born 1947) whose work “*The Satanic Verses*” that earned him a death sentence from the Iranian Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (Retrieved from http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Salman_Rushdie.aspx).

¹⁰⁵ **Algerian Civil War:** Algerian Civil War (1992-1999) was between Islamist groups and the established secular parties, headed by FLN. (Retrieved from http://looklex.com/e.o/algerian_civil_war.htm).

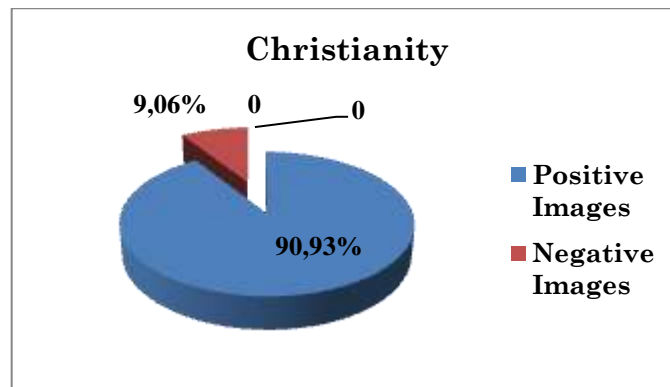
the feature of Muslims¹⁰⁶. As to the emergence of political Islam, two vistas have been identified in the research landscape: ethnocentrists and cultural relativists¹⁰⁷. As to the former, political Islam is nurtured by the religion solely, and that other factors such as the status quo of politics and economy all together with society are trivial as to the issue discussed. Some others argue that Islam is “*the dominant ideology in the Muslim world and that it is a rigid, immutable system which is incompatible with modernism.*” As to the latter, advocates of such a panorama thoroughly hold to the belief that Islam has never been a reason for the unbearable political clashes. Per contra, “*some aspects of Islam have made it very suitable as an instrument for correcting existing social, economic, and political inequalities in the societies concerned*”. (Koningsveld and Shadid, *ibid.*).

3.4. 4.2. Online Representations of Christianity

As to the religion of Christianity, most of the images retrieved from the Internet depict this religion positively. The positive images centre on the notion Jesus Christ’s suffering as he was crucified. These representations that are presented via images of the Cross, Mary, and the Bible target propagating the essence of Christianity that hinges on sacrifice, love and salvation. As the negative images, most of them relate to some jokes about the religion. It is momentous to note that there was no single image that epitomised the religion or even the Christians as aggressive or violent people. Per contra, the images that are available in the Net serve a positive distorted reality, an ideal immaculate picture about the target concept. The figure below showcases the online representation of Christianity:

¹⁰⁶ **Online Dictionary .com** offer the following definition to fundamentalism “*a strict adherence to any set of basic ideas or principles: the fundamentalism of the extreme conservatives*”. However, in the Western discourse, it designates Muslims only.

¹⁰⁷ **Cultural Relativism** This is an approach that hinges on objective grounds in analyzing others’ behaviour and norms, since it interprets others’ behaviors in the light of their motives, habits and values if. Cultural relativism outlines the fact that the function and meaning of a trait are relative to its cultural setting (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/basic-concepts/Cultural-Relativism.php>).



Pie-Chart 2.6. Positive and Negative Images about Christianity

Some of the images that illustrate the online representation of Christianity are provided below:

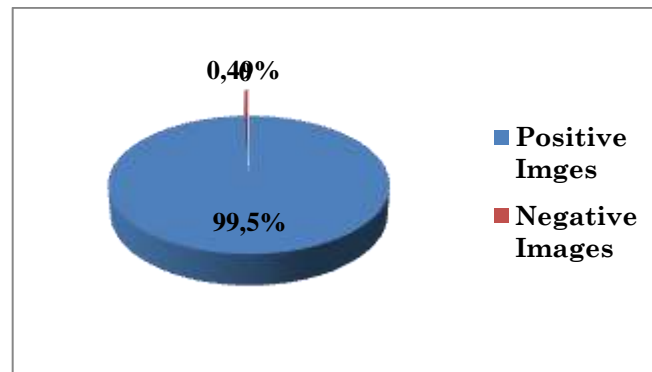


Figure 2.6 Online Representation of Christianity (Retrieved from http://www.google.fr/search?q=jews&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=B5jbUvLHAYiohAfwxIG4Dw&ved=0CAcQ_AUoAQ&biw=1366&bih=631#q=christianity&tbm=isch)

3.4. 4.3. Representations of Judaism Online

The figure below showcases that the negative images about Judaism are almost absent (0, 49%). The majority of the images are positive. Lucidly, the graph below indicates Internet's chauvinistic treatment of the Abrahamic religions. The representations that these images serve to any Internet user do not depict the religion only, but the whole nation most importantly. Most of them depict the Jews as worshipers and peace-seeking people. While other pictures,

limn some national and religious symbols such as the Star of David, known in Hebrew as “*the Shield of David*”¹⁰⁸. As to the rare negative images, they are related to some Jokes. It is important to note that among 100 images, none had related Judaism to violent activities and terroristic actions.



Pie-Chart 2.7: Positive and Negative Images about Judaism

Here are some images that illuminate the online representations of Judaism:



Figure 2.7.: Online Representations of Judaism (Retrieved from http://www.google.dz/search?q=Judaism&noj=1&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=JrGBU76GLcvB0gWv5IGACw&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAQ&biw=1366&bih=631)

¹⁰⁸ **Star of David** (“Shield of David), is Jewish symbol composed of two overlaid equilateral triangles that form a six-pointed star.” (Retrieved from [http:// www. Britannica .com/EBchecked/ topic /152589/ Star-of-David](http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/152589/Star-of-David)).

In the bygone centuries, the image of the Jews that was propagated all over the world was not that bright. Indubitably, there were miscellaneous reasons that poured in the stream of negative the descriptions of these people¹⁰⁹. The most prevalent one, however, was nurtured by religious backgrounds where Christianity lucidly stated that the Jews were the ones who crucified Jesus Christ. This brought about the stereotype of the Jews as cruel and merciless people, the stereotype that had been fomented by Christians' hatred for the Jews (Lester, 1995). The religious aspects of Jews' stereotypes had been subsidized as Judaism lucidly indicated the superiority of the Jews and the inferiority of the other races. The other races, according to this some interpretations of this religion, are animals and incomplete human being, whom any Jew has the total freedom to kill (Kaidy, 1993). Suleiman articulates:

There was not possible way to reconcile between the Jews and the others in the light of these religious teachings. The distorted Jewish teachings permit the Jew to commit all kinds of crimes against the other human beings ...given the circumstance they go through (Suleiman, 2003:231).

The financial and the economic traits affiliated to the Jewish race had been of significance as to shaping the stereotype of the Jew who is known for unethical practices and greed. The Jews throughout the world and in Europe in particular, had been known for their love for money. Most of their businesses had hinged on the mantra "*the aim justifies the means*¹¹⁰". The immediate sequel of such money-loving souls had been manifested in all kinds of unethical practices the Jews employed to commerce in all kinds of goods, no matter legal or forbidden. The Jews had been described as corrupt and betraying people in Europe and in Germany, in particular (Shaheen, 1984). Likewise, the Jews had been categorised as part of the black community, simply because the European mind had been locked within the vicious circle of racism as an attempt to exclude the Jews from the white community, claimed to be purely Christian European.

¹⁰⁹ The depiction of the Jewish race has nothing to do with the our personal views; they reflect the views of the cited authors.

¹¹⁰ This saying is attributed to Machiavelli, which means that one can use all the possible means at hand to reach their aims and goals.

Likewise, the European mentality in the bygone centuries considered that bad behaviour and negative attitudes were mainly characteristics of all other races but the whites'. More than this, they believed that all that was not white was definitely black. (Suleiman, 2003: 235). However, now, the potential of any talk about the negative stereotypes of the Jews is low. Suleiman articulates:

Even though, the negative stereotype disappeared completely. None dares to mention some of its characteristics nor to use it in explaining the events. None in America and Europe dare do any work or action that points to the hatred of the Jews or their disregard. The most dangerous issue is that instead of the negative stereotypes with which the Jews were known, new positive stereotypes replaced them. (Suleiman, *ibid.*).

The reasons why the image of the Jews had been positively metamorphosed obligates the intervention of studies in manifold fields and disciplines. Nonetheless, the media and the way they influenced the international views about this race, are worth discussing. The paradoxical issue in relation to the Jewish image in modern times relates to the fact that, all of a sudden, the Europeans forgot the worst traits they used to attribute to the Jews over the long past centuries, and that in the mid of the twentieth century, they regretted the fact that they mistreated this race. More than this, the Europeans become conscious of the fact that the Jewish race would require an apology and an oath to be protected all over the world (Suleiman, 2003:237). But, how do they have such a feeling towards the Jews in that particular time? Why did not they regret what they did to the Muslims, the Arabs and worst of all, the Africans?

From a historical vista, Napoleon's conquest of Egypt is a good example whereby the Jews had been encouraged to join the French troops so as to construct their nation in Egypt. Howbeit, the defeat of Napoleon stood against the Jewish plan. Not only did the Jews partake in the colonial activity, but they were active agents in instigating European countries to do their colonial expansions. In such a way they ended as kingmakers as far as European colonial policy was concerned. Inconvertibly, the mutual profits were easy to identify in

the European-Jewish relationship. As the European took advantage of the presence of the Jews in the East, the Jews took advantage of the European colonial power as well (Suleiman, *ibid.*).

The Cold War had brought about another powerful partner to the Jews: the American who, in the previous time, used to hate them due to the spurt in the Jewish immigration to the New World. The Jews had been used so as to contain the Soviet expansion all over the world (Edmund, 1983). The Jewish state in the Middle East became a strategic point for the American ideology and therefore, all kinds of media during the 1847 were employed to support the right of the Jews for a sovereign state. It is well known that European and American media alike do not hinge on the government they operate within. On the contrary, these media are known to be the adversary for the governments themselves, according to the liberal perspectives. The question that can be asked within this prospect, is how come that these forms media change their opponent perspectives to become advocates of the Israeli interest? Suleiman argues:

The American media propagated the most important feature of the new Jews' image that Israel is the most important strategic American properties. The propagation of these ideas had been so ubiquitous that they had become unarguable. (Suleiman, *ibid.*239).

The religious aspects that had once contributed to the propagation of the negative ideas about the Jews as those who were the responsible people for crucifying Jesus the Christ, had been used to praise their race lucidly . The Jews had digested this fact and therefore knew that the positive image could be possible only if the Christian teachings were altered. Hence, the Jews were believed to be active agents in transforming Europe into secular continent as they optimised their efforts so as to keep those priests who were attached to the old versions of the Bible away from the religious novel scene. In addition to this, they were aware of the fact that the religion that once was spreading negative views about them could be bridled so as to serve their interests¹¹¹. The sequel of

¹¹¹ **Suleiman** believes that the Jews distorted some versions of the Bible to serve their interests.

all this had been displayed in a change they brought to the teaching methods used in the Sunday Protestant Schools¹¹². The new religious information that had been served to the learners centred mainly on the following points (Suleiman, *ibid.* 242):

- The Jews are God's chosen people and that Palestine is the Promised Land for the all the Jews;
- the crucifying of Jesus Christ had been attached the Roman government;
- the focus on the fact that Jesus Christ was a Jew.

The most significant reasons that led to the American media to have chauvinistic views as to the Israelis' poor conditions were nurtured within the Christian culture. American Christians believe that the Jews have all the rights to dwell in their land, according to the Bible. They see that an ethical process that they are ready body and soul to realise. Suleiman, (*ibid.*) adds that this Western Christian culture constructs the journalists' views about all the events.

The spread of the new ideology that supports the interests of the Jews worldwide had been galvanized by manifold means, including TV and radio programmes such as CBN¹¹³, created by Pat Robertson, often known as “*the most dangerous man in the world*”. CBN had broadcasted distorted news to America and to the Middle East, especially during the Israeli's occupation of Lebanon¹¹⁴.

¹¹² **Sabbath Schools:** *Thes schools date back to the past centuries, namely the 19th century . These schools were to instruct children* The only instruction that the Jewish child had received was in the Hebrew disciplines, Bible, Mishnah, Talmud, and the like. It was only by. The closing quarter of the eighteenth century witnessed the establishment in Germany of schools for Jewish children in which secular subjects were taught in addition to the Hebrew branches.(Retrieved from <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12965-sabbath-schools>).

¹¹³ **The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc. (CBN)** “*is a nonprofit organization devoted to spreading the Christian Gospel internationally through mass media, education, and humanitarian efforts*” (Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2845600028.html>)

¹¹⁴ **Lebanon war 1982**It is considered as the most significant intervention of Israel in Lebanon. This intervention took place by 1962 (retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/334152/Lebanon/279120/Civil-war>).

In addition to this, this media enterprise disposes a university and aid services worldwide. Robertson's philosophy hinged on the belief that Israel was "*God's Favoured Nation*". Lucidly and cogently, he used the media enterprise to spread these ideas, in various programme, namely 700 Club¹¹⁵ broadcasted in 130 TV channels. More than this, he candidly propagated claims about Muslims and Arabs as enemies of God, since they come in the way of God's will of the establishment of the Israeli state, and as such they delay the resurrection of Jesus Christ ¹¹⁶(Sammak, 1995:23).

Another leading figure in the positive change that the image of the Jews has undergone related to *Jerry Falwell*¹¹⁷, the one who supported the claim that opposing Israel meant opposing God , and that God praised those who praised it and cursed those who cursed it . To spread such ideas, Falwell animated a TV show called "*Old Time Gospel Hour*"¹¹⁸. More than this, he took advantage of the events of the 11th September, 2001 to propagate his claim summarized in the fact that the Jews are the chosen people, and to clearly attack the Muslims as he described their prophet a terrorist (Suleiman, 2003: 247). Howbeit, the coming of the eighties shaped the novel positive image of the Jews when the Western civilization had been attached to Jewish roots to be called "Judo- Christian Civilization".

¹¹⁵ **The 700 Club** is a religious television programme that broadcasted some Christian teachings (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/676491/The-700-Club>).

¹¹⁶ **Resurrection** is epitomizes the rising again from the dead, the resumption of life. In the Christian faith, the main sources which directly attest the fact of Christ's Resurrection are the Four Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. (Retrieved from , The Original Catholoic Encyclopedia ,<http://oce.catholic.com/index.php?title=Resurrection>).

¹¹⁷ **Falwell, Jerry Lamom** " American fundamentalist Baptist, a popular preacher and founder of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Falwell began (1968) his services on television on a programme that was later named The Old Times Gospel Hour. Retrieved from <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Falwell,+Jerry+Lamon>).

¹¹⁸ **Old-Time Gospel Hour** "*An American radio programme broadcasted by 1956 by Falwell.*" (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1347764/Old-Time-Gospel-Hour>).

The Second World War had been among the bloodiest wars in the history of humanity. More than forty million people lost their lives, including people from all religions and races. Be that as it may, media had been lucidly biased towards some races in their propagation of some aspects and omission of others. Among all the races that had been victimised in such a war, were the Jews who got their share from spreading remorse via all sorts of media in the spirits of human mankind. Suleiman comments:

.... All the victims of the Second World War had been forgotten as they did not get even the right to have their real number published. However, the Jewish victims got an important position in history since they had been supported by powerful media that transformed them a means to torture European, American and Christian peoples' consciousness (Suleiman, *ibid*: 250).

The aftermath of the Second World War witnessed the emergence of the affective Jewish concept of the Holocaust to generate feelings of remorse and bitterness in relation the world view. This strategy had been central in transforming the Jews' negative image into the emotional pitying image. Here, the role played by European and American media had been quintessential in propagating those heart-breaking notions about the extermination of the waned race. Ergo, the Holocaust had become a lucrative industry as the Jews controlled the American cinema whereby hundreds of films that centred on the Holocaust were produced in Hollywood. Howbeit, there had been several studies that inspected the very nature of the Holocaust. The inception of such studies emanated in France when the researcher Henry Fakh¹¹⁹ submitted a Doctorate thesis, where he tackled the issue of the exaggeration as to Jews' torture during the War. He affirmed that the Holocaust was but an ideology used to picture Israel as the victim that needed worldly protection (cited in Suleiman, 2003: 255).

¹¹⁹ It is claimed that Henry got his Doctorate degree. However, after some time, the French university deprived him of his degree, after being obliged by some Jews (Hwidi, F :1994).

The other version of the ideology of the Holocaust was practised under the taboo of anti-Semitism,¹²⁰ where the Jews considered any information against this race to be systematically against Semitism. In relation to this idea, the freedom of the American and the European media had been questioned, given the fact they were not free to chastise the Holocaust, or worse than this, to reveal the crimes committed against the human race worldwide. The taboo of anti-Semitism was lucidly identifiable as to the oppression of the journalists who, according to Norman Solomon, had been targeted so as to have utter control over the whole media enterprise (cited in *ibid.* 264).¹²¹

The Jews had been cognizant of the significance of information distribution and management as early as the nineteenth century. They considered that journalism equals the value of gold. This awareness had been reified as some claims suggest that the Jews control most of the American media. This presumption is denied by (Edmund, 1983). Per contra, he confirms the fact that the most famous and significant American newspapers are owned by Jewish families. Undoubtedly, the two arguments put forward by him are contradictory, claims Suleiman (*ibid.*:288), since the first one deprives the Jews of any media manipulation, while the second one affirms the fact that the production of news is mediated by the Jews' lens before they are served to the public. Additionally, there are some facts that cannot be the outcome of coincidence. Positively, most of the famous American networks are managed by Jews: NBC run by David Sarnoff¹²², CBS run by William Bali¹²³, and ABC run by Leonard Goldenson¹²⁴.

¹²⁰ **Anti-Semitism** represents a kind of hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious or racial group. The term *anti-Semitism* goes back to 1879, the time when the German agitator Wilhelm Marr to designate the anti-Jewish campaigns under way in central Europe at that time. (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/27646/anti-Semitism>).

¹²¹ Solomon points to the fact that he was accused of anti-Semitism for the simple reason that he signalled the American media bias towards Israel. He adds that the American Journalists became aware of the fact that any criticism directed towards the Jews could threaten their careers. (cited in Suleiman, S. 2003: 264).

¹²² **National Broadcasting Company** was the first full-service radio network in the U.S. This company supports television services to affiliated TV Stations, produces TV and radio programmes and operates seven TV stations Retrieved from ([http://www. Encyclopedia .com / topic/ National_ Broadcasting_Company_Inc.aspx](http://www.Encyclopedia.com/topic/National_Broadcasting_Company_Inc.aspx)).

¹²³ **CBS Corporation**, (1928–74) formerly known as Columbia Broadcasting System and CBS Inc. It is a major American mass-media company that operates the CBS

Admittedly, the Jewish media power cannot be measured by means of the number of the newspapers they possess, but this mightiness can be proved by the significance of the newspapers, discarding any quantitative consideration. The Jews are believed to manage the most important and influential newspapers in America, including “*The New York Times*¹²⁵ and *Washington Post*¹²⁶. Truly, these are touchstones as far as other Western newspapers are concerned. In other words, these two newspapers are believed to programme the agendas to the rest of the newspapers.

The advent of media had been an advantage as to transforming the image of the Jews from cheaters and corrupt people into victims. Cinema and the production of films had come to affirm the new image that anyone, they like it or not, should believe. (Edmund, 1983) claims that Hollywood is owned and run by the Jews, as 60 percent of the higher positions within this company are occupied by them. Moreover, in 1995, the number of film productions that the Jews controlled reached 74 percent of the whole American film production. All these films describe the Jews as loving, affectionate and generous people. The main actors, when they are Jews, hold the name and the reputation of the good guy who does all it takes to rescue the humanity. This confirms the fact that nowadays, the Jews have created their “*own America*”, stated Nill Jablre in his book “*Their Empire*” (cited in Edmund, *ibid.*). As they controlled the American media, the Jews manipulate the American opinion. Lichter and Robert comment:

national radio and television networks. (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/100876/CBS-Corporation>).

¹²⁴ **Goldenson** managed the ABC in (1953). Retrieved from <http://www.hawaiiilibrary.net/article/whebn0002046775/leonard%20goldenson>).

¹²⁵ **The New York Times** is a morning daily newspaper published in New York City. It is one of the world's great newspapers. Its strength is in its editorial excellence. (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/412546/The-New-York-Times>).

¹²⁶ **The Washington Post**, morning daily newspaper published in Washington, D.C., the dominant newspaper in the U.S. capital and usually counted as one of the greatest newspapers in that country. Retrieved from (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/636526/The-Washington-Post>).

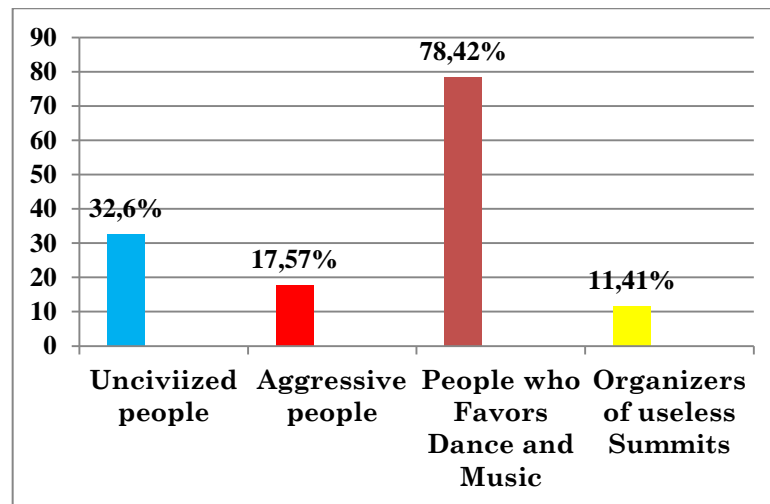
The Jews have become the ones who produce and manipulate the American public opinion. Consequently, they possessed a huge power. This power reaches every American house and therefore shapes the brains of every single American.....The Jews control the coverage of all the events worldwide and hence news' consumers get what these groups filter as appropriate to their nation. (Lichter and Robert, 1981).

2.4.5. Online Representations of the Arabs, the Africans, and the Westerners

2.4.5.1. Arabs' Online Representations

100 pictures which represent the Arabs online had been retrieved from the Internet (via Google image). They have been classified in the categories mentioned below¹²⁷. The analysis conducted had focused on the topics and the themes these pictures share in common, in addition to the negative as well as the positive connotations they trigger off. The graph below elucidates the common stereotypes of the Arabs identified in the love of music, dance and fan. Under this spirit, the pictures depict different music TV shows and miscellaneous parties organized within the Arab world. The other negative stereotype that is gelled to the Arabs relates to the daily conflicts and the demonstrations that are accompanied with clashes in the Arab world. The stereotype, within this vista, stands for the Arabs as aggressive and uncivilized people. Last but not least, some pictures represent the Arabs as organizers of useless summits. The graph below clarifies the point:

¹²⁷ Here too, we typed the word "Arabs" with no specification as to orienting the research towards implicit aims. Neutrality had been an ethical issue on which this research bottoms on.



Bar Graph 2. 1: Arabs' Online Representations

2.4.5.1.1 .Representations of the Arabs in the Wikipedia

The technological caprice that the world has witnessed during the bygone years has certainly led to an amelioration of human life conditions, as it shortened distances and united nations. Ridouani (2011) speculates that the understanding of technology should be illustrative of how new devices are invented to better human life qualities. He states " *technology, generally speaking , is the set of the dynamic and developed tools, or the group of strategies or the knowledge, that are supposed to have the capacity to solve humans' complex interlaced problems that make out human's life framework.*" Positively, the "new revolution's boons that hinge on information distribution and management, to a great extent, are not cast aside. Per contra, the bans of such a metamorphosis whose danger does not lie in the nature of the change, but rather in who manipulates and controls it, should be taken seriously. Ridouani (ibid.) explains the danger of the new flow of information distribution as he stated that information producers " *reach some personal aims by means of spreading some ready-made knowledge products, and to brainwash human's minds to control and exploit them to attain some economic, political, and ideological aims*" (ibid.).

Information change is peculiar in terms of its effects, since it does not target material cultural artefacts that conventional colonial powers were skilful in doing. Worse than this, the strength of such a power lies in its ability to manage cultures, what Ridouani (ibid.) calls " *cultural control*". Ergo, under the mantra of informing and educating different categories of people, media alter susceptible cultural aspects, including people's traditions and customs, if not their shared belief systems. In the 21st century, powerful nations do not refer to political and military powers to control other waned countries, but information management and distribution has become the mightiest means of manipulation. Ridouani (ibid.) firmly posits that the West wisely use information management and distribution to breach political, economic, and cultural systems by means of propagating its representation-laden ideals. Ridouani (ibid.) pinpoints to the fact that "*owners of information*" are those who produce the information, depicting a virtual reality and more importantly, juggling the receivers' views. He showcases this phenomenon as he depicts the manipulative role of television on persons' cultures, stating that:

In most cases, one may think that what they see is right, even more important than the real truthMedia not only do they help their users to do things easily and afford them comfort, but they produce new cultures for them, affecting their behaviour from different perspectives, including their daily programmes, and alter persons' vision and taste about divergent life angles, even worse than this, they control them completely since they decide for them what is right and what is wrong. Hollywood, for instance, does not produce films only, but it creates power and privilege as it contributes in highlighting the image of good and evil in many strategic situations (Ridouani, ibid.).

Beyond shadow of a doubt, Internet affords myriad services for its users, since it nurtures the process of information management and distribution worldwide. Some proponents of Internet use argue that it is the most suitable venue for a balanced practice of democracy as it opens, using Ridouani's statement, "*an open parliament that gives the chance for many users to give their views and participate in decisions' making*". Yet, the other side of the story is not that promising, since internet critics are dubious about the authenticity of justice and democracy in

these virtual platforms. Ridouani (ibid.) claims that " *the dream of spreading justice does not mean that it will be achieved by means of owning these information tools, because the difference between the producers of information and its consumers remains very big.* Ridouani (ibid.) sees this information metamorphosis as a danger for those societies that do not produce the information. This revolution that emanates from Western sources, is even more threatening than one may think as it probably *excise all the intellectual, cultural, and religious foundations within waned nations and thereby transforming them into "an electronic herd that consumes what the other nations produce"* (ibid.).

Graham (2011) articulates that online platforms are not «ideal" venues of equality and understandings, as one may think. On the contrary, these spheres are more racist than physical settings, since there "*are obvious gaps in access to the Internet, particularly the participation gap between those who have their say, and those whose voices are pushed to the sideline.*" He (ibid.) supplemented that Internet had shortened distances and fomented interactions worldwide, but some cultures, namely the Middle East and the North African cultures, are not that "*presented*" in websites as compared to Western cultures. Graham (ibid.) grounded his study on the findings he retrieved from Wikipedia. The latter, he speculates, is an appropriate avenue whereby one can lucidly identify all sides of Internet use, particularly the boons related to the "*increase of participation for all people*" and the marginalization and the inaction of unbalanced power practices. More important than this, Wikipedia is represented as an informative website to common people, but for cultural studies scholars and computer mediated communication researchers, this site is politically loaded with intentions and wills. Graham outlines the chauvinistic features of the Wikipedia as he commented:

Because the underlying political, geographic and social structures of Wikipedia are hidden from users, and because there have not been any large scale studies of the geography of these structures and their relationship to online participation, groups of people may be marginalized without their knowledge (Graham, ibid.).

Here is another stereotypical online representation of the Arabs online:

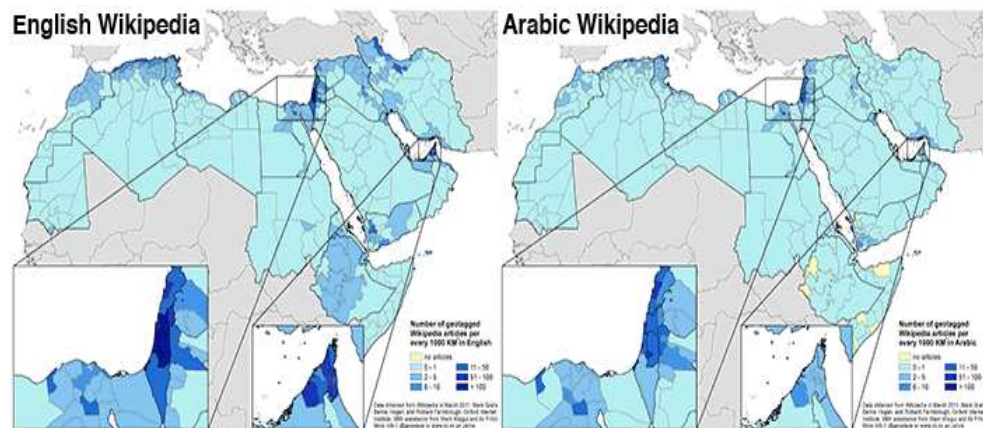


Figure 2.8. : English and Arabic's Representation in Wikipedia
(Graham, 2011, retrieved from <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/projects/?id=70>)

The figure above typifies the locus of both of English and Arabic languages in a set of articles retrieved from Wikipedia in 2011. Diaphanously, the maps are a kind of representations that locate both languages within some places, like the Middle East and disregard others, namely North Africa. According to Graham (ibid.), these representations “are being determined by outsiders with a potential misunderstanding of the significance of local events, sites of interest and historical figures”.

Media, in the light of the arguments provided above, have never been a neutral source of information. Unquestionably, these means are useful tools for research developments and studies to be carried out. But, the other seamy side reveals a dark perspective that cannot be denied. Among the quintessential aspects of media is that they influence morals, values, if not an utter view about the whole world. They “direct and orient one’s feelings and thoughts and dictate to one who one “may abhor”, who “may sympathize” with, who “may trust”, and who “may have misgivings about” (Ridouani, 2011). Media representations are distinguished from the other types of forms of thoughts in their recurrence of images, ideas, news, etc. In such a way,

their thoughts *will be «mythologized»*. Thus, when one seeks truth, they are not that afraid of the set of the lies they come across, but they are more frightened to deal with myths. Shaheen (1990:12) uses the following quotation by President John Fitzgerald Kennedy¹²⁸ to explain the point: *“The great enemy of truth is very often not the lie, deliberate, contrived and dishonest, but the myth, persistent, persuasive and realistic.”* The myth that media propagate describes the Arabs as people who *“live in mythical kingdoms of endless desert dotted with oil wells, tents, run-down mosques, palaces, goats, and camels”*(Ridouani, *ibid*).

Truly, the Arabs' representations by the West are not a novel issue to be addressed in media studies. On the contrary, the stereotypical relationships among the two cultures had accompanied the very contact between the Arabs and the Westerners over the bygone times. Now, with the advent of miscellaneous types of media, these distortions of reality are even ubiquitous as far as divergent locations are concerned, in most cases with West representing the Arabs as *«Other»* or *“Enemy”*. Here, a Western representation of Islam limpidly explains the idea:

The term Islam as it is used today seems to mean one simple thing, but in fact is part fiction, part ideological label, part minimal designation of a religion called Islam. Today Islam is peculiarly traumatic news in the West. During the past few years, especially since events in Iran caught European and American attention so strongly, the media have therefore covered Islam: they have portrayed it, characterized it, analyzed it, given instant courses on it, and consequently they have made it known. But this coverage is misleadingly full, and a great deal in this energetic coverage is based on far from objective material. In many instances Islam has licensed not only patent inaccuracy, but also expressions of unrestrained ethnocentrism, cultural, and even racial hatred, deep yet paradoxically free-floating hostility (Edward Said, 2003).

¹²⁸ **John F. Kennedy**, (John Fitzgerald Kennedy), was 35th president of the United States (1961–63), who witnessed number of foreign crises, especially in Cuba and Berlin . He was assassinated while riding in a motorcade in Dallas (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/314791/John-F-Kennedy>).

The Western descriptions of the Arabs via a set of stereotypes have gone through distinguished processes due to a set of events that charted the streams of representations. Ridouani (2011) observes that the "*stereotypical images of Arabs and Muslims are intact; the sole difference between the past and the present lies chiefly in the means and not in the content*". Interestingly, the Arabs in the bygone centuries, had been described in literary works as " *erotic, primitive, ignorant, and slave trader*"; however, with the advent of technology and the emergence of media of all kinds, new labels had been well designed. Today, we are more likely to come across names such as "*terrorist*", "*fundamentalist*" and "*blood-thirsty*". Shaheen observes that:

Research verifies that lurid and insidious depictions of Arabs are staple fare. The Arab Muslim continues to surface as the threatening cultural "Other." As John Esposito says, "Fear of the Green Menace [green being the colour of Islam] may well replace that of the Red Menace of world communism. . . . Islam is often equated with holy war and hatred, fanaticism and violence, intolerance and the oppression of women. (Shaheen, 1990:12).

The Westerners are not the only ones who represent the Arabs and Islam, in particular as a threat; the Europeans too, have such a representation of the Arab world, a world that is a hotbed for menace and instability. And, to operate against such a danger, Westerners and Europeans instrumentalise all the tools at hand, including media, to do what they call "*defending themselves*" (Ridouani,2011). Additionally, in media most importantly, the image of all that is Arab is related to bad values and atrocious behaviours grouped in one category described as "*barbaric, uncivilized, and anti-democratic*". Moreover, the Arabs are categorized in one static frame of representations. Thus, Arabs' representations in media do not take the diversities within the Arab world, a diversity that permeates cultures, religions, traditions and ways of thinking and acting. Arabs are scapegoated for things that they are accused of, and hence they are victimized within a complex world veiled by media manipulators. The Western process of generalization is clarified by Shaheen's comment:

Muslims are lumped together and our expectations are based more on stereotyping than on empirical research, according to Esposito. All too often the "coverage of Islam and the Muslim world concludes there is a monolithic Islam out there somewhere, believing, feeling, thinking and acting as one." The stereotypical Muslim presented to Americans resembles Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, Libya's Moammar Gadhafi, or Iraq's Saddam Hussein; the imagery "has profoundly affected American perceptions of Islam and the Middle East (Shaheen, 1990: 12).

Undoubtedly, the distorted images about the Arabs are rooted in miscellaneous ideological grounds. In some cases, Westerners are likely to distort some religious concepts so as to mislead, if not to draw the attention of people worldwide so as to justify their actions under the mantra of " *acting against terroritic plans*". Among these concepts used to mislead the world consent, Ridouani (ibid) mentions fundamentalism whose dictionary understanding is as follows: "*In Christianity (esp. among certain Protestant sects) the belief that every word of the Bible is divinely inspired and therefore true_* (Online dictionary. com). However, the same source outlines the same concept differently, given the occurrence of the word Islam ". Thus, in "*Islam a_movement favouring strict_observance of the teachings of the Koran and Islamic law strict adherence to the fundamental principles of any set of beliefs*" (ibid.). Under such circumstances "*fundamentalism is stripped from its literal meaning and granted a pejorative one, connoting mainly extremism and terrorism* (ibid.). This is not the end of the story, since even the Orient's culture is damaged and transformed into modelled clay, shaped and reshaped in favour of a set of ideological representations. For instance, clothing, in most cases, religious clothing has been represented as terrorist disguise. These clothes, which are tailored terroristic connotations, embrace mainly the veil, and the turban that symbolizes primitive behaviour. Shaheen thinks all these representations are ideologically displayed in movies to serve certain aims:

For more than a century movies have dramatized myth making. Ever since the camera began to crank, the unkempt Arab has appeared as an uncivilized character, the cultural Other, someone who appears and acts differently than the white Western protagonist, someone of a different race, class, gender or national origin. The diverse Islamic world is populated solely with bearded mullahs, shady sheikhs in their harems, bombers, backward Bedouin, belly dancers, harem maidens and obsequious domestics (Shaheen, 1990: 12).

Even in the field of arts¹²⁹, Arabs' representations are instrumentalised so as to alter people's consensus, to turn the blind eye towards some hidden objectives. Ridouani (2011) states that in art, Arabs are categorized as *billionaires, bombers, or belly dancers*. Translucently, the aims here are to make fun of the Arabs' art and culture, to expunge their customs and traditions, or to devalue its worth, and to highlight the superiority of the Western arts. Furthermore, in art representation, Ridouani (ibid.) believes, the painter is more likely to draw the targeted persons referring to their own imagination, in fact an imagination loaded with Western representations. Thus, though the Arabs live within the same territories, they are often, especially in the case of male and female, distinguished. While women are portrayed a white bodies, men are described as dark-skinned beings. Ridouani (ibid.) speculates that "*such extreme notion of complexion that distinguishes the white female from the dark male may exist nowhere in the world but the Western imagination both in the sender and receiver*" (ibid.).

Today, media display all kinds of Arabs' representations that, to a great extent, had been attired Western characters, if not an Americanized representation. Ridouani (ibid.) argues that even in cartoons, for instance Aladdin¹³⁰, Arabs are pictured as uncivilized persons whose main objective is to fill in their empty bellies and to enjoy dirty moments of belly dancing. These altered descriptions, though they are about Arabs' culture, are more suitable to

¹²⁹ The word art stands for many activities. However, in the above paragraph, it denotes drawing.

¹³⁰ **Aladdin**: Aladdin is the hero of one of the best-known stories in *The Thousand and One Nights*. (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/12032/Aladdin>).

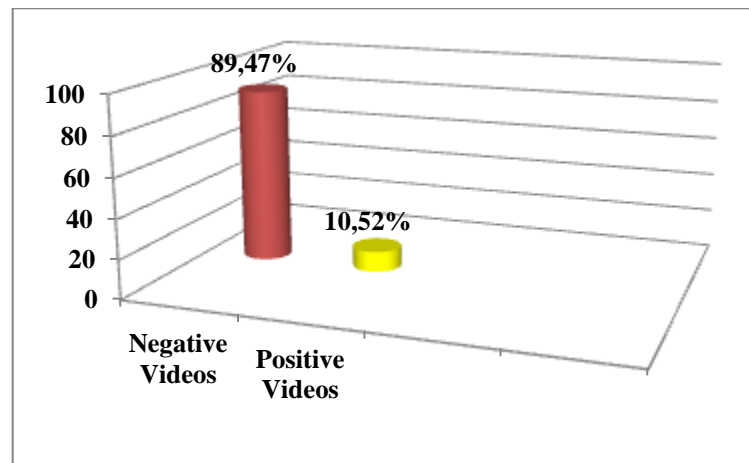
Western ways of life, Ridouani (ibid.) thinks. The same features apply to the cartoon of Ali Baba¹³¹ whose main scenes centre around:

- ✓ Animalised persons driven by their desires (Ali Baba the Mad Dog of the Desert);
- ✓ hateful Arab merchants who are ready to kill for money;
- ✓ the greedy Arab traders;
- ✓ characters having particular features as "heavy brow, hooked nose, thick lips and missing teeth.

2.4.5.1.2. Arab Women's Online Representations

In the previous section, the online representations of the three religions had been explored via the images that Google serves to its users. However, as to Arab women depiction online, the same website had been targeted, but this time via the videos it displays online. To have rigorous data, **50** Videos had been scrutinized, and then categorized in groups in accordance with the themes they cover. The main categories fall within these stereotypes and representations: Arab women as bodies, exploited sex, and the source of terrorism. The figure below lucidly illustrates the negative representations **(89, 47%)** Arab women and Muslim ones, in particular have in relation to online platforms.

¹³¹ **Ali Baba**, fictional character, the hero of " Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," one of the best-known stories in *The Thousand and One Nights* (Retrieved from [http:// www.britannica. Com /EBchecked /topic/1763174/Ali-Baba-and-the-Forty-Thieves](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1763174/Ali-Baba-and-the-Forty-Thieves)).



Bar graph 2 .2. Negative and Positive Videos about Arabs Women in Google

Beyond shadow of a doubt, most of the videos that learners of English can access via Google, hold negative stereotypes and representations about the Arab women. Western representations of this sex are focalised on the issue of the veil which has become a symbol for women's flagrant oppression, backwardness, and men domination. These stereotypes are translucently expressed in all kinds of media. In Western reports, for instance, women who wear the veil are described as 'ghosts'. A reporter from *San Francisco Chronicle*¹³² expounds such a chauvinistic representation as he comments: *'Sometimes you can see their faces. Sometimes just their eyes. Sometimes you see nothing at all of the humans beneath the black shrouds'* (Ryan, 2004:11). Another reporter from Scotland stresses the fact that most of the stereotypes that depict women as *'phantoms' who peer from within their cocoons, do estrange women who live in foreign countries'* (Deerin, 2004: 16). The same pejorative connotations have been attributed to almost all the traditional and the religious clothes Muslim women wear, including 'abayas'¹³³ that are described as *'shapeless robes'* (Harris, 2001:2).

¹³² **San Francisco Chronicle** is American newspaper (Retrieved from ([http:// www.britannica. com/ EBchecked/topic/688248/San-Francisco-Chronicle](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/688248/San-Francisco-Chronicle)).

¹³³ **Abaya** is "A loose, usually black robe worn by Muslim women, especially in Arabic-speaking regions, covering the body from head to toe or the neck down and often worn with a headscarf and veil " (Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/abaya>).

Surprisingly, attacks on the veil have been intensified as some reporters explicitly linked it to oppression and dehumanization of women in the Arab world. These aggressive stereotypes have embellished some U.S. newspapers' headlines. One of them goes this way '*Lifting the veil on women's enslavement*,' Landsberg, has once described an experience she lived while contemplating a veiled women in the city. She speculates:

Those dead, shuttered, hollow-eyed faces were the ugliest image of enslavement I have ever seen," Landsberg declares. "I couldn't sleep that night, and it wasn't because of the heat. To see women in a state of such abject abasement, paraded through the sophisticated City of Light, was literally sickening. (Landsberg, 2002:2).

As it was argued in the previous section, stereotypes are based on statistical experiences that hinge on a distorted prototype taken as the standard for valuing others. Distinguishably, these forms of judgments nurture generalization processes, where everyone is seen as belonging to the category already identified. Under such a thought, Arab women's stereotyping is but an instantiation of this cognitive process. The sequel of that is the stereotype that all veiled women have the same views and opinions. This unitary image of Muslim women has been illustrated in one of the most popular newspapers 'the *Boston Globe*'s¹³⁴ article, that recounted the story of three Iraqi sisters interviewed about the possibility of constructing a Democratic Iraq. Ghannam (2003:3) reports that, though the three sisters gave different opinions about the issue, they were labelled within the same frame of rigid identities. He (ibid.) comments: '*they wore nearly identical black robes [abayas] and headscarves at a memorial service...each had her own opinion on Iraq's future, with emphasis on equal rights for women*'.

¹³⁴ **The Boston Globe**, daily newspaper published in Boston, the city's largest and one of the most influential newspapers in the United States (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/74903/The-Boston-Globe>).

The post-colonial scholars also got their share from the stereotyping process of the Arab women. However, as pointed at by Yegenogolu (2003:542), all veiled women hide something under their scarves, in most cases dark hair. In an analogical study, he conducted on the representations of both Algerian and Jewish women, Yegenogolu (ibid.) proposed that Arab women have become enigmatic beings, given the fact that hide behind their veils to protect themselves from the Westerners' gazes.

Stereotypes are bound to the context they are created in, and the aim they are designed to achieve. In some settings, as it was argued above, women are enslaved in the Arab world as they serve as mistresses rather than wives who have the same rights as men. They are called weakened creature and oppressed beings. However, in a surprising way, they become suicide bombers and terrorists when issues of ethnic wars are called upon. Though Arab women suiciders are stereotyped as fierce and brutal beings who are able to act like men, they remain exposed to man manipulation. As compared to men, women who commit suicide are in most cases performing their terrorist actions out of submission to men. Bennett (2003:1) postulates: "*It is not clear to what extent she may have been manipulated by other Palestinians, perhaps including her eldest brother, a leader of the Fatah faction of Yasir Arafat*". The ideological metamorphoses of the Arab women duties are lucidly identified in the passage below:

One the one hand, reports on female suicide bombers in Palestine, and more recently Iraq, portray these women to be far from the passive, helpless and oppressed image that is common in other stories; on the contrary, these women are portrayed as fearless, audacious and almost inhumane in their capacity to blow themselves up and kill innocent people with them (Eltantawy, 2007, cited in Suleiman, 2003).

Even in children movies, Arab women are stereotyped as bodies and not minds and identities. The fantasy film of the *Beauty and the Beast* ¹³⁵ serves as a good illustration. The stereotypes within this prospect are even more efficient,

¹³⁵ **Beauty and the Beast** "*is a 1991 American animated musical romantic fantasy film produced by Walt Disney Feature Animation and released by Walt Disney Pictures*" (Freedictionary.com).

since children lack maturity to think cavilingly of the scenes. When watching such movies, children are imprisoned in their innocence, and therefore can barely demarcate between reality and the fiction. The innocence of children is juxtaposed with film-makers' implicit manipulations of reality, in most cases nurturing representations of cultures, races, gender and sexuality to support colonial hierarchies and notions of inferiority and superiority (Giroux, 2001:233). In such a movie, Arab women are portrayed as belly dancers and bodies to amuse the others. These representations have other connotations, mainly focusing on the fact that Arab women make '*sensual lovers*', but never described as 'true loves'.

According to Nash (1984), the stereotypes about Muslim women date back to the bygone centuries, almost to the 19th century where Arab women had been represented as exotic women, as opposed to bourgeois women who mainly represented modernity and elegance. However, by the 20th century women who were not Western were described as slaves of their cultures as they did not participate in the political scene. More than this, they were contextualized within one static platform of "*mothers and consumable objects*". Then, in the late 20th century, Arab women were epitomes of traditional cultures and backward societies. Lutz and Collins (1993:50) suggest that while men of the late 20th century were influenced by Western cultures, women were appended to the traditional forms of clothing. Consequently, "*the progress was identified as something masculine and tradition as something feminine*".

The stereotypes that predominate media discourse, and which instigate islamophobic thoughts centre on the fact that Muslim women are known for their ignorance and submission (Muñoz, 2005). The creation of these stereotypes hinges on the conceptual and theoretical activity in relation to Islam. In simpler words, social phenomena tend to be explained religiously. An illustrative case is grounded on the idea of the veil that is interpreted as oppression against women's rights, to give room to other social issues, including the right to education and freedom of speech. Thus, "*the situations and processes reported in the news are largely explained as a consequence of Islam itself, rather than the result of specific political or socio-economic situations*". (Navarro, 2010:110). Likewise, Western analogies about women do not

compare the Muslim woman who is veiled and consequently traditional, to the Western one who is unveiled and modern. By contrast, “*the latter are distributed between Islamist and non-Islamist women. And the factor distinguishing traditional women from modern women is not the veil [...],but whether or not they have had access to education*” (Muñoz, *ibid.*). Cogently, the stereotypes about Muslim women are not always explicitly mentioned and highlighted. In some cases, they are implicitly introduced, in some cases unidentified; so as to leave room for persons’ active imagination to run the show. ‘*Islamist women are largely absent from the mass media. Bearing in mind that much of the textual strategy in ideological production is not dictated by what is really said but by what it is not said*’. Media discourse purposefully deletes some positive aspects of women and highlight other negative ones. Muñoz argues that Muslim women are:

...victims, in family relations or illustrating a specific cultural landscape” (often linked to Islam), “instead of as a source of information on important events in their communities.” In short, they are portrayed as “observers rather than as active participants in their community” (Muñoz, *ibid*:210).

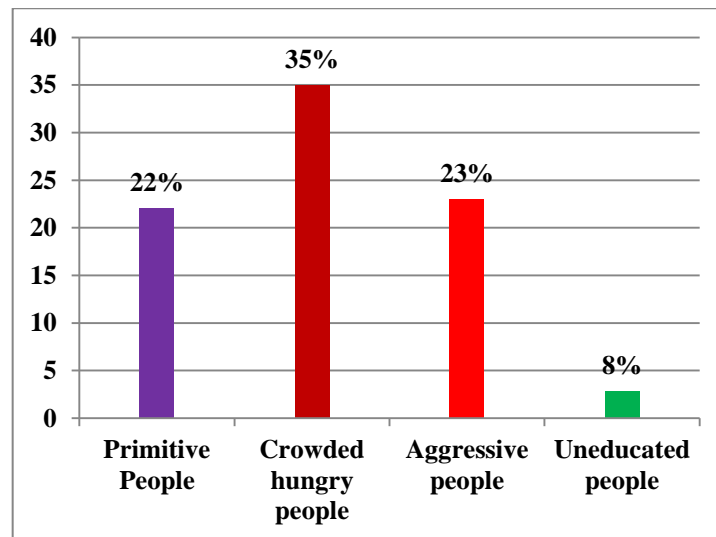
The veil has become the index of women who are “*lacking individual or personal attributes*.” In such a way, these waned women are represented as submissive beings that are optional parts within their cultures and therefore lack individuality. By contrast, women who are westernised are pictured to epitomes of Western modern cultures, with emphasis put on their professional career and individual achievements. Consequently, “*the dominant informative discourse tends to represent the veil as the ultimate symbol of the exclusion of women but also not normally reflect its multidimensional character*.” (Muñoz, 2005). The degradation of the veil has been clarified by Boumedienne who comments on an article appeared in French media:

In August 2006, when the British authorities decided to keep aeroplanes grounded at Heathrow airport in order to dismantle a series of terrorist attempts. [...] liberation. fr [the web page of the French newspaper “Libération”] announced “attempted attacks” which it described as Islamist [...] and could not find anything better to illustrate its article than the photograph of a veiled woman with one hand pushing her baby’s pram and the other carrying a small child in the corridors of Heathrow airport (Boumedienne ,2007).

2.4.5.2. Africans’ Online Representations

The stereotypical images in relation to the Othered cultures¹³⁶ are intensified as it comes to the African cultures. Positively, typing of the word “*African*” online reveals the biased nature of the online platforms. **100** pictures had been used to explore the discussed representations. To begin with, most of the pictures retrieved from the Internet provide the stereotype of the Africans as crowded and hungry people who need help and all kinds of aids. The Arabs and the Africans, undoubtedly, share the same negative representation that stands for the aggressive nature of these people. Other chauvinistic pictures stress the primitive nature of the African cultures, served to the Internet users. The lack of education, too, gets its share as far as the African countries are concerned. All these stereotypes pour in the stream of one ironclad representation that depicts the Africans as uncivilised people. The graph below elucidates the data discussed:

¹³⁶ The Othered cultures denote the Arabs and the Africans.



Bar Graph 2.3: Africans' online Representations

The link that affiliated between Western countries and African's had been mediated by the stereotype of slavery. The stereotype had been tailored religious connotations when the Africans had been forced to adopt Christianity so as to become kind and obedient slaves, and thus creating the stereotype of the Christian black peaceful slaves. (Suleiman, 2003: 375). The stereotype had become the culture that the Westerns tried hard to preserve. Right from the first contact with the Africans, the Europeans considered them as beasts that were not able to think properly, if not mindless beings. This stereotype had been functional even when America was declared a new state. The Africans had been stereotyped as beings closer to animals than to human beings, and are superior to the gorillas and the monkeys and inferior as to the Europeans. This stereotype had been a kind of excuse so as to legitimise their trade to the New World. The sequel of these chauvinistic forms of preconceptions had affected the black community to greater extents. In all fields of life, this race had been obstructed from realising their basic dreams, to live a dignified life based on equality and justice. The blacks' abilities had been limited to the activities that require physical efforts such as hard works and sports (ibid. 378).

Suleiman (ibid.) argues that the whites took advantage of everything that could be invested economically. While the blacks had been used so as to construct America, the post period had seen another version to the exploitation of this race. In nowadays' time, the black people are employed in the production of leisure,

including songs, dance, etc. The black women are stereotyped as brilliant dancers who perform half-naked performances that reflect their unlimited sexual desires (ibid. 380). As to the black men, they are used to perform some secondary acts in white-men dominated films, highlighting the superiority of the Americans.

The stereotype that depicts the blacks as criminals had been instrumentalised so as to justify the racist attitudes the Americans and the Europeans exercised when dealing with the black community. These black people would look like criminals who are a threat for the whole society, and therefore it is the duty of the white race to take them away from those places to civilize and educate them to become good citizens. (Suleiman, ibid. :382). However, according to some statistics, it is claimed that 80 percent of the persons who consume drugs such as cocaine and commit crimes in America are white Americans (ibid: 383). The Western media have instrumentalised an ideological analogy that hinges on racist and biased parameters. The analogy that places the white at the top of humanity, the one who is so humane and able to abolish slave trade. Those features that depict this race as powerful, intelligent, able to solve all kinds of problems and to manage all sorts of leadership and administrative occupations, created the desired image of the whites. The blacks, on the other hand, are described as ugly and stupid. These stereotypes have influenced the way people judge the behaviour of both the whites and the blacks. Suleiman argues:

When a white person commits a crime, he is believed to have some circumstances that obliged him to do so. The aim, at the end, is to have him gain affectionate support. In some other cases, the crime is described as being an exceptional individual case that goes against the norms. Consequently, the person is punished as the one who broke the society's laws. (Suleiman, ibid.).

The abolishment of slavery had been a turning point as to the relationship between the blacks and the whites. At least the stereotype that embodies this race only in the frame of submissions and servitude was somehow over. However, the colonial activity had come to create other stereotypes that can justify the process in question. These ideological plans had been motivated by the mantra

“civilizing the black savages”. And since civilization springs from Europe and America, they were the only ones who had the right to handle the situation. This stereotype had been backed up by means of another one that took the title of “white men’s burden” , a burden of leading the blacks from ignorance to knowledge. Under this motto, the African countries had been exploited and instrumentalised to achieve an economic prosperity in Western societies. The image is even more efficient for those who have not been to the continent. Suleiman (ibid.394) comments: “*Most of the Westerns have not visited Africa, though there is a specific image to Africa settled down in Western people’s minds that hinges on primitivism, tribes, hanger, civil war, political instability, corruption, and abuse.*”

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Africa was considered as a reference for the political crisis, the spread of famine, the deadly civil wars, and the inability of the Africans to run the affairs of their countries. These conditions had nurtured the creation of a set of stereotypes that had been attached to Africa, even in these days. They include: “*dependent Africa*” and “*Pitiable Africa*”. All this had been instrumentalised to colonise the black continent once again. The image of the Africans can be summarized in the following set of stereotypes:

- ✓ Catastrophes: Africa is depicted in Western media as “hell on earth” due to the poverty, famine and wars.¹³⁷ (Martinadale, 1995).
- ✓ Famine: Western media focus on showing that Africa is the continent where famine is the daily nightmare people suffer from¹³⁸.
- ✓ Civil wars: these continuous fights have resulted in the death of hundreds of innocent people and the spread of poverty within the African families¹³⁹.

¹³⁷ This continent is also called the “lost continent” full of people who die on a daily basis” (Martinadale, 1995).

¹³⁸ African children are used to confirm the negative image. The Somalian case illustrates the idea, as in 1992, while Western media’s concern was solely to cover the case, 250 persons died because of drought. In later time, the case had been discarded by the media, and then when the Americans decided to colonise it, the image of poor boys dying from hanger was utilised once again (Suleiman, 2003).

¹³⁹ Western media make sure that these wars are caused due to the violence of the people and their ignorance, and delete the fact the reasons behind those deadly wars go back to colonialism (Suleiman, ibid.).

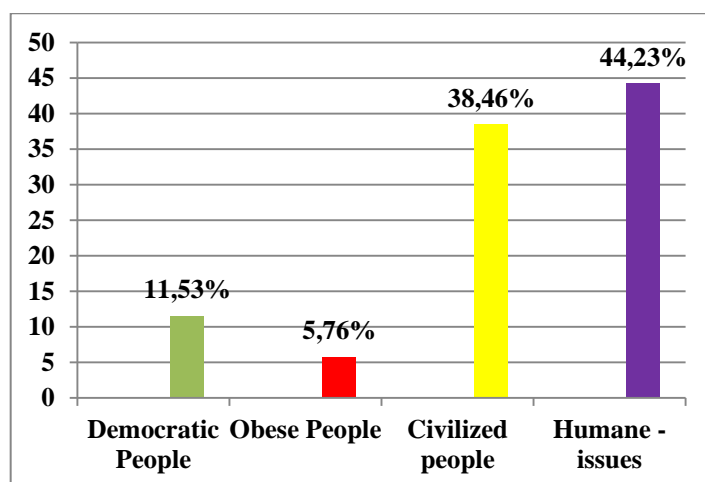
- ✓ Diseases: among the diseases for which Africa is accused of being the source, is Aids¹⁴⁰. (Suleiman, *ibid.* 404).
- ✓ Corruption: it is argued that the image of Africa has been distorted in relation to the corruption, that on the one hand had nurtured by the Africans and elaborate, and embellished by Western media¹⁴¹(*ibid.*:406).

2.4.5.3. Westerners' Online Representations

Unlike the online representations of the Arabs and the Africans that in most cases depict aggression, violence, and terrorism, those of the Americans denote positive traits. Most of the retrieved images described the Americans as people who are more concerned with human issues, including healthcare, education, and aids of different kinds to the poor people around the globe. The other positive image given to this race emphasizes the organized and the democratic nature of its culture, including the organized ceremonies, unions and peaceful demonstrations. The only negative picture attached to the Americans relates to the issue of obesity that would not harm the American nation as the Arabs and the Africans' representations would do. The figure below explicates the data discussed:

¹⁴⁰ Western media always link the disease to the Africans who are responsible persons for its spread because of their sexual practices. This is clear as most of the articles that tackle the issue of Aids which are accompanied by pictures of Africans (Suleiman).

¹⁴¹ Africans are described as filthy rich person who spend a lot of money to spend good times in Western countries and in the endless parties they organise. Western media coverage for these facts may be taken at a advantageous element as the raising people's awareness, but deep inside corruption facts are filtered and the ones which are unveiled target some political leaders who for some reasons were not that cooperative (Suleiman, *ibid*:406).



Bar Graph 2.4: Americans' Online Representations

2.5. Learners' Stereotypes about the Self and the Other

The previous section elucidated the chauvinistic position online platforms display in relation to the Other, particularly towards the Muslim, the Arabs and the Africans. However, this part, by contrast to the one that proceeds, targets learners' stereotypes about the West and their attitudes in relation to online representations. A questionnaire¹⁴² had been given to the **75** students of English who are members of the online community studied. It included a set of quantitative questions as well as qualitative ones purposefully, for the sake of cross-checking the findings. However, before dealing with learners' attitudes towards the Other, the most significant effects of stereotypes are going to be discussed.

Stereotypes befall when there is a lack in information supposed to be provided by the society. These forms of generalisations are believed by psychologists to be a necessary outcome of human mental processes. In stereotyping, people tend to simplify the information they get from their environment (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson and Gaertner, 1996: 312) .Suggesting

¹⁴² The questionnaire is displayed in the appendix.

that stereotypes are basically cognitive, lead to the fact that they influence individual's perception of objects and beings around them, as it "*renders some attributes that are congruent with the stereotype highly salient, others less so and the prediction of their likely behaviour*" (Nedale and Durkin, 1998:12). Most importantly, stereotypes are not individualistic but rather public. They are the shared beliefs that support the "*social standing*" of the group the individual belongs to (Tajfel and Forgas, 1981: 111).

In cultural studies, media have been considered as a crucial agent as to developing miscellaneous kinds of negative attitudes in relation to certain cultural groups. Individuals, because of the lack of cultural exposures¹⁴³, are likely to develop what is known as racial attitudes, outlined as "*The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others*" (*The Free Dictionary*). Research in this field has shown that the effects of media on individuals' perception of other cultures via a set of stereotypes, and the judgements they are likely to produce, is mediated by their racial attitudes (Dixon, 2006; Gilliam and Iyengar, 2000).

Schmader, Johns and Forbes (2008: 337) postulate that stereotypes are likely to constitute a threat as to the social position and the performances of some individuals. Stereotype threat¹⁴⁴ is created due to miscellaneous factors. Withal, amid the different aspects of threat, they identify three momentous common sequels: the actuation of "*psychological stress responses*"¹⁴⁵, "*performance monitoring*"¹⁴⁶, and "*mental suppression of negative thoughts and emotions*"¹⁴⁷. They accentuated the fact that these three results of stereotypes affect noticeably

¹⁴³ **Cultural exposure** embodies the cultural experiences individuals develop across time.

¹⁴⁴ **Stereotype Threat** "*Stereotype threat is a term coined by social psychologists Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson that refers to the fear people experience when they are at risk of confirming a negative stereotype that is held about their group. This psychological threat can undermine successful performance of tasks and activities*" (Retrieved from [http:// www. encyclopedia. com/doc/1G2-3045302610.html](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3045302610.html)).

¹⁴⁵ **Psychological Stress responses:** Psychological stress responses stem from stress itself. Stress represents environmental pressure that leads to certain responses. In some cases, it promotes adaptation to the environment. In other cases, however, it leads to negative results. (Retrieved from [http://www.britannica. com/EBchecked/topic/568921/stress](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/568921/stress)).

¹⁴⁶ **Stereotype threat** affects individuals' achievements and performances.

¹⁴⁷ When exposed to a stereotype threat, learners are cognitively and emotionally versed in it, and hence their performance is going to be influenced negatively (Schmader et al., 2008).

cognitive resources that are lucidly identified in learners' performances in class, especially when they deal with cultural issues. Differently put, those learners who are not exposed to any stereotype threat are more likely to perform better than those who are imprisoned in such a fear in all kinds of tests. (Alter et al., 2010: 17). Still, stereotype threat can be temperate by means of the environments it befalls in. Steele and Aronson (1995:85) adhere to the fact that if stereotypes are generated before the test, they are likely to give negative results, while when they occur after the test, they give positive feedbacks. Additionally, these stereotypes affect learners' performances only when they are prominent.

Among the consequences of threat stereotypes, are '*psychological stress responses*.' The mitigation of such a psychological deficiency, that undoubtedly affects learners' performances negatively, has been researched by many scholars as to its deep consequences in relation to divergent ecologies, including learning milieus. Likewise, they created two opposing psychological concepts known as "threat appraisal"¹⁴⁸ and "challenge appraisal"¹⁴⁹. Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter and Salomon (1999) postulate that the former creates stress responses that, on their turn, obstruct all kinds of performances. As to the latter, they believe, it displays adaptation skills to manage stress responses generated by the threat. (Scheepers, 2009; Blascovich, and Weisbuch, 2008). Alter et al. have conducted a study on how challenge appraisal positively affects learning. They concluded that:

In two experiments, we found that reframing a threatening task as a challenge eradicated the negative effects of stereotype threat. This effect was apparent among Black school students in North Carolina and among Princeton University undergraduates from poorly-represented high schools (Alter et al., 2010: 170).

¹⁴⁸ **Threat appraisal** "*the mental and emotional procedures involved in evaluating the possibility of and degree of threat*". (Retrieved from <http://psychologydictionary.org/threat-appraisal/>).

¹⁴⁹ The concept embraces all the variables that the stereotype threat generates, and which instigates challenge in relation to individual's attitudes and behaviour.

Regardless of the fact that stereotypes may generate positive feedbacks, past research confirmed that stereotype's threat contexts are more likely to fuel negative stereotypes towards individuals from divergent cultures (Steele and Aronson, 1995:82). Still, the body of knowledge in relation to this issue has not fully described how individuals, before moving to the operational phase, develop these preconceptions in their minds. Schmader, Johns and Forbes (2009: 333) contend that negative stereotypes are the sequel of stereotype threat that occurs within three-way process interactive mechanism. He explains the three associations as follows:

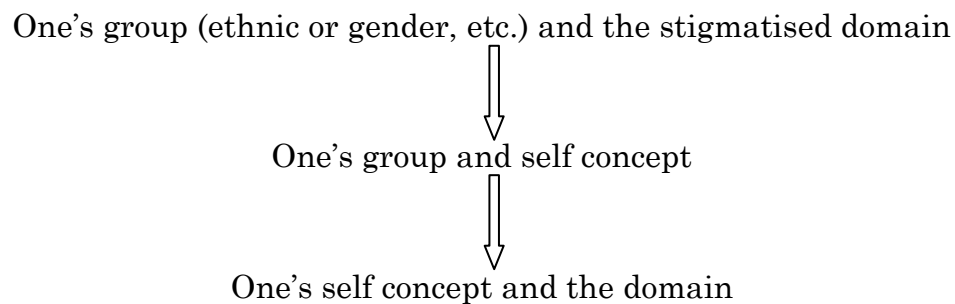


Figure 2.9: Schmader, Johns and Forbes's Model of Stereotyping (ibid.)

Inconvertibly, the three neurological mediations are not static and balanced. Forbes (2009) argues that stereotype threat may engender opposing rapports among the aforementioned- three associations. Therefore, negative stereotypes befall when there is a contact between one' group and the stigmatised domain. Howbeit, positive rapport is potentially identifiable as it comes to the interplay of one's group and self concept and one's self and the domain. He further comments that this unbalanced nature is quintessential in relation to overcoming the negative stereotype, which would be even reinforced, given that the three associations hinge on negative rapports. Still, these associations including stereotypes, affect individual's cognitive capacity, and that when negative attitudes are deleted from the three processes, performances that require high level of cognition such as problem solving contexts, are likely to be successfully done.

One of the main features of stereotypes is their iterant occurrence over time. Repetition is believed to be among the key factors in learning processes as identified in the quotation “*repetition is the mother of learning*”¹⁵⁰. Ergo, iterating these forms of reality distortion would definitely make these stereotypes digested and adopted as the true depiction of reality (Banaji, Hardin and Rothman, 1993:280). By the same token, stereotypes fuel prejudices and negative attitudes towards others. The concept of stereotypes, from a psychological vista, had been always affiliated with other preconceptions, namely prejudice and value-judgements. According to some scholars, the link between stereotypes and prejudice¹⁵¹ is so tight that one can hardly distinguish one from another. In an intricate way, both coexist and orient individuals’ behaviour (Hardin and Higgins (1996). As to some other scholars, stereotypes are the ones that fuel prejudices as they function as rationalisers for attitudes and behaviour (Allport, 1954).

In recent years the body of knowledge that had been accumulated in different fields, and in psychology in particular, fomented the idea that stereotypes determine prejudiced behaviours towards heterogeneous cultural groups and individuals. Under this line of thought, prejudices are the sequel of stereotyping processes. Interestingly, scholars within this approach admit that stereotypes are spontaneously exercised on the individuals that represent the Other. It is worth mentioning that the knowledge that nurtures these stereotypes contributes to the formation of prejudices. This intricate relation between the two kinds of preconceptions is even more deleterious for the process of learning. Ehrlich (1973) states that these stereotypes and prejudices are part of the “*social heritage*” that would harm the targeted ethnic groups, more specifically. Nevertheless, the deterministic nature of stereotypes’ perspective sidesteps the loose nature that stands between the stereotypical knowledge that individuals accumulate and its application in real situations. Therefore, individuals have room for their own reasoning, as they engage in interactive processes with others, undoubtedly having conceptual stereotypes, but not necessarily convinced of them (Ashmore, and Del Boca, 1981).

¹⁵⁰ This statement had been accessed via the following link : <http://blog.brainscape.com/2011/05/repetition-learning/>.

¹⁵¹ In the above paragraph, prejudice is construed as one among the various consequences of stereotypes.

Another distinction that needs to be highlighted in relation to stereotype is the set of beliefs. Beliefs are distinguished from stereotypes on one illuminating ground. Stereotypes, as it was pointed at, are the sequel of the social heritage of an individual. However, individuals, even if the percentage is low, are likely to falsify them. Beliefs, on the contrary, though they are representations about objects and beings, they are taken as the truth (Pratkanis, 1988). Though the two concepts represent two divergent extremes, they in a different ways, affect individuals' behaviour in relation to distinguished cultural group, represented as the Other.

Attitudes and stereotypes are among the exceptional "*psychological constructs*" that undergo neurological processes. Attitudes describe the positive and negative evaluative processes of a being or an object within a certain environment that are nurtured by individual's cognition or affection Chaiken and Wood (1981). By contrast, stereotypes are "*overgeneralized beliefs*" that are basically cognitive (Allport, 1954). Despite the difference that lies between the two concepts, common grounds link them to one another. Both stereotypes and attitudes are either conscious or unconscious, also called implicit and explicit modes. Explicit attitudes are rather clearly identified in people's interactions as they are directly mentioned or explained (Oskamp and Schulz, 2005). Implicit attitudes and stereotypes are nurtured by "*neural associative networks*" within one's brain that individuals are not always aware of. Any stimulus that may activate these brain networks would alter individuals' feelings and actions in response to the negative context or setting. Additionally, implicit attitudes and stereotypes and their opposite types are likely to differ at various levels.

Attitudes are outlined as "*affect for or against a psychological object*" (Thurstone, 1931:224). These lens of preconceptions form a one way evaluative process that nurtures judgments of miscellaneous types, including liking, favourability, and pleasantness. Though some arguments would reinforce the fact that stereotypes and attitudes are independent constructs, since the first is cognitive and the second is affective, there was a cascade of theories that argued against such an assumption. Some scholars have argued that in stereotypical processes, not only cognitive abilities are operational, but affective ones too, are

necessary. Moreover, any study that tackles the effects of stereotypes on individuals and social group needs to take into account both cognitive and affective aspects of stereotypes. Fiske (1982) comments: “*affect is the very reason stereotypes matter*”. Stereotypes and attitudes relate to each other in divergent ways, among which most scholars identify three:

- ✓ Stereotype primacy: attitudes (like prejudice) are the results of stereotypes (Billig, 1985:102).
- ✓ Attitude primacy: here the claim is that cognitive aspects of preconception (stereotypes) are just the outcome of the affective side of the process (attitudes)¹⁵² (Allport, 1954).
- ✓ Stereotype_and attitudes primacy: is mainly about the two parts that pour in the stream of attitudes. (Eagly and Mladinic, 1989).¹⁵³

The influence of attitudes on stereotypes’ formation and application is undeniable. Nevertheless, research in relation to both components that affect human behaviour revealed the fact that the different natures of attitudes influence stereotypes divergently. In a study conducted on women’s readiness to deal with maths tests, it was shown that implicit attitudes have a quintessential role in motivation and performance within stereotypical contexts. More precisely, positive implicit attitudes had been found to augment math motivation as to women’s performances in the subject in question. Negative attitudes, on the contrary, are believed by (Kray and Lindenberg, 2000:142) to negatively influence individuals’ performances. The bright side of this idea is that these negative attitudes can increase learners’ motivation as they optimise their

¹⁵² Allport (1954) states: *stereotypes are not identical with prejudice. They are primarily rationalisers they adapt to the prevailing temper of prejudice or the needs of the situation*”.

¹⁵³ Attitudes, according to this perspective, entail beliefs (cognitive), feelings and emotions (affective) and actions (conative). In this way stereotypes turn to be the cognitive part of attitudes (Eagly and Mladinic (1989).

learning performances to “*face those stereotypes*”. The two opposing aspects of attitudes are believed to strengthen learners’ motivation as they instigate learners to do better in their tests.

As it was explained above, attitudes are crucial in relation to individual’s performances and interactions. Attitudes can exist at various planes. Racial attitudes¹⁵⁴ are among the most important generators of misunderstandings and conflicts within ethnic groups that coexist in a unifying geographical location. Be that as it may, the first theories advanced in relation to how racial attitudes lead to discriminatory behaviours had been inspected. This is due to the fact that attitudes are not necessarily agents that affect human behaviour in all cases. This idea is reinforced by the study by Crosby et al. (1980:545) on white and blacks’ contacts in America. They proposed that positive racial attitudes do not always lead to a positive behaviour. The white Americans were believed to have racial behaviours that are more dominant than the attitudes. These results had been backed up by Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson and Gaertner’s (1996:310) review that included 23 studies, and where whites had been asked to judge some black and white individuals. The answers had been positively biased towards the black. Despite the fact that white participants had some racial attitudes, their behaviours were not that negative.

Common misunderstandings befall when racial attitudes and stereotypes are used interchangeably. However, past and current studies have emphasized the fact that stereotypes are only one part of racial attitudes. Hardin and Higgins (1996:30) argue that stereotypes occupy a cognitive part within racial attitudes. That is, stereotypes fuel a cognitive source for prejudices. This is clear in the following statement advanced by Brigham (1971:129) who stated: “*in order to feel negatively toward a group, one must be able to perceive the different individuals of the given ethnic group as having certain constant characteristics*”. Be that as it may, stereotypes can affect prejudices in a positive way. Simpson and Yinger (1965) suggest that people who are stereotyped and prejudiced are likely to develop feelings of hostility and hatred towards the ones who created them. In relation to this, the prejudiced people, as they develop some stereotypes and prejudices

¹⁵⁴ Racial attitudes are those attitudes that are those attitudes developed towards particular races.

about that group as a reaction, are likely to avoid hostility. In addition to the explicit ties that link stereotypes to prejudices, other implicit ones also bring the two kinds of preconception in contact. In other words, stereotypes may be related to prejudices by means of manifold elements such as social hierarchies within the groups themselves.

Since stereotypes occupy a cognitive aspect of attitudes, negative stereotypes would systematically lead to negative attitudes (Jones, 1997). The more negative the stereotypes is, the more supportive to it the individual will be. However, some researchers have gone to suggest that stereotypes are not as informative as attitudes when it comes to preconceiving people and objects part of the Other. Hence, studies in relation to this issue should prioritise attitudes over stereotypes. Esses, Haddock and Zanna comment:

Merely looking at the degree to which an individual expresses stereotypes of a group that are in accord with stereotypes expressed by others often tells us very little about the individual's overall evaluation of the groups (Esses, Haddock and Zanna (1993:139).

Stereotypes are believed to include a cognitive component of attitudes (Jones :ibid.). Under this spirit, attitudes serve as rationalisers for negative attitudes and feelings. If the cultural stereotype is largely negative (as with whites' stereotype of blacks), then the degree to which an individual endorses this stereotype and prejudice should be closely related. The evaluation of person's stereotypes should therefore be based on the evaluation of their attitudes. Esses, Haddock and Zanna, (ibid.) articulated that merely looking at the degree to which an individual expresses stereotypes of a group that are in accord with stereotypes expressed by others, often tells very little about the individual's overall evaluation of the groups. Because both individual evaluative stereotypes and attitudes involve favourable and unfavourable responses to a particular group, these measures should be more highly correlated –particularly if, as Stangor, Sechrist and Jost (2001:484) suggest, racial attitudes have substantial affective basis. Jones (1997) suggests that not only do stereotypes influence individuals' attitudes, but these forms of reality distortion embrace the cognitive aspects of

attitudes. Stereotypes, by means of repetition become “*rationalisers*¹⁵⁵”, in the sense they become active agents as to judging individuals and groups, and systematically generating negative attitudes and feelings.

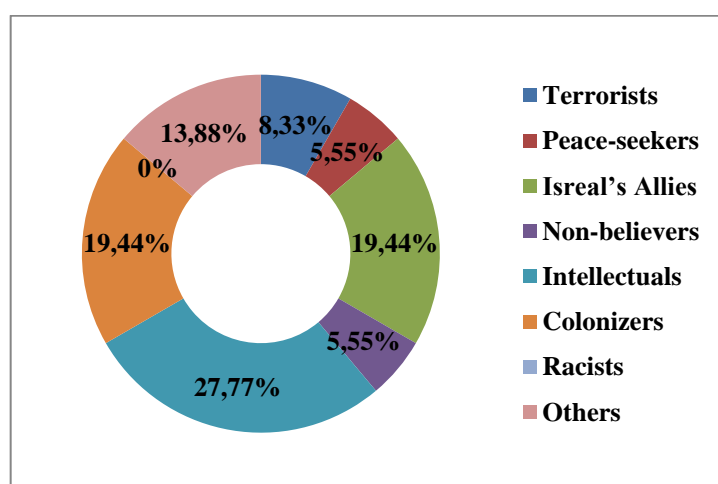
Hamilton and Sherman (1996) claim that when the stereotypical relationship that links individuals of different cultural backgrounds is highly negative, discriminatory behaviours are likely to occur. The fact that stereotypes are basically cognitive structures that intervene in perception, store and retrieval of information, make them influence human behaviour. In fact, there are many ways with which stereotypes influence behaviour. First, stereotypes develop a kind of social expectations that direct human behaviour (Jasmin, 1991, cited in Dovidio et al., :1996). Second, some case of discriminatory actions and behaviours are nurtured and justified by some stereotypical beliefs (Jost and Banaji, 1994:22). Third, stereotypes and discriminatory behaviours in some cases influence one another as they emanate from a common source.

Jellison et al. (2004) postulate that when individuals are prejudiced, they are disliked since they do not confirm to the norms (cited in Hetzel : 2008) . According to Hetzel (2008:27), prejudice hinges on the belief that difference is “ *wrong, to be a less desirable person, lacking in certain aspects of character and morality and viewed as potential threat to the social order and standard of any given time and people*”. Prejudice takes various types among which, is “*attribution –value prejudice*”. The latter underlies the fact that when prejudice befalls, the prejudiced person is the one to blame, since they have the capacity to control the attributes that generate the prejudice. These attributes mainly cover issues of appearance, weight and poverty. Crandal et al. (2001) conjectured that in such a case, these individuals deserve the other individuals’ prejudicial behaviours.

All the learners who have been interviewed via the questionnaire admitted that they access images and videos via Google. In addition to this the majority of them claimed they search for videos and images in relation to their own culture and the target one as well. The role of media and Internet in particular, in shaping learners’ stereotypes and representations about the other cannot be

¹⁵⁵ The word “rationaliser” stands for the ability to control person’s reason. In this connection, stereotypes, when taken as the truth, they are guide individual’s actions and behaviour.

eschewed. The Americans¹⁵⁶ are among the people who receive a great deal of representations and stereotypes in such online platforms. Learners too, are more likely to link the West to America, and consequently produce miscellaneous kinds of reality distortion towards it. In the graph below, most of the learners believe the Americans to be intellectual people (**27, 77%**). Howbeit, this positive image is contrasted by means of two negative images, including Americans as colonizers (**19, 44%**) and as allies of Israel (**19, 44%**). It is worthwhile noting that these two negative images are developed due to historical backgrounds, ethnic conflicts within the cultures involved, and the political discourse within learners' community¹⁵⁷. Other stereotypes picture the Americans as "*most hated societies in the world, criminals, powerful, mind-users, creative*". The Figure below elucidates the data discussed.



Pie-Chart 2.8: Learners' Online Representations and Stereotypes about the Americans

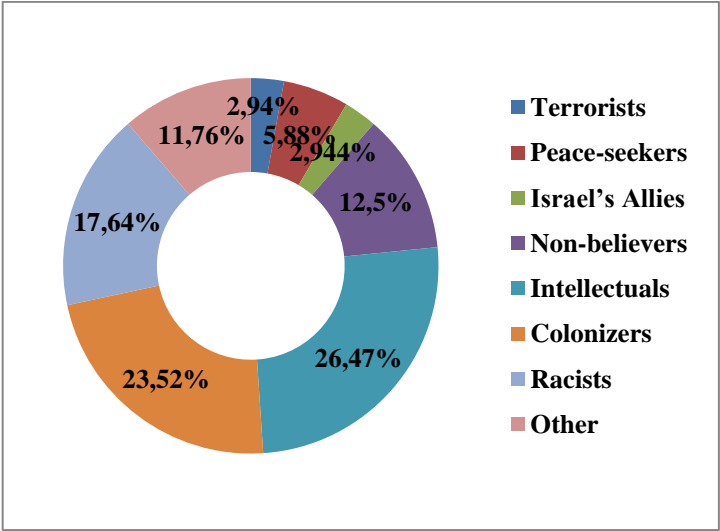
Most of the learners who have been asked the question in relation to the way they stereotype the Europeans¹⁵⁸, have pictured this race as intellectual (**26, 47%**). They also maintain that the Europeans are colonizers due to the historical heritage they call upon in the process of stereotyping and representing the Other.

¹⁵⁶ The question of the questionnaire goes this way "how can you describe the Americans?"

¹⁵⁷ Political discourse is believed to be effective in the process of stereotyping and representing culture due to the employment of religious texts in such kinds of speeches.

¹⁵⁸ The second question of the questionnaire goes this way "how can you describe the Europeans?"

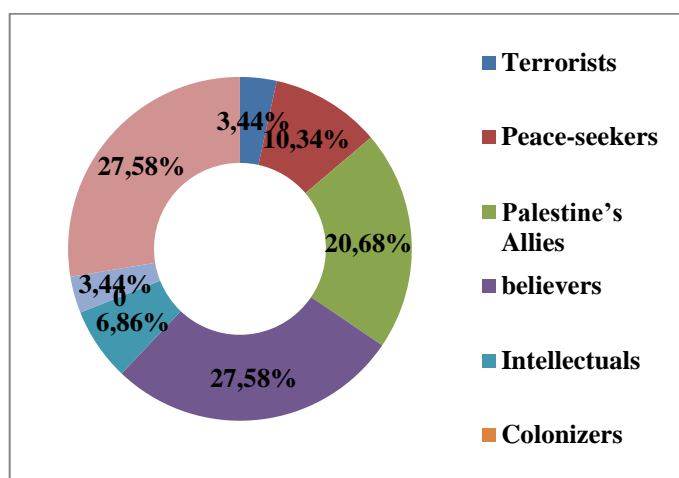
What can be noticed here, is that both the Americans and the Europeans are pictured almost in the same way, despite the fact that each one epitomises divergent histories and cultures. The body of knowledge in relation to the nature of stereotypes and representations serves as a lighthouse in relation to this, since these kinds of reality distortion group people of different cultures in certain unitary categories. The same thing is applicable to the Muslims who, to some extent, are positioned within the locus of terrorism. In addition to this, some learners think that the Europeans are racists (17, 64%), while others describe them as “non-believers (12, 5%). Other stereotypes centre on the following ideas: “civilized, unified, developers, friends, and “they hate Muslims”. The graph below details the findings.



Pie-chart 2.9: Learners’ Online Representations and Stereotypes about the Europeans

The effects of representations on learners’ development of certain stereotypes are lucid in the graph below. These forms of reality distortion and simplification serve as hotbeds for learners to develop ethnocentric attitudes in relation to the Other. Learners, as it is shown below, fall in the trap of generalization, the natural process of stereotyping others. More precisely, the learners interviewed conjecture that all the Arabs are believers (27, 58%). They seem to overlook the

fact that in some Arab countries, not believers¹⁵⁹. Interestingly, as opposed to the belief that Westerners are the enemies of Palestinians, the image of the Arabs as allies of Palestinians is among the ironclad representations that the learners hold in their minds **(20, 68%)**. Beyond shadow of a doubt, this issue is debatable, and therefore requires other studies that cavilingly permeate politicized and religious discourses. Other representations and stereotypes about the Arabs include the following descriptions “*They treat all men as their brothers*”, “*weak*”, “*empty-minded*”, “*narrow-minded*”, “*separated*”, “*peaceful*”, “*non understood people by other communities*”, and “*brave*”. The graph below explicates the findings:

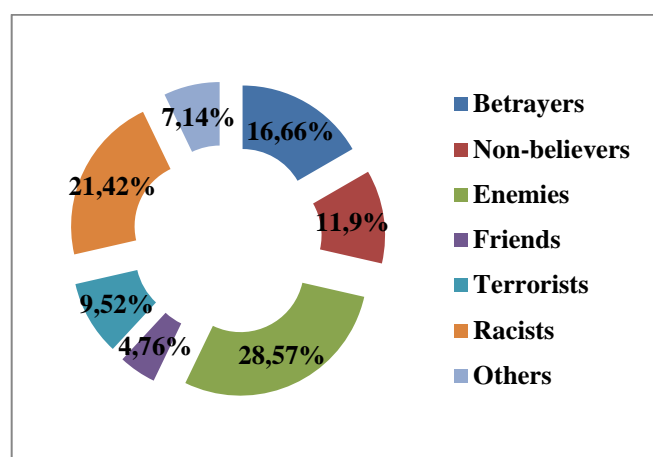


Pie-chart 2.10: Learners' Online Representations and Stereotypes about the Arabs

This part reconnoitres learners' stereotypes and representations in relation to religious identities. Our aim behind questioning learners about their views in relation to religious identities had been impelled by the hypothesis that learners' understandings of their religions affect the way they perceive the Other, namely when the other represents a different religion. Truly, in the antecedent graphs, the learners interviewed had given some positive views in relation to the Americans and the Europeans. However, their views had been divergent as religious identities had been attired to the concept of the Other. Undeniably, the Americans and the Europeans whom the learners' once described as intellectuals

¹⁵⁹ Believers, according to the interviewed learners are limited to Muslims only.

may be Jews. The graph below elucidates the fact that most of the stereotypes that learners hold about this religious race are loaded by means of historical and religious backgrounds. The interviewed learners think that the Jews¹⁶⁰ are the enemies who have to be defeated, and who constitute a danger in relation to the stability of many Arab countries **(28, 57%)**. They also depict them as unfaithful people who are prone to betray others **(16, 66%)**. Other negative stereotypes in relation to this religious race include the following traits “*selfish, hypocrites, devils*”. The graph below showcases the data gathered:

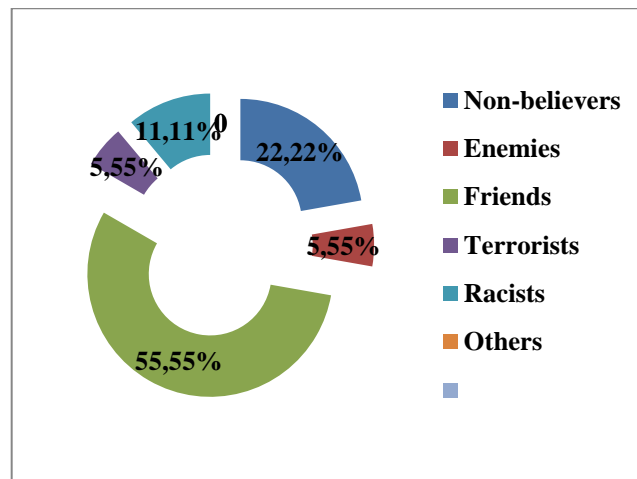


Pie-chart 2.11: Learners’ Stereotypes about the Jews

Learners of English within the online community develop positive attitudes towards the Christians ¹⁶¹since the majority of them describe them as their friends **(55, 55%)**. Howbeit, they believe that the only believers are the Muslims **(22%)**. The graph below expounds the data collected:

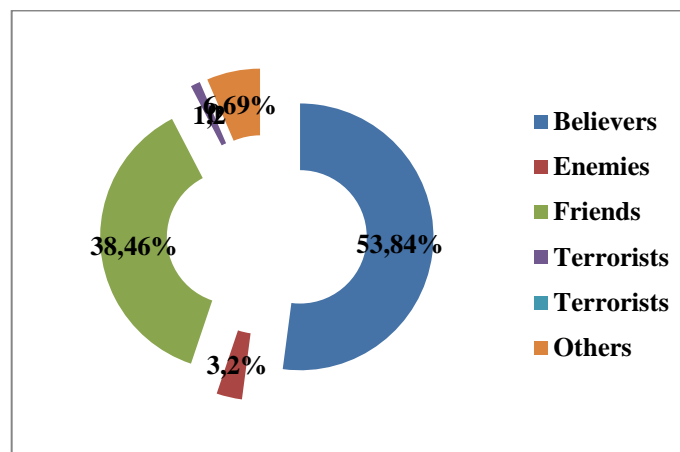
¹⁶⁰ The question of the questionnaire goes this way: “how do you depict the Jews?”

¹⁶¹ The question of the questionnaire was “ how do you depict the Christians?”



Pie-chart 2.12: Learners' Stereotypes about Christians

Learners' self-centeredness is lucid as to the data represented in the graph below. The stereotype of Muslims being the only believers is galvanised (**53, 84%**). Noticeably, the interviewed learners provide positive images in relation to Muslims¹⁶². They picture them as friends (**38, 46%**). Here, the stereotypical ideas they have make them jumble Islam as religion with Muslims as human beings who can be rebuked at different planes. Other traits learners give to the Muslims include the following “*they do all their best to complete daawa*¹⁶³, *victims*”. The graph below elaborates the point made:



Pie-chart 2.13: Learners' Stereotypes about the Muslims

¹⁶² The question of the questionnaire goes this way “ how do you depict the Muslims?”

¹⁶³ The concept daawa is a koranic term that stands for “ preaching”.

2.6. Learners' Attitudes towards the Stereotypes of the Self and the Other

This section targets learners' attitudes in relation to the online stereotypes and representations. To get deep and reliable data in relation to the point investigated, open-ended questions had been given to the learners within the online community. These questions had been purposefully accompanied by some images retrieved from the Internet for the sake of contextualising the question and delimiting its scope¹⁶⁴. All this had been invested to have data that can be used objectively. The data gathered had been grouped in divergent categories according to the similarities found in the learners' answers and the commonalities of the ideas and themes.

The first question displayed some online representations about Muslims and Islam. The pictures that had been attached to question relate to the stereotype of Islam and terrorism. The question centred on two main aspects: the ones how posted them and the reasons behind that. It is worth mentioning that our aim behind that was to unbridle learners' thoughts, views and attitudes in relation to the question, and to have valuable data that can be rigorously analysed. The data gathered from the first question had been stratified in some categories according to the ideas' commonality. The tables below showcase them, and at the same time expounds learners' attitudes towards the Other.

The table below showcases learners' views in relation to Islam and Muslims' online representations and stereotypes. Lucidly, these learners who constitute the majority emphasize the negative intents of such kinds of reality distortion. The negative attitudes figure out in most of their views, including expressions of *"hate Muslims, make people hating us, destroy the Muslims, to show that Muslims are terrorists, etc.* Moreover, the learners interviewed seem to blame the Jews, the Americans, and the Europeans for the online representations posted. Nevertheless, the minority of the learners put the blame on the Muslims themselves. One of the learners commented *"To my point of view, they are Muslims, describing their hatred or fight and anger by the name of Jihad, forgetting that Islam is a*

¹⁶⁴ The question goes this way : "Who has posted these images about Muslims online ? Why?"

peaceful religion. *Muslims and Islam is not exactly the same thing*". Some of the interviewed learners have shown a kind of awareness about the leading role that media play in relation to online representations. They state *"The Western media because there are many obvious reasons why Islam is not a religion of peace " in their opinion" I am going to mention the deadly attacks which was committed especially in the name of Islam"*. The point that should be accentuated, here, centres on the fact that online representations and stereotypes foment learners' development of negative attitudes towards the Other as one homogenous construct.

Westerns’ Evil Intentions Towards Islam and Muslims
<p><i>“ I suppose, normally, <u>they are the Christians and the Jews</u>, i.e. Non-Muslims and in fact they <u>misjudge the Islam</u> and their followers just because they are racists , <u>they totally hate Muslims</u> so to provide bad reputation on them , <u>to show they are terrorist and bad people</u>. “</i></p> <p><i><u>“The Americans and the Europeans posted such images to make our religion dirty and make people hating us. I just blame the organizations and the government. However, I do not target the citizens (there are good who do not accept and there are bad”.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>“Enemies of God posted these pictures to destroy the Muslims identity and show their macho image.”</u></i></p> <p><i><u>“I think that these images had been posted by the Westerns to show that the Muslims are terrorists and use their religion to fight and spread the violence in everywhere”.</u></i>¹⁶⁵</p>

Table 2.4: Learners’ Attitudes towards Islam and Muslims’ Online Representations and Stereotypes

The tension between the self and the Other exists at different planes and around particular topics and issues. The issue of the veil is among the identity markers that Muslims identify themselves with. Beyond shadow of a doubt, this

¹⁶⁵ For more examples about learners’ attitudes about Muslims’ online representations, see appendix.

issue had become the incentive for so many debates among the Orientals and well as the Westerns, and of course with juxtaposing views and perspectives. The question¹⁶⁶ that the learners had to answer had been accompanied with some distorted pictures of veiled women¹⁶⁷. The learners had been asked about the ones who posted them and the reasons behind that act. The data is presented below in the category of: *“the veil as a symbol of oppression”*:

The Veil as a Symbol of Oppression
<p><i>“<u>Christians posted these images</u> because they consider it as a lack of freedom, for them Muslim <u>women are all controlled, jailed, mistreated and discriminated.</u>”</i></p> <p><i>“<u>The Western European society</u>, because the Islamic dress is an issue of value conflicts and the clash of civilizations and in their view is that the freely chosen Islamic dress is a <u>declaration of allegiance to radical Islamism</u>”.</i></p> <p><i>“<u>According to me the Europeans</u> because of human freedom. They think Islam is a religion which is <u>worse for women freedom</u>”.</i></p> <p><i>“<u>The Jews</u> because they are <u>against this kind of veil</u>. It does not give women their total liberty”.</i></p> <p><i>“As I mentioned, it is the <u>American and European governments</u> so that they show to the world that the <u>Muslim women is not free</u> and she accepts everything either bad or good (passive)”.</i></p>

Table 2.5: Learners’ Attitudes In Relation to the Online Representations of the Veil

The above table explicates learners’ views and attitudes in relation to the issue of the veil. The majority of them conjecture that the online representations of that religious clothing are loaded with evil intensions, especially in relation to the status quo of women within Muslim countries. Here, too, learners’ are prone to develop some negative attitudes about the Other as a unitary and discard the other agents involved in that process. Their negative attitudes are expressed in

¹⁶⁶ The question goes this way “Who, according to you, has posted these images online? Why?”

¹⁶⁷ The pictures portrayed Muslim veiled women’s online representations.

the following statements *“They think Islam is a religion which is worse for women freedom; The Jews because they are against this kind of veil. It does not give women their total liberty”*. The learners blame the Jews, the Christians, and the Europeans for those online representations. Moreover, the minority of the learners interviewed point to the fact that these online representations express Westerns’ hatred for Islam. Here is a learner’s comment that elucidates the point:” *Surely, they are the non-Muslims who hate putting the scarf since they hate Islam as a whole so to criticise and to prove the negative they preferred this way to misjudge the scarf and Islam.”*

The next question targeted learners’ views and opinions about some of the Jews’ online representations¹⁶⁸. The pictures that had been provided to the learners describe the Jews as intellectuals who value science and studies. Our aim behind that was to instigate learners’ attitudes, and to get reliable data from their answers. The data gathered had been grouped into one main category labelled as “learners’ negative attitudes towards the Jews”:

Negative Attitudes About The Jews
<p><i>“Because Jews are that bad and they know so, they always try to give good impression about themselves to look as normal and good societies as all people. That’s why they post such images to make Jews as a whole friendly and peace-seekers, but this is not true at all, they are the devil itself as they are selfish and Muslims are their first target to destroy”.</i></p> <p><i>“The Jews themselves posted it to show to the public that are intellectual and educated. I can’t answer by it is true or not but I can said that they are somehow intellectuals but unfortunately in the negative side”.</i></p> <p><i>“The Israelis in order to hide the true image”.</i></p>

Table 2.6: Learners’ Negative Attitudes towards the Jews’ Online Representation

¹⁶⁸ The question goes this way “Here the Jews are represented as intellectuals. Who posted it online? Why? Is it true?”

Positively, the learners do not come to the classroom with crude repertoires of knowledge. On the contrary, they bring knowledge they developed from their socialisation, politicised discourse, and media ideological discourse, to the learning context. The majority of learners' interviewed have denied the positive traits attributed to the Jews within the online presentation provided to them. Their thoughts settled on the common belief that this religious race is the one that posted them online, so as to keep the audience's attention away from their negative acts, especially towards Muslims. One comment runs this way: *"Because Jews are that bad and they know so, they always try to give good impression about themselves to look as normal and good societies as all people. That's why they post such images to make Jews as a whole friendly and peace-seekers, but this is not true at all, they are the devil itself as they are selfish and Muslims are their first target to destroy"*. Be that as it may, the minority of the learners have admitted the fact that the picture that describes the Jews as intellectuals is realistic. One learner states that *"They are represented as intellectuals by whole world, because i think it is given to them by God. Yes, I think that is true"*.

It is important to note that the pictures about the Africans that had been provided to the learners in relation to the question have not been randomly chosen. On the contrary, they are based on the findings gathered from the previous section, which cavilingly studied the way the Africans are represented online¹⁶⁹. Therefore the pictures displayed epitomise how this race is represented online. The data gathered had been stratified in one elemental category: "Uncivilized People". The table below expounds the data gathered.

¹⁶⁹ Do you think this image reflects Africans? Who post it online? Why?

Uncivilized People
<p><i>“Well, may be the minority. <u>Posted by Americans to make them seen as people also need to be civilized and they (Americans) are the saviours</u>”.</i></p> <p><i>“Not probably yes, and the one who posted, he or she wanted to show <u>that Africans seem like slaves no more</u>.”</i></p> <p><i>“I don’t think so may be <u>American and European in order to show that Africans are uncivilized or African civilization is uncivilized (animals)</u>.”</i></p>

Table 2.7: Learners’ Attitudes towards the Africans’ Online Representations

The table above expounds learners’ attitudes about the online representations of the Africans. Most of the learners interviewed have denied the authenticity of the pictures that described the Africans as primitive people. They claim that the Westerners posted them online so as to dirty the reputation of this race. Here is a comment by a learner that explicates the idea *“I don’t think so may be American and European in order to show that Africans are uncivilized or African civilization is uncivilized (animals)”*. Another comment goes this way *“Well, may be the minority. Posted by Americans to make them seen as people also need to be civilized and they (Americans) are the saviours”*. Some learners contended that the ones who posted them are derived by their hatred and dislike for the Africans. A learner clearly avers *“The image does not represent the Africans, it is the enemies who posted this, because they hate us.”* The minority of the learners interviewed have described the picture in relation to Africans’ cultural diversities. A learner gives their view stating *“Sometimes yes and sometimes no. Because Africans have many different identities many different cultures”*.

2.6. Conclusion :

Beyond shadow of a doubt, the online platforms that have become another venue for learners to develop their cultural knowledge are instrumenstaised chauvinistically to scatter some negative representations and stereotypes about the Other. The biased nature of these online ecologies inspects the very nature of technology that, according to the prospect that this study adopts, is humanised and deprived of its robotic and mechanistic qualities. The neutrality of such online spaces is substituted for implicit intentions loaded by discriminatory, racist attitudes and evil wills. Learners, though it is undeniable to eschew the amount of knowledge they develop in relation to online spaces, are exposed to a flow of information along stereotypical ideas and depictions, including their own culture. Undeniably, this chapter divulged the seamy side of the Internet, and revealed that representations of cultures are but an activity of power and superiority. On the one hand, the West is represented as the cascade of good values, social democratic issues, civilization and modernity. The Orient, per contra, is the epitome of moral decay, dehumanization, and terroristic behaviours. In the same stream, pour the online representations of the Africans who are described as the source of famine, poverty, and aggression.

In such unbridled online ecologies where the human percolators, namely the teachers are substituted for manifold links of distractions, the chary infiltration of the knowledge that the learners come across is too low. Unquestionably, this environment instigates the spread of stereotypical and prejudicial affiliations between the self and the Other. Likewise, the luck of learners' intercultural awareness and their self-centredness along the chauvinistic representations of learners' culture, undeniably foment a kind reciprocity between the two sides, nurtured and loaded by mistrust, if not hatred. Lucidly, the learners respond, in most case negatively to the online representations they have been introduced to. Furthermore, these learners are not aucourant of the clear-cut distinction between the religions and religious beings, and religious interpretations. Consequently, they label all that is the Other in the frame of "unbelievers". In the light of the discussions in relation to online representations and learners'

attitudes about online distortion of their culture, the background knowledge that learners bring to the EFL classrooms obligates chary exploration and rigorous analysis. This idea along the duty of teachers as intercultural mediators will be tackled in the third chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE: Linguistic Competence Overrules an Intercultural World: Learners' Cultural Representations, Stereotypes, and Prejudices Eschewed in EFL Classrooms

3.1. Introduction	213
3.2. The History of Teaching About Other Cultures	214
3.3. The Significance of Cultural Instruction	218
3.4. Quandaries of Intercultural Instruction	227
3.5. The Context of teaching About Cultures in Algeria	234
3.5.1. The LMD Reform in Algeria	234
3.5.1.1. LMD Syllabi of English	239
3.5.1.1.1. First Year LMD Syllabus of English	240
3.5.1.1.2. Second Year LMD Syllabus of English	244
3.5.1.1.3. Third Year LMD Syllabus of English	245
3.5.1.2. The Significance of Literature in Cultural Instruction	246
3.5.1.3. Approaches of Teaching Literature	259
3.5.1.3.1. The Contents of the Subjects of Literature Within LMD System	261
3.5.1.3.1.1. First Year Subject of Literature	261
3.5.1.3.1.2. Second Year Subject of Literature	263
3.5.1.3.1.3. Third Year Subject of Literature	266
3.6 . The Assessment of Intercultural Learning	269
3.6.1. Predicaments of Intercultural Assessment	270
3.6.2 Study Sample	274
3.6.3. First Year learners' Views About the Other	276
3.6.4. Second Year learners' Views About the Other	280
3.6.5. Third Year Learners' Views About the Other	238
3.7. Conclusion	288

3.1. Introduction:

In a global world mediated by technology, constraining the process of learning other languages and about other cultures to classrooms is a fallacy that most of the scholars, nowadays, confirm. As it had been shown in the previous chapter, learners are prone to develop their cultural knowledge from other sources, namely the Internet. The latter furnishes venues for retrieving information and collaboration among the learners and imminent scholars. Howbeit, these online platforms are not neutral in depicting cultures. Beyond shadow of a doubt, the loose interstice that resides between the chauvinistic nature of online platforms and learners' ethnocentric perspectives accredits room for stereotypes and prejudices to circulate freely, nurturing negative attitudes about the Self and the Other.

EFL classrooms have a vital duty in relation to the distorted process pointed at. The instruction of languages and the teaching about other cultures are elemental as to mitigating learners' attitudes and developing their awareness about the chauvinistic nature of those online platforms. Beyond shadow of a doubt, an effective education that prioritizes those concerns would lead the learners to objectively view the cultural world around them. Despite this fact, the process of teaching about cultures in Algeria does not really fulfill its duty as to developing learners' intercultural skills. This is the case since both teachers and the contents of the syllabi of English do not meet the needs of a contemporary intercultural world. Despite the fact that literature is quintessential as to developing learners' cultural awareness, it does not provide a knowledge that corresponds to the 21st century world. Teachers, too, are likely to eschew learners' cultural shortcomings and focus on their linguistic competence while assessing their writing performances.

This chapter reconnoiters the wide interlude that demarcates between learners' online learning and classroom learning. It reviews some views in relation to the significance of teaching about other cultures. After that, it underscores the mammoth role of literature in relation to the process of teaching about other cultures. A brief overview about the LMD system is introduced.

These theoretical backgrounds consolidate the practical section that targets the context of teaching languages and about¹⁷⁰ other cultures in Algeria. This part digs deeper into the syllabi of English introduced to the three levels (first-second-third years). In connection with this, the contents of the syllabi of literature would be rigorously analyzed. Finally, teachers' assessment of learners' cultural shortcomings will be investigated. To cut it short, this chapter scrutinizes the effectiveness of EFL classroom learning in mitigating stereotypes, prejudices, and representations learners are likely to develop in online platforms, and from other sources, not doubt.

3.2. The History of Teaching about Other Cultures:

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, a successful intercultural learning obligates teachers' as well as learners' cognizance of the significance of teaching and learning about other cultures in EFL milieus and online platforms¹⁷¹. This awareness is likely to reconcile asymmetrical cultural perceptions and upbringings. Unlike the bygone years, where the necessity of implementing culture along language learning was a theoretical endeavour, the contemporary era is preoccupied by assessing the outcomes of the integration of culture along the debated field. However, this recognition had been preceded by heated debates that charted some ways of teaching about other cultures.

The history of teaching about other cultures had been charted by two main panoramas. The first perspective entails the transmission of cultural facts represented in statistical formats. The target cultures, within this vista, are epitomized in the structures of their institutions and other touchstones of civilization such as literature and art, what scholars label "highbrow ¹⁷² information". This cultural prospect also encompasses lowbrow cultural

¹⁷⁰ We use the expression 'teaching about other cultures and not cultures, since the scope of culture is very broad, and therefore one is likely to give some cultural ideas only that do not reflect all the aspects of the targeted culture.

¹⁷¹ In this study the scope of learning about other cultures is not bound to language classes only, but it embodies online learning too (this idea is detailed in the previous chapter).

¹⁷² Highbrow is "*a person of superior intellectual interests and tastes*".Dictionary.com (<http://dictionary.reference.com>).

knowledge, which accentuates customs, habits and other daily cultural activities (Kramsch, 1993:4).

Inconvertibly, this cultural purview does not match the need of an effective teaching that prioritizes meaning and mutual understanding over cultural facts and objects. Kramsch (ibid.) points the fact that this approach of teaching about cultures is rather superficial, as it does not underscore meaning as its nucleus. She goes on to state that such a shallow understanding of culture would not help much in the leaning process, as it typifies rigid purviews about cultures¹⁷³. Huebener (1959: 177) postulates that this perspective provides learners with “*mere book knowledge learned by rote*”¹⁷⁴. The second approach of teaching about other cultures hinges on some anthropological platforms and cross-cultural psychology as well. Thanasoulas (2001) contends that this panorama overshadows mere cultural facts and focuses on interpretive processes within divergent cultures. He maintains:

The other perspective, drawing upon cross-cultural psychology or anthropology, has been to embed culture within an interpretive framework and establish connections, namely, points of reference or departure, between one's own and the target country (Thanasoulas, ibid.).

One objection that can be formulated in relation to the debated prospect springs from the fact that this perspective accredits room for cultural knowledge that can be invested in meaning interpretation within communicative processes. Howbeit, not all the users of such knowledge can successfully employ it in their interactions. Indeed, the skills that any communicator needs to interact globally are not the nucleus for such a cultural panorama.

¹⁷³ It is worth mentioning that in intercultural communication, meaning is the most important element that lubricates interactions.

¹⁷⁴ ‘By rote’ is an expression that denotes the mechanic nature of learning (memorizing things without understanding their meanings. (Dictionary.com)

The bygone approaches to teaching about other cultures had been solely affiliated with accessing works of literature. Ergo, any language learning had been deemed to be successful as learners penetrate the meanings coded within the literary works (Lessard-Clouston, 1997:133). Flewelling, (1993: 339) shares this perspective as he commented “[I]t was through reading that students learned of the civilization associated with the target language’. (cited in Lessard-Clouston, 1997). The metamorphosis in language teaching had been apparent by the time Hall (1959), advanced his perspectives of teaching language to match emotional and physical needs along other goals. Kramsch (1993: 224) outlined the aims of these scholars as she states: ‘the foreign culture [would appear] less threatening and more accessible to the language learner’. In the same line of thought, Steele (1989: 155) observed that Brooks (1968) “emphasized the importance of culture not for the study of literature but for language learning’. The model of teaching about other cultures that Brooks advanced disregarded geographical and historical backgrounds in relation to language instruction, and focuses on anthropological frameworks in the study of culture. By the same token, the distinction Brook brought forward in relation to the typologies of cultures¹⁷⁵ had been a turning point as far as culture instruction was concerned . This discrimination between cultures had been of due importance as it broke down the manta that “culture is an intellectual gift bestowed only upon the elite” (Byram, and Morgan, 1994). Thanasoulas described Brooks’ approach to culture teaching as he commented:

Admittedly, the main thrust of his work was to make people aware that culture resides in the very fabric of their lives—their *modus vivendi*, their beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes—rather than in a preoccupation with aesthetic reflections or high-falutin ideas. Thanasoulas (2001:4)

¹⁷⁵ Brooks distinguishes between two kinds of culture. The first identified as Culture with capital “ C” that joins literature , music, art, etc. and culture with small “ c” that joins lifestyles and behaviours. (cited in Thanasoulas (2001:4).

Other metamorphoses in relation to language learning and teaching had been a driving force, as to the implementation of culture along language classes. The first change had been affiliated with the move outlined in relation to language teaching approaches. Behaviourism¹⁷⁶ as an approach that hinged on drills, repetition and imitation, along positivism¹⁷⁷ that bottomed on experience and sensory faculties, had been substituted for other approaches that prioritized critical thinking and analysis. This metamorphosis had been subsidized as the dusty understanding of language had been abandoned for good. It is worth mentioning that the past understandings of language framed language in a set of codes that delineated grammatical rules only. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, these understandings paid lip service to the reality of language learning which, limited to such a frame, would undeniably lead to the breakdown of communication and the learning process as well (Thanasoulas, *ibid.*:5).

The process of teaching about other cultures gained momentum in the 1980's, the era where researchers acknowledged the significance of culture in relation to language learning (Byram, Morgan et al., 1994: 5). The outstanding role of culture had been subsidized as the fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistic prospered in the 1980's and 1990's. The influence of these disciplines on the debated concept had been lucid in relation to the way culture was conceived by scholars. The emblem that culture serves only communication had been substituted for the fact that culture functions as a means of persuasion, deception, punishment and control (Fairclough, 1989). By the same token, the understanding of communication as a mere exchange of information had been replaced by the fact that communication is a cognitive as well as affective and value-laden activity.

¹⁷⁶**Behaviorism** is built on the assumption "*behave is what organisms do.*" This approach targets promoting the scientific study of behaviour. It excludes The influence of social groups and cultures in the formation of bahviours (Retrieved from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/behaviorism/>)

¹⁷⁷ **Positivism**, in philosophy, outlines any system that hinges on retrieving data from experience and excludes a priori or metaphysical speculations. (Auguste Comte, 1798–1857) ([HTTP://WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/EBCHECKED/TOPIC/471865/POSITIVISM](http://www.britannica.com/EBCHECKED/TOPIC/471865/POSITIVISM)).

3.3. The Significance of Cultural Instruction:

Undoubtedly, the reasons behind implementing culture within language teaching and learning milieus are multifarious and miscellaneous. Howbeit, some of them are more paramount than others. These incentives include the reciprocity that gels both language and culture together, and the aims of language education that targets learners' development of communicative competence. To begin with, the affiliation between language and culture has become a boring platitude tackled within every discussion in relation to language learning. However, what needs emphasis are the implications of the mutual influence of both constructs on both teachers and learners.

It is worth mentioning that language has never been an “*an autonomous construct*”, insightfully contended Fairclough (1989). Per contra, language is affiliated with social institutions, and hence constructs social order and is constructed by these forms of societies. Fairclough (ibid.) argues that “*language is not an ‘autonomous construct, but social practice both creating and created by ‘the structures and forces of [the] social institutions within which we live and function’.*” Duranti clarifies the reciprocity that gels both language and culture as she commented:

To be part of a culture means to share the propositional knowledge and the rules of inference necessary to understand whether certain propositions are true (given certain premises). To the propositional knowledge, one might add the procedural knowledge to carry out tasks such as cooking, weaving, farming, fishing, giving a formal speech, answering the phone, asking for a favor, writing a letter for a job application. Duranti (1997: 28-29)

Buttjes (1990:55) has identified the reciprocity between language and culture in the following connections:

- ✓ Language acquisition does not follow a universal sequence, but differs across cultures;
- ✓ the process of becoming a competent member of society is realized through exchanges of language in particular social situations;
- ✓ every society orchestrates the ways in which children participate in particular situations, and this, in turn, affects the form, the function, and the content of children's utterances;
- ✓ caregivers' primary concern is not with grammatical input, but with the transmission of socio-cultural knowledge;
- ✓ the native learner, in addition to language, acquires also the paralinguistic patterns and the kinesics¹⁷⁸ of his or her culture.

Truly, the teaching about other cultures accompanies any kind of leaning process. This is true, since culture not only does it befall in language classes, but also goes hand in hand with everyday language use. The duties of culture are not constrained to this function, but they extend to influence social positions and cultural roles. Armour-Thomas and Gopaul-McNicol (1998: 56) share this claim as they postulated that “*culture defines not only what its members should think or learn but also what they should ignore or treat as irrelevant*”.

The implementation of culture within language learning is backed up by how different languages affect thinking and behaving processes. Undoubtedly, Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that mainly explains how language affects thought and behaviour differently, enlightens some grounds of the necessity of teaching about other cultures. The strong version of this hypothetical claim suggests that

¹⁷⁸ **kinesics** is the study of body movements, gestures, facial expressions, etc., as a means of communication (Dictionary.com).

language determines the way individuals think about the whole world, and the way they behave in divergent situations. Claiming the validity of that, one is likely to say that language determines culture, and in language classrooms, it decides upon the cultures to be allowed. Burton (2010:98) asserts “*It is not difficult to see how this idea provokes unease, lending weight to ideas of ‘superior’ languages (and ‘target’ cultures*”. This claim had been rebuked by many scientists, who chastised it on the basis of the ideas that this claim would mainly generate the fact that scientific discoveries lack universality, and that they bottom on the language they had been brought in. The other version of the hypothesis outlined above is said to be weak. It suggests that language influences thought, but does not determine it. Within this vista, translation across languages and cultures illustrates the point at hand. Within processes of translation, a room is left for persons’ views and personal interpretation. Under this spirit, culture is given its share in relation to the processes of meaning interpretation and construal. The common point that links all the views discussed above relates to the fact that culture is part of any language learning.

The reciprocity that jumbles both language and culture suggests that any linguistic act is deemed to befall in cultural grounds. Clearly, communication is one the elemental activities that consolidate human relationships and encounters. This implies that the duty of cultures in relation to lubricating communicative processes is undeniable. The dichotomy linguistic competence vs. communicative competence is worth dealing with in relation to the significance of culture in any kind of teaching and learning process. To begin with, linguistic competence (as discussed in chapter one) falls short of mark when it comes to communicative situations that necessitate more than mere grammatical rules. Communicative competence, too, recounts the same story of inefficiency and inadequacy in its rapport with instructive milieus. As to this model of communication, each single foci had been dedicated to the different contextual variables that influence communicative acts. By contrast, the cognitive skills that lubricate cultural encounters had been a trivia as to the debated competence (Straub, 1999: 2). These shortcomings urged the emergence of other competences that recognized the significance of culture in language learning. Thanasoulas argues that:

In other words, since the wider context of language, that is, society and culture, has been reduced to a variable elusive of any definition—as many teachers and students incessantly talk about it without knowing what its exact meaning is—it stands to reason that the term communicative competence should become nothing more than an empty and meretricious word, resorted to if for no other reason than to make an educational point (Thanasoulas, 2001).

A fluent speaker of any language is inclined to possess communicative skills that allow them exchange ideas, express views, and most importantly, achieve communicative needs. Inconvertibly, this constitutes the main objectives of language learning and teaching. Howbeit, to attain a communicative ability, the learner needs to dive deeper into the culture of the foreigner. The problem, according to Purba (2011:48), springs from the unbecoming knowledge that textbooks provide to the learners. He asserts that *“For many people, this is difficult to do for although grammar books gives so called genuine examples from real life, without background knowledge those real situations may be considered fictive by the learners.* Under this spirit, a befitting cultural knowledge would enhance the communicative process the learners partake in. The vitality of culture for communication is elucidated in the passage below:

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted... Culture...is the foundation of communication (Samovar et al., 1981: 3).

The vitality of cultures does not only permeate one’s communicative activities, but its role dives deeper into persons’ acquisition of their mother tongues. The momentous role that cultures occupy in relation to language learning goes back to the very acquisition of the mother tongue, argues the sociologist Durkheim (1947). According to him, children learn their mother tongues by means of formulating some hypotheses to interpret some unknown circumstances. The

child, in case they come across something or somebody, is likely to call upon these hypotheses that are culturally determined. Lucidly, the process of learning the mother tongue goes through the process of matching the cultural knowledge the child brings with him with those things and the beings they come across. Ergo, before the process of internalization, the child's learning undergoes some corrections. Landar (1965:225) postulates that. *"If he is (child) taken for a walk and sees a sparrow and says, "canary," he will be corrected, learning that 'competence counts'.* In other words, *'[s]ocioculturally structured associations have to be internalized"*. By the same token, language has never been a passive agent in relation to cultural practices and activities. Durkheim (ibid.) contends that language should not be recognized as an optional construct, but it permeates the very construction and formation of the cultural thoughts.

Lessard-Clouston (1997) claims that despite the fact that culture is taught in every single class of language both explicitly and implicitly, one should emphasize its' instruction due to the fact learners need to be au courant of the intricacies that bring communication, culture and language learning together. In addition to this, the debated process abets learners decrease their stereotypes in relation to the Other. Moreover, as learners develop some knowledge about the target cultures, they manipulate their own learning by means of inspecting the contexts within which the target culture is presented. All these premises for the implementation of culture in language classes had been outlined by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993: 7-8), who hinged their suggestions on Seelye's (1988) *'seven goals of cultural instruction'*. They believe that the process of teaching about other cultures should meet the following goals:

- ✓ To help learners to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours;
- ✓ to help learners to develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the ways in which people speak and behave;

- ✓ to help learners to become more aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture;
- ✓ to help learners to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language;
- ✓ to help learners to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence;
- ✓ to help learners to develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture;
- ✓ to stimulate learners' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people.

Positively, the process of teaching about other cultures affects the learning process at different planes. However, while some effects are recognized by scholars, other elemental traits of culture are eschewed. McKay (2003) maintains that cultures influence the language teaching in two main ways. Linguistically speaking, it affects the very substance of language patterns, including semantics, pragmatics, and discourse. From a pedagogical vista, culture obligates the availability of certain materials, since any teacher is inclined to design their language course along cultural considerations. This could be the case in language classrooms, since some textbooks provide, for instance pictures, while others do not, and in this case need other materials to be used.

Among the touchstones of teaching culture along languages is the room it opens for learner to develop tolerance and understanding of the target culture, and the foreign people who, in most cases, are seen as enemies and non-believers (Valdes, 1986: 33). Some learners are prone to think that learning a foreign culture presupposes an adoption of the target culture and the denial of their own culture. However, teaching about other cultures tightens the reciprocity between one's own culture and the target's. Brown (1986) believes that individual's culture lubricates the understating of other cultures (cited in Valdes, *ibid.*) .In

the same line of thought, Genc and Bada (2005) postulates that the process of teaching about other cultures can be done with the preservation of learners' culture. Brown stated that one's own culture furnishes:

a 'cognitive framework....[which] is made up of a number of unquantifiable [my emphasis]embrac[ing] ...assumptions about how the world is constructed' (ibid.). But this cognitive framework is, to a great extent, maintained and sanctioned through the very use of language, which is arguably 'the most visible and available expression of [a] culture' (Brown, 1986, cited in Valdes, ibid.).

Admittedly, the process of teaching about other cultures is deemed successful, in case it leads the learners to develop empathy towards the target culture. Ergo, the aim of teaching about other cultures has never aimed at to eradicating values and patterns, but its goal is "*refine the self so that it can take a more universal and less egoistic form*" (Valdes: ibid.100). In connection with this, Paige, et al. (n.d.) emphasize the significance of culture learning in relation to language learning, which they define as "*the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures*". They maintain that culture learning should excel mere acquisition of cultural fact, and account for interactional skills that involve:

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

However, in case culture teaching is not taken as a paramount objective of teaching languages, learners are prone to develop ethnocentric attitudes in relation to the foreigners. Moreover, the lack of cultural awareness would lead them to stratify the involved cultures on the basis of chauvinistic hierarchies, and undoubtedly perceive their own culture as the only right representation of reality. Kramsch expounds this claim as she asserts:

People who identify themselves as members of a social group (family, neighborhood, professional or ethnic affiliation, and nation) acquire common ways of viewing the world through their interactions with other members of the same group. These views are reinforced through institutions like the family, the school, the workplace, the church, the government, and other sites of socialization through their lives. Common attitudes, beliefs and values are reflected in the way members of the group use language—for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it. (Kramsch, 2001:6)

Amchouch (n.d) states that the history of Arab nations reflects the reciprocity that gels both the flowering of nations with their ability to communicate with other nations worldwide, and hence taking advantage from their diverse achievements. It is well known that the Arabs contacted different cultures, namely those of Spaniards, Greeks, and the Persians, during the Abbassides' era. Definitely, the outcomes of those contacts had been the most important factors that helped the flourish of the Arab Islamic civilization at that time. It is also recognized that the mutual influence within these nations had been based mainly on the extent of mastery of foreign languages and the ability to translate them.

Abou Elrouss (n.d.) accentuates the significance of teaching about other cultures, as he claims that each language reflects a given culture (s). Therefore, teaching any language with no reference to the cultural grounds, would lead learners to accumulate meaningless symbols. Per contra, as enough cultural information is introduced to the learners, their interactive processes with the

foreigners would be subsidized. Additionally, teaching language and culture in a balanced way would enrich learners' linguistic and cultural repertoires, and hence develop a readiness to understand and tolerate the Other.

Abou Alrouss (ibid.) reinforces the significance of teaching foreign languages and about other cultures, as he showcases the status quo of teaching Arabic to foreigners who, according to him, are likely to discover the Arabs' cultures, and hence abandon their negative views about the people in question. Despite this promising fact, teaching Arabic to foreigners is not that effective, since the learners, though they develop high levels in the language, have some cultural gaps in relation to the targeted culture. Part of the reason why this is true, is teachers' emphasis on teaching language at the expense of the cultural backgrounds.

Abou Elrouss (ibid.) maintains that the studies conducted in the field of teaching language and about cultures have revealed that, in case language is taught solely, the whole teaching process would be useless for both the teacher and the learner, as language learning itself becomes an arduous activity. Ergo, the process of learning another language should be carried on via the targeted language, since introducing a reconciliatory language would harm the process of language and culture learning. However, this gloomy aspect is contrasted by a bright side of teaching about other cultures. In connection with this, the debated process abets the learners to develop positive views, not only towards the target culture, but the target language too, as the process becomes enjoyable and motivating.

The influence of motivation on language learning had become truism that most researchers take it as self-evident process within the debated process. Per contra, the reciprocity between motivation and culture still brings about heated debates among scholars of diverse fields. While some of them asserted that culture, in most cases, hinders learners' motivation, others claimed that *"education that respects diversity creates an inclusive safe environment and also engages students' motivation"* (Hoosain, 2007). Concurrent with this, Purba (2011:48) asserts that learners prefer the tasks that epitomize divergent cultures and perspectives, including role plays, singing, dancing, and discovering new ideas

and information about foreign cultures. This is true as far as the teaching of English in Algeria is concerned. As teachers of the subject of “oral expression”, we had the chance to observe that the learners are more interested in the new cultural aspects than the other common traits within their own cultures.

Politzer (1959:85-86) maintains that teaching about other cultures has never been a matter of liking it or disliking it; on the contrary, it is an obligatory process that any instructor of language should be aware of. In case, this process is eschewed in language teaching milieus, the basic aims of teaching would be obstructed. Politzer asserts that:

If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning; for unless he is warned, unless he receives cultural instruction, he will associate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols". (Politzer, *ibid.*)

3.4. Quandaries of Intercultural Instruction:

Language learning is believed to be arduous and demanding, since it requires both teachers' competence and learners' motivation to learn. This process may be obstructed by manifold obstacles that can be rooted in linguistic deficiencies and cultural ones. As to the former, learners who lack the linguistic necessary backgrounds are prone not do well in their linguistic activities. The latter designates the stereotypical interlude that demarcates between learners' culture and the target one. This implies that leaning about other cultures is one of the most difficult processes that, if not given due attention and significance, would hinder the whole language learning process.

Burton (2010:98) maintains that we are over the argument whether or not we should implement culture in language classes. He adds that the eminence of culture in relation to learning milieus is recognized by everyone, yet taken for granted. Accordingly, *“there are not many objections, but there are numerous*

complications". In addition to this, other predicaments emanate from the very nature of the concept culture that until now challenges researchers and studies. Within this vista, the teachers are exposed to an intricate dilemma, as they have to decide which culture they should implement in their classes, and which they should sidestep. The predicament is more stressed, since language teaching and culture teaching, though interrelate, are different. Undoubtedly, in culture classes, much concern should be given to the learners' cultures. Burton (ibid.) adds that the teachers are exposed to the labyrinthine concept of culture, since they are unable to detect which aspects are representative of certain cultures and which are not. According to him, the obdurate nature of culture "*is likely to steal valuable time from more bona fide language learning*" (ibid).

Another issue of relevance in relation to teaching about other cultures is grounded on the lack of practice outside the classroom settings. Burton (ibid.) alludes to a very significant knot in relation to culture learning that most of the teachers, if not all, are unaware of. He claims that the target culture and the native one represent two opposing information processes and use. Ergo, the learners are prone to call upon the target culture while they read texts or listen to speeches delivered in the target culture. In such a case, the target culture, and the whole process of learning about it would be constrained to an "input use". Per contra, when it comes to learners' cultures, they are likely to use their background knowledge as platforms for communication outside the learning setting. In this way, their own culture is processed in relation to output activities, especially communicative processes. Within this prospect, the learning process would be a mono-cultural process that would, undeniably, be carried on at the expense of learners' readiness to become intercultural citizens.

Brining the issue of the difficulties of cultural instruction to the fore without discussing their historical and colonial backgrounds would be unfair. Bennani (n.d.) alludes to a very significant obstacle in the process of teaching foreign languages, which he localizes within the process of teaching native languages such as Arabic. He postulates that Arabic is a unifying language that bridges the borders within the Maghreb and the Arab world. This language is deemed an elemental trait in spreading feelings of brotherhood and attitudes of cooperation

among the involved nations. He claims that this linguistic unity could be achieved only when an effective education is implemented in the Maghreb, the education that targets erasing the colonial past. Admittedly, this claim runs counter to the teaching about foreign cultures which, according to this ethnocentric perspective, represents the colonial power. He asserts that every one of us recalls that among the aims of colonialism, were the Christianization and the spread of the French culture in the Maghreb. As to the former incentive, King Charles X (1830) as says: “*the impressive satisfaction that I want to get, to preserve the dignity of France, will be transformed - with the help of God- for the benefit of Christianity*” (cited in Bennani, *ibid.*). This would lead to the following dilemma: if some scholars within the Arab world still think in this shallow way, how would our learners tolerate the Other, given the status quo of cultural instruction in the Arab world?

To diminish such threats, the process of Arabization¹⁷⁹ had to be launched within the Arab world. To meet this end, following the Syrian path, the Maghreb banned any introduction of foreign languages to primary schools; they had been constrained to high schools’ programmes only . Bennani (n.d.) claims that the aim of primary education aimed at raising people’s awareness of their cultural identities, a process that could be achieved only in Arabic. Another incentive that backed up the exclusion of foreign languages in the early phases of learning relates to the fact that Arabic was necessary for future jobs, while foreign languages served only few functions. Teaching foreign languages along Arabic in primary schools had been banned, since it was believed to:

- ✓ confuse the minds of the pupils, exhaust their minds, and hamper their intellectual development as a result of this confusion and fatigue;
- ✓ Arabic language is complex in itself, since it requires more efforts than other language leaning processes;

¹⁷⁹ The process of Arabization had been introduced to the Arab countries after the independence.

- ✓ the wide gap the distinguishes between Arabic and European languages makes our learners find more difficulties learning European languages, if compared to European learners learning other European ;
- ✓ the differences between the vernacular languages and the classical language is a critical obstacle.

Each culture has its own modes of transmission of language knowledge, which determine the behaviour of the individuals towards new learning. Cicurel (2003) supports the importance of the educational culture and cultural heritage of the learner in the process of knowledge transmission and learning. In the family, the individual receives an education about the values that play a leading role in the construction of representations about learning processes. Ergo, how the individual is raised is undoubtedly reflected in how they learn. That is to say, some of the individuals are raised up on grounds of taking initiatives, expressing their views, and having some kind of freedom, while others are not. Consequently, everyone would represent a different approach of learning. While the former is prone to express his cultural views candidly, the other is likely to perceive the target culture with reservation and a kind of denial. Dabène claims that the influence of family upbringings is lucidly expressed in educational settings. She expounds this idea as he asserts:

From the social point of view, a child living in an Arabic society largely depends on family support even after their independence. This emotional, financial, and cultural dependency will influence how they live and behave in their second medium: school (Dabène 1994: 17).

Dabène (ibid.) addresses culture and its influence on learning a foreign language, in an attempt to better understand the relationship between the institutional environment, educational culture, and the difficulties that accompany learning French . In a study conducted by her, she elucidates the extent to which learners adhere to their families, Muslim faith and Arab identities. Additionally, a kind of homogeneity is noticed between the values of

belonging and basic components of the identity that relates to Islamic religion, the Arabic language, culture, civilization and history (ibid.).

Dabène (ibid.) emphasizes the importance of cultural differences and their influence on language learning. Inconvertibly, cultural heritage is an element that should not be overlooked in this context of “savoir apprendre”, which is determined by the society in which the learner lives. Moreover, she expounds how the cultural gap forms a barrier in relation to language learning, since educational traditions and relational practices create problems that are difficult to solve.

Her analysis focuses on two main elements: the 'educational traditions' which include learning strategies, known as teaching strategies and 'relational practices' that refer to relations between the teacher, the learner and knowledge within the language classroom. In other works, she accentuates the influence of cultural practices on attitudes towards learning (Dabène, ibid.18). This author underscores the significance of taking into account cultural practices in relation to learners' attitudes towards learning, so as to negotiate the imposition of methodological strategies previously set (ibid. 17). This claim matches what Alan Pulverness labels “*culture-sanitized*¹⁸⁰ *course material*”. He believes learners are supposed to cavilingly approach ideas and information within the cultures delivered to them via their mother tongue; however, their critical minds are “*infantilized*” by means of the materials used by the teachers, and which are, in most cases, deprived of the cultural touch.

The significance of learning foreign languages is, undoubtedly, a necessity that abets the learners to communicate at a global scale, since it furnishes for divergent perspectives of perceiving the world around them, and displays attitudes of tolerance and forgiveness. By the same token, foreign languages allow the penetration of different cultures, and hence the exploration of new ways of life. The process opens a room for the discovery of other individuals who epitomize divergent cultures.

¹⁸⁰ This expression means “to free from dirt, germs, etc., as by cleaning or sterilizing”. “to make less offensive by eliminating anything unwholesome, objectionable, incriminating”, etc.: to sanitize a document before releasing it to the press (dictionary.reference.com).

Sheikh (n.d.) accentuates the fact that the teaching foreign languages can be obstructed by many barriers, in most cases cultural differences between the target culture and the learners'. He maintains that, when there is a cultural or a linguistic gap, learners refer to their mother tongue or native culture to penetrate the meanings they come across when they deal with the target cultures. Within this mono-cultural vista, the potential for them to develop some misunderstandings towards the foreigner is high. Moreover, the lack of effective cultural instruction would, undoubtedly, lead to what Sheikh (ibid.) calls "cultural frame of reference (taken from Islam¹⁸¹). In this regard, when the learners do not find a cultural equivalent to some aspects of the target culture, they tend to use "cultural frame of reference, as they interpret these traits in relation to some aspects in their own culture, in most cases using their mother tongue.

According to Sheikh (ibid.), using the mother tongue or the native culture in EFL contexts is not banned, if used in an organized way. Therefore, explaining some terms with reference to the native culture could not harm the process of cultural learning. Per contra, if too much emphasis is put on the native culture, the learners would find difficulties, if not rivalrous challenges to construct their own understandings of the target culture as autonomous and peculiar representations of certain people. This dilemma is reinforced as some teachers encourage their learners to use dictionaries, namely "Arabic-English dictionaries. By the same token, learners will become culturally handicapped, unable to think cavinlingly about the target culture, and unqualified to perceive difference within cultures. Ergo, he states, the process of teaching foreign languages should excel languages as a means of communication, but languages as carriers of cultural representations. In achieving this pillar understanding, an intercultural milieu would be guaranteed for our learners.

Archambault and Corbeil (n.d.) maintain that as teachers of English, we must put in mind that the concept of culture encompasses all aspects of life of an organized group of people, including political, economic, religious, and artistic activities, and certain products of these activities, among other cultural

²² frame of reference: in Arabic: "القياس"

products (songs, radio or television, movies, books). Culture is lived in the present (present), while it has its roots in the past (history), and it is projected into the future (group projects). Within this vista, it becomes lucid that the teaching of foreign languages can be an opportunity or a way to teach about cultures. Nevertheless, the cultural content of education will be superficial as compared to the complexity of culture. In addition, because the changing environment in which it takes place, education tends to favor the novel cultural traits at the expense of history, politics at the expense of the economy, cultural fashionable products at the expense of others. Therefore, regardless of any other considerations, one should be skeptical towards teaching cultural content in relation to second and foreign language types of learning.

More important than this, language learning is no longer bound to particular cultures. Now with the spread of English all over the world, the mantra that “all this is English is definitely British or American”, is abandoned. The current perspectives of teaching about other cultures aid the learners to develop their linguistic skills, in our case English, and at the same time widen their cultural knowledge to account for different cultures across the world. However, Smith (1976:39) asserts that the global status of English language suggests that, as English has become a lingua franca, learners do not need to develop cultural knowledge about the target cultures, since via English language, they can communicate worldwide. Ergo, the most important aim of teaching a global language is to lubricate communication across cultures.

Due to the momentous role culture occupies within the process of language learning, the teaching about other cultures should excel mere transmission of cultural facts Kramsch (1993). Culture should be construed as an interpersonal process that encompasses outstanding constructs such as gender, age, social class, etc. Despite the sound arguments that back up the significance of culture in relation to foreign language learning, some scholars and teachers still recognize it as a skill that only skillful communicators possess, rather than a necessary communicative need that any individual who aspires global communication should develop (Thanasoulas (2001:6). Undoubtedly, the

significance of culture in language learning should not take cultural knowledge as trait of communicative competence, but the aim that teachers, syllabus designers, and curriculum designers should target (ibid.).

Purba (2011) postulates that despite the fact that language teaching is deemed to be culture teaching, teachers are not cognizant of that fact, including the effects cultures have on the process of learning languages. He states:

Despite the awareness, it remains unclear to many foreign language educators just why and how this has come to be the case, what impact this has on their classroom practice, and how to incorporate culture into the FL classroom. (Purba, ibid. :49)

Among the duties of teachers, Melde (1987) postulates, is to develop learners' cultural awareness. This cognizance abets the learners to develop an understanding of both the target culture and their own. Byram, Morgan et al., (1994) contend that *"through a process of decentering and a level of reciprocity, there arises a moral dimension, a judgmental tendency, which is not defined purely on formal, logical grounds"*. To meet these needs, learners need to step in the shoes of the foreigner. In such a way, they develop a kind of knowledge about other cultures that can be invested in communicative activities (ibid.).

3.5. The Context of teaching About Cultures in Algeria:

3.5.1. The LMD Reform in Algeria:

Language policy in Algeria has undergone various metamorphoses over the bygone years. The first reform had been applied to the Algerian system of education just after the Independence of the country in 1962, which took the name of Arabization. This random policy that kept the country away from the global world had been severely chastised by scholars and politicians as well. Both

presidents of Algeria Mohamed Boudiaf¹⁸² and Abdelaziz Bouteflika¹⁸³ have described it as “*sinister policy*” (Benrabah,2002: 236 ,cited in Brikci, n.d., 2012).

The policy of Arabization had been launched as a reaction towards the linguistic practices French colonial power exercised in Algeria before independence, by means of using Arabic as the only language of instruction. Howbeit, the shortcomings had been huge, as scholars pointed to the asymmetrical nature that distinguished between Arabic language practices in the classroom and the linguistic activity that characterizes the outside classroom-settings. Under this spirit, the secretary of state of culture postulated that “: *In the street, people use all sorts of languages except [Classical] Arabic; this is not the normal state of things at all.*” (Benrabah,ibid.:235, cited in Brikci, n.d., ibid.).

Among the other educational reforms that charted the educational stream in our country are those amendments that befell in of the 1971 and 2003. These changes had been motivated by economic, social, and international needs. And since education is the ground on which the development of any nation could be judged, the educational system in Algeria had partaken in such a compelled transformation. The 1971 Reform had been motivated by the impelling need for executives, namely teachers and instructors to meet the needs of a new educational plan. This reform had been inclusive, since it overhauled teachers’ diplomas and provided new trainings to the instructors. The aim here was to affiliate between teachers’ training and the users’ needs. Consequently, this metamorphosis had subsidized the sector of higher education, as it promoted access to universities.

The search for common grounds of communication and transfer had been amid the touchstones of globalization, the movement that Gidden’s (1990:64) defines as “*the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and*

¹⁸³ **Muhammad Boudiaf**, (1919-1992) was an Algerian political leader who was a founder of the revolutionary National Liberation Front (FLN) that led the Algerian war of independence (1954–62), and, after a 27-year exile, he became the president of Algeria (1992 [http :// www. etc.edu .cn/eet /articles/vygotsky_zpd/index.htm](http://www.etc.edu.cn/eet/articles/vygotsky_zpd/index.htm)).

vice versa". Likewise, the emergence of global needs had been nurtured by the technological boom that took the traditional ways of life by the wide margin. In connection with this, Carnoy (2005) comments: "*And this globality became possible only recently because of the technological infrastructure provided by improved telecommunication networks*". Beyond shadow of a doubt, globalization nurtures multifarious fields and spheres. Nevertheless, its effects on information and creativity are prioritized. Carnoy (ibid.) claims that globalization is in favour of internationalized and fast growing information industries that produce knowledge, goods, and services. In the light of this increased demand for globality, much pressure had been exercised on systems of education, namely higher education to meet the needs of the "*global village*".

Algeria, like other countries, had partaken in the process of globalization, as the president Abdelaziz Bouteflika, in the annual conference of the *International Labour Organization* (ILO) held on September 2005 in Geneva, postulated: "": "*Like many other citizens in the world I dare to nourish hope that the next United Nations Summit ... will give an international impulse to build a social dimension of globalization which contributes to the maintenance of peace and international security*" (cited in Brikci, 2012).

Undeniably, the application of the process of Arabization in a world that bottoms on diversity and interculturality had been described as a wrong path, as far as the Algerian educational system was concerned. This awareness had urged some metamorphoses that touched various fields. The educational sector along the economic one had been the domains that received due attention, as far as changes had been concerned. As to economy, Algeria versed itself in the international trade that hinges on free-market. Education, too, had been among the sectors that have undergone considerable amendments. These changes had accompanied the adoption of the European educational system LMD in the academic year 2002-2003. This acronym stands for Bachelor-Master-Doctorate¹⁸⁴, a translation of the acronym "BMP" that abbreviates "Bachelor-Master-Philosophia Doctor" (cited in ibid.).

¹⁸⁴ The licence, corresponding to three years of study beyond the baccalauréat (bac+3);
The master, corresponding to two years further study beyond the licence (bac+5);
The doctorat, corresponding to three years of research beyond the master (bac+8).

The aim had been to be in line with the novel socio-economic scene that accompanied the move towards market economy. Moreover, adopting such an international educational system, in this case, LMD had come as a response to the needs of a global world. Pologna postulates that this system had been launched so as *“to create a common market of diplomas to facilitate the mobility of students and the creation of a common labor market, as well as the mobility of graduates with the concept of employability”* (Cited in Benghabrit and Senouci, 2009:190). Other reasons for the implementation of such a reform relate to the failure of the antecedent system, known as “the Classical System”. This system has been criticized by diverse commissions since the 1980’s, including ‘Commission National de Réforme du Système’. The contents of such a system had been believed to have the following shortcomings:

- ✓ Non- existent relationships with the socio-economic environment;
- ✓ the increase of joblessness among the graduate students;
- ✓ the inefficiency of training programmes (Mazzella ,2009:14).

The implementation of the LMD system has been instigated by the incentive of enhancing common points between the Algerian educational system and the international ones. According to Idri (2005), the Algerian educational reform is an example of how the Algerian government tries to apply identical programmes of most developed countries. The integration of the LMD reform in education in Algeria, Idri (ibid) believes, is considered as a move towards globalization, since this system has proved its utility, as it has been adopted by most European countries and even a considerable number of other countries of the world. This system has been applied in neighboring countries like Morocco and Tunisia before its application in Algeria.

The Ministry of Higher Education appointed a given number of commissions whose preoccupation was designing a framework for the LMD system within the Algerian context. Commission National de Réforme du Système’ (2001) mentions

the following reasons for the implementation of the new system to the Algerian higher education:

- ✓ have a clearer presentation of the degree courses by field of study, organized as study paths, leading to degrees that are recognized throughout the world;
- ✓ increase national and international mobility, especially towards European countries;
- ✓ create greater flexibility for each student in terms of both content and time taken to complete the degree courses;
- ✓ improve access to further education at any age;
- ✓ meeting the needs of globalization and technological boom; (In Mazzella, *ibid.*)
- ✓ increasing student flexibility in choosing and transferring courses and credits;
- ✓ making the system more efficient as relates to the time it takes for students to graduate;
- ✓ increasing lifelong learning opportunities;
- ✓ increasing institutional autonomy while producing learning outcomes more attuned to the needs of the labor market (Clark, 2006).

3.5.1.1. LMD Syllabi of English:

English is the number one language that is used worldwide. It is the main mode of communication within the global audiences from day- to -day communication to working in the office. The popularity of English as an international business language continues to grow by the day, as top business schools and universities irrespective of location are pushing for English as the teaching medium in order to meet the challenges of globalization.

As far as the Algerian educational system is concerned, English is introduced to learners at the level of the middle school. Becoming aware of the necessity of the language in question, the Ministry of Education opted for change, a change which touched all the subjects including English language. The programme of English teaching at this basic stage has been enriched by means of introducing new topics to the learners. Now, pupils have many workshops and productive activities to do. Moreover, English pronunciation has been emphasized which, we think, will help them develop a good oral skill.

At the level of secondary education, English language teaching is given more prominence in some branches. Themes like business and ethics, education, civilization and many others are introduced to learners via English. This variety of topics gives learners the opportunity to develop knowledge about other peoples and other cultures. English is given much emphasis in literary branches .The latter provides the learners with deeper knowledge about the target language and culture.

As one moves to higher education in Algeria, things become more specific and oriented. English occupies a very important place at university, in our case the University of Mostaganem. At this level, students pursuing a degree in English are supposed to dedicate their time to the study of the target language. Other modules like French and computing are introduced too, but are not as important as the language in question. Students learn various modules which contribute to enhancing their skills. The tables below will showcase LMD syllabi of English in detail:

3.5.1.1.1. First Year LMD Syllabus of English:

This section reconnoiters the contents of the syllabi of English within the LMD system. It displays the subjects that learners of English deal with along their three years of graduation. The focus of this analysis is put on the intercultural dimensions within the manifold subjects of English. This is processed via the time allocated to each subject and the content of each one. The tables below expound the idea best:

Subjects	Time Dedicated to Each Subject
Linguistics	One and a half hours a week
Methodology	Three hours a week
Written expression	Three hours a week
Grammar	One and a half hours a week
Oral expression	Three hours a week
Epistimology	One and a half hours a week
History of cultural ideas	One and a half hours a week
Origins of Languages	One and a half hours a week
ICT ¹⁸⁵	One and a half hours a week
Phonetics	One and a half hours a week
Morpho-syntax	One and a half hours a week
Literary genres	One and a half hours a week
Educational psychology	One and a half hours a week
French	One and a half hours a week

Table 3.1. : The Contents of First Year LMD Syllabi of English

¹⁸⁵ **ICT** stands for information communication technology. However, in the context of English language teaching in Mostaganem University, this term is constrained to computing lessons only.

Lucidly, the debated syllabus is rich as far as the diversified subjects are concerned. At this level, learners get to know how languages originate and develop across time (Origins of Languages), some fundamental theories of language learning (Educational Psychology), and many other significant ideas and information. However, taking into account the data presented in the above table, one may notice that at the level of the first year, the focus is on the speaking and writing skills. This clear in the way time is allocated to the subjects which support the skills. This could be seen in the subjects of oral and written expression which are taught three hours a week. This is reasonable since through this way, learners will be able to express themselves via English orally and in writing. But, what needs to be emphasized within the displayed table is the marginalization of the contents that nurture the development of cultural knowledge and skills. This is translucent in the time dedicated to the subjects of “*Literary Genres*” and “*History of Cultural Ideas*” Undoubtedly, these subjects which deal with cultural aspects, need to be allotted some more time. Culture has become more than a mere fifth skill which could be sidestepped. Kramersch states:

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

Teaching about cultures, Nostrand (1967: 118) suggests, overshadows a description of cultural facts. As pointed at by Kramsch (1993), cultural knowledge is just a small part in the process in question. This underscores the fact that teaching about cultures should reinforce one's communicative competence, as it delves deeper into the use grammatical sounds, and meanings along processes of reflection and interpretation. To get a clearer idea of the way culture is taught in the Department of English (The University of Mostaganem), the subject of "History of Cultural Ideas" of the first year will be showcased:

The Topics
Culture : what is culture ?
Ancient Greece
Greek Myths and Heroes
Classical Greece
Roman Civilization
The History of Christianity
The Ten Commandments
The Middle Ages
The Renaissance
The Reformation

Table 3.2: The Content of the Subject of History of Cultural Ideas

In the first semester, first year learners are introduced to the concept of culture. This topic, teachers believe, maps out the multifarious definitions given by scholars to the debated concept. This introduction is crucial since it paves the way for more complex aspects of culture which will be dealt with later on. After this smooth introduction, these learners are taught ancient civilizations (the Greek and Roman civilizations, etc.). In the second semester, first year learners deal with the topic of Christianity. Here, we expect them to have different attitudes towards such a topic. Ergo, teachers should spot the negative attitudes and try to decrease them by means of increasing learners' cultural awareness. After that, they learn about 'the Ten Commandments'. Here too, teachers should

pay attention to learners' attitudes since this issue is interpreted differently as one deals with different religions. The Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation are the topics with which the second semester ends.

Beyond the interest these topics may bear, the focus on ancient civilization may yet be quite questionable, given the necessity to familiarize learners with more topical issues. In this regard, one may ask the following question: Do learners who are part of online communities need such topics to interact interculturally in the 21st century? One may claim that learners should be introduced to more contemporary features of the target culture (s) along past cultural information. To put it differently, they should learn cultural aspects that help them get accustomed to Otherness, which has taken different dimensions in current technology-determined world. In addition to this, when learning English as a foreign language, it is vital for learners to be introduced to the cultures of those who speak the target language (American, British, Australian, or other non-native English speaking societies that still have a close relation to this language such as India. This is referred to nowhere within the subject of “*History of Cultural Ideas*”.

3.5.1.1.2. Second Year LMD Syllabus of English:

Subjects	Time Dedicated for each Subject
Linguistics	One and a half hours a week
Phonology	One and a half hours a week
Morphology	One and a half hours a week
French	One and a half hours a week
ICT	One and a half hours a week
Educational Psychology	One and a half hours a week
British Civilization	One and a half hours a week
American civilization	One and a half hours a week
American Literature	One and a half hours a week
British Literature	One and a half hours a week
Methodology	Three hours a week
ESP	One and a half hours a week

Table 3.3: The Contents of Second Year LMD Syllabi of English

There are many subjects that cease to exist in the second year syllabus and others which are added. Part of the reason why the subjects of oral and written expression do not figure out in the syllabus in question, is the fact that second year learners are expected to have already developed these skills during the first year. But, have these learners really developed the required oral and written competences, and therefore are not in need of one of these subjects? At this level, learners deal with literature, which most scholars believe, is very elemental when it comes to the teaching about other cultures. At this level, the subjects of literature are rooted in the American and British cultures. Parallel to this, both British and American civilizations are introduced to the learners. The introduction of the subject of ESP is central, since it informs the learners about the impact of technology on the use of English language. Nevertheless, “*History of Cultural Ideas*”, as a subject is no longer part of the syllabus. This raises the following questions: Have first learners of English developed the necessary knowledge about the target cultures? Do not they need a subject dedicated to

culture? We believe that culture, at this level, should be emphasized since second year learners have developed a given level in the target language, and therefore are able to develop knowledge about the target cultures. Thus, culture should be an essential component of the second year syllabus.

3.5.1.1.3. Third Year LMD Syllabus of English:

Subjects	Time Dedicated to each Subject
Methodology	One and a half hours a week
Discourse Analysis	One and a half hours a week
Language and Society	One and a half hours a week
T.E.F.L	One and a half hours a week
French	One and a half hours a week
British literature	One and a half hours a week
British civilization	One and a half hours a week
American literature	One and a half hours a week
American civilization	One and a half hours a week

Table 3.4 : The Contents of Third Year LMD Syllabi of English

Here, the number of the subjects is reduced to 9 modules. At this level, other modules such as language and society, discourse analysis and TEFL are emphasized. Nevertheless, culture is not taught as an autonomous subject, as compared to first year LMD syllabus; it is taught within other subjects such as literature and civilization. Beyond shadow of a doubt, if one compares the three syllabi to each other, they will easily notice how marginalized the teaching about other culture(s) within the LMD system is. This system seems to emphasize the oral and writing skills and sidestep the teaching of culture. Despite the fact that culture is believed to be the fifth skill, this system does not recognize it as such. Thus, it is hoped that in the coming years, the LMD syllabi of English will include subjects which may help learners develop a certain cultural knowledge which will aid them communicate interculturally in a technology-determined world.

Obviously, the fact that the subject of literature is part of all the LMD syllabi of English underscores the momentous role literature occupies in relation to language and culture learning. Undeniably, the review of the literature in relation to the significance of literature in language processes is rich; however, the actual practice of literature instruction does not much this undeniable fact. In the following section, the significance of literature will be explored in relation to the body of knowledge advanced in the debated field. It will be followed by some analysis of the contents of the subjects of literature introduced to the learners of English.

3.5.1.2. The Significance of Literature in Cultural Instruction:

As it has been argued in the previous discussions, the locus of culture within language learning practices is debatable, at least for those who believe that foreign languages and cultures threaten the status quo of the native cultures, the identity of its people, and their system of beliefs. By the same token, the role that literature plays in such learning milieus has generated asymmetrical views in relation to its bans and boons. According to some scholars, literature should be constrained to achieve some goals; it should not be introduced to foreign learners. Other scholars, however, have enlightened its utility in developing learners' linguistic, communicative and intercultural competencies.

Albazei (2014) contends that English has become the lingua franca within the world, therefore, its instruction is rudimentary. But, he inspects the inclusion of literature within the process of learning other languages. He claims that there are some learners who speak English fluently; however, they barely know valuable information in relation to its literature. His criticism of the implementation of literature in the debated process is backed up by the argument that the Arab countries teach literature in their universities, not for some established goals, but for an attempt to imitate the Western countries that concurred on the elemental nature of this subject in language processes.

The threat of teaching literature, Albazei (ibid.) maintains, is backed up by the book “*Globalectics: The Theory and Politics of Knowing*”, written by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. Albazei, (ibid.) asserts that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is among the precursors of the movement of post-colonialism, that hinges on two main perspectives: studying the Third World literature as a portrayal of the colonial period, and studying the Western literature as a depiction of the colonial activities nurtured by means of attitudes of inequality and prejudice. In the aforementioned book, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o expounds these attitudes of superiority, as he cited the Shakespeare literary work “The Tempest. According to him, this play portrays the discriminatory attitudes the Europeans have towards the Africans. Albazei (ibid.) relates the status quo of teaching literature within the Arab countries to the intellectual revolution that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o fought for. The author, after spending some time in England, has come back to his country Kenya to find that the process of teaching English language via literature hinges on ideological and racist grounds, namely on the orthodoxy that stratifies the black people as inferior and the white race as superior. The author chastised teaching British literature to the African learners at different plane. First, the British literature is concerned with issues that have no relevance in the African cultures, and which are prioritized over national literature.

Antagonists of the use of literature in language classes postulate that the aim of learning a foreign language is to aid the learners get a job. Literature, within this instrumental motive, is not that significant. Additionally, it is commonly known that literature is the vehicle of cultures. Opponents of literature claim that the literary texts are culturally conditioned, and in case they are introduced to the learners, the whole process of learning would be hampered. McKay (1982:530).

Literature occupies a central role as far as learning languages and about cultures are concerned. Proponents of its inclusion in language classes underscore its utility in subsidizing learners' linguistic repertoire, their autonomy, acquisition of mother tongue, communicative skills, and intercultural competence, most importantly.

It is important to note that the salience of introducing literature along language classes has never been identified in relation to the target language only, but its vitality permeates the very acquisition of the mother tongue. Poetry, for instance, is believed to foment both the child's language and personality at the same time. In their early stages of language learning, children prefer poetry, since it subsidizes their creativity, imagination and language structures.

According to Andre (2005:10) poetry creates a space of freedom where learners can develop their power of imagination and acquire skills of creative thinking. By the same token, poetry can be used to teach about other languages. According to Khansir (2012:242), this literary genre can be used to enhance learning foreign languages, since it provides a motivating environment for the learners.

The first function of language, it should be noted, is communication, not only for the transfer of knowledge, but for the acquisition of information about the target language and its culture (s), too. In relation to this, literature turns to be the vehicle of feelings and thoughts as well as the bearer of cultures. According to Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher (1996: 159), communication as process has two main dimensions: linguistic and relational properties. In relation to this, the cultural information needs to befall within its context of enunciation and production. Therefore, communication does not have a full sense only when attributed to a given situation, since some cultural traits have multifarious senses. Inconvertibly, the cultural acts, like words, are polysemic, and therefore require analytical and interpretative processes. Under this spirit, literature underscores a pragmatic approach, if not a cultural pragmatic perspective. Consequently, since literature allows the cultural miscegenation, it foments discussion about values, cultural diversity, and alterity (Abdallah- Pretceille and Porcher, *ibid.*).

Farias (1992) maintains that communication can take various forms and may occur in different contexts. Therefore, in educational settings, communication in relation to language learning is the nucleus of language instruction. Language learning targets a communication that is established on grounds of trust, freedom of expressing views, enjoyment and mutual respect. Farias (*ibid.*)

articulates that literature, as a background of cultures, is vital in developing a language that suits communicative needs. Nevertheless, antagonists of such a perspective may claim that the literary style is not appropriate in relation the traits of effective communication. However, these texts do not present a static language model that needs to be applied, but offer contexts that foment learners' development of a communicative language.

Learners' communicative skills are subsidized as they engage in reading literary texts. Albert and Souchon (2000) outline literature as a tool valuable for understanding human communication. Within this vista, learners who read literature are believed to have developed a kind of literary communication, since this process takes into account the relations between the three poles: the issuer, the text, the receiver (cited in Pirolli, 2012) Undoubtedly, if the literary reading is taken as a form of communication, it will no longer be a peripheral site at the end of units, or as a support to cultural content or civilizations chosen for a particular theme. Per contra, it will have a legitimate place in the same called communicative approaches (Pirolli, 2012).

The act of reading, it is important to note, is among the constructive elements of communicative competence, since it stimulates learners' imagination and critical thinking, and allows them affiliate to the text affectively and emotionally (Vlachou, 2009). Ergo, the literary texts help the reader to progressively construct an affiliation to the text, given the fact each reader has his own perception of the world, determined by his own experiences, beliefs, emotions, and representations. Vlachou (ibid.) calls this "*an active-productive processes of literature*". This process links between the subjectivity of the reader, the intentions of the author, and reality. Following Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, both the reader and the author display their own beliefs and experiences in an active and reactive dialogue, including the reader, the author and the literary text. Bakhtin (1984: 152) asserts that the message is not transmitted from the author to the reader; it is constructed among them as an ideological ground. The message is a construction that comes into being out of their interaction. This literary reading boosts interaction within language classes, a reading that looks like a mirror that can be recognized within different cultures and epochs (ibid.).

The most important criterion of literary texts relates to its intercultural dimension. Undoubtedly, the literary text encompasses rationality, irrationality, imagination, realism, ideology, pragmatics, truth, lie, and therefore, the learners are prone to develop an awareness of interculturality. As it had been argued before, literature as an active-productive process stimulates the linguistic production and aids them identify a set of hypotheses that they call upon to approach the text as a cultural product.

Coraca (2009) contends that the concept of reading in relation to poetic text is too broad and general, since the target process does not depict a passive act, but a series of reactions, attitudes and behaviours. Moreover, these texts nurture psychological effects, where the reader/learner engages in neuro-psychological processes. Under the same vein, poems are very crucial in the process of learning, as they abet the learners identify problems and solve them. More important than this, they depict some aspects of life that the readers may identify themselves with. Naturel (1995: 25) asserts: *that literature is part of the universe that surrounds us*" (cited in Coraca, 2009). In connection with this, Adam (1991: 38, cited in *ibid.*) claims that poetry, as an essential discursive practice, targets relating the different individuals socially along the different eras. Above all, Coraca (*ibid.*) states, poems, by means of their processes of polysemy, generate psychological and social circumstances. This is the case since, when coming across such learning situations, the learners are encouraged to practice what they have learnt in a group work. According to Lazar (1993:193), poetry can be used in foreign language classroom to facilitate communication and interaction, since it is regarded as a universal language. Under this spirit, teachers can use such genre to promote communication. The teacher, who wants to promote the poetic expression of the learner, can make them learn new communication possibilities and make them able to choose the more accurate and meaningful expression to fit the communicative context.

In addition to the above-mentioned benefits of literature in enhancing communication, scholars posit that it also serves as an effective tool for developing learners' autonomy. Literature classes are believed to nurture strategies of answering questions, commenting, and arguing in a polite and

organized way. More important than this, literature is believed to develop cooperation and assistance among the learners. This sense of sharing and learning from others is grounded on Vygotsky's concept of "*zone of proximal development*"¹⁸⁶, abbreviated as "ZPD". Vygotsky maintains that learning autonomously and receiving feedbacks from others are two kinds of learning processes, and of course, the latter describes the traits of effective learning (cited in Li, 2005).

Learners' autonomy is subsidized along the process of linguistic enrichment. Besse (1989:29) asserts that by means of introducing literature to language classrooms, the learner develops the target language, which influences various planes. More important than this, it helps them develop their own learning, an autonomy that is engendered as the learner fetches the backgrounds of the text. This self-reliance is backed up since literature, by means of the myths and rites that distinguish some cultures from others, opens up a space for critical thinking. Ergo, literature is elemental in nurturing backgrounds of constructive criticism, collaboration, and information exchange. In the same vein, literature can enrich learners' cultural capital, an incentive that is used to motivate other learners to learn about the target cultures.

Li (2005) has conducted a study of the significance of literature circles¹⁸⁷ in relation to language learning. She revealed that such a kind of literature classes engage the learners in various activities, notably performing roles.¹⁸⁸ Under this

¹⁸⁶ According to Vygotsky, the ZPD: "*is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.*" (Vygotsky, 1978) (retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/literature-circles-how-to-and-reasons-why-elena-aguilar>).

¹⁸⁷ Literature circles can be a place for cooperative learning. Students help each other understand a text and make sense of it. Lit circles teach kids how to use each other as resources and become independent learners (Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/>).

¹⁸⁸ All the features that characterize literature circles are displayed in learners' literature classes. (this claim is backed up by means of a two-month observation that we conducted on the teaching of literature within the university of Mostaganem).

spirit, the learners are encouraged to approach the literary activities charily and cavilingly. Li cites a learner's response to a literary story:

I have a little bit question. What does he mean when he say "I am alone."
Because he say "I am alone – alone but not nearly so lonely as I was back on
the campus at school." His mean when he stay with people, a lot of people,
he feel lonely. But now he stay in forest, alone, but he doesn't feel lonely.
Do you know why? Do you have any idea about this? Did you ever have
similar experience? Li (2005)

Beyond shadow of a doubt, the afore-mentioned benefits of introducing literature along language classes are of due significance. Howbeit, the cultural mediation that literary texts occupy within that process is the most prominent advantage these cultural windows serve to both learners and teachers. Chantzou (2009) describes language and literature as siamese constructs, and hence the elimination of one means the exclusion of the second. Cuq and Gruca (2003: 427) postulate that any foreign language is able to boost the intersection of different ideas, views, and perspectives. In a way, these languages allow the exploration of the Self through the experience of the Other. Undoubtedly, the fact that language and literature are siamese constructs suggests that the literary text allows the reader to experience Otherness, given the occurrence of an intersection between an individualized discourse and decentralization (Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher, 2001: 152, cited Cuq and Gruca, 2003 : 427). Under this line of thought, fiction becomes a means of experiencing diversity and living alterity.

Bottino (n.d.) claims that focal point of the cultural dimension of literature relates to the information and the feelings that literature transmits to the readers, in our case learners of English. This model hinges on teaching expressions and new words via the target language. Howbeit, what is distinctive about such a prospect is its utility in relation to nurturing learners' awareness about novel cultures and ideologies. Additionally, it prioritizes the knowledge that can be retrieved from texts, while it does not give due importance to texts as such (ibid.). Another cultural benefit of literature is that it aids learners to

understand the other societies and cultures, since the literary characters, acts and events occur according to the norms of a specific culture or society.

Maley (2001) contends that literature can be advantageous since it displays multifarious traits that, if used in the right way, would lead to a successful and effective learning. To begin with, literature is distinguished from other works of art by its universality. In this regard, learners can establish grounds of affiliation between the target culture and their own, by means of experiencing feelings of love, death, etc., .Within the same line of thought, it nurtures authenticity, as it offers genuine descriptions of reality, sometimes in a fictive way.

Literature becomes a vector of cultures, as it lubricates the encounter of learners' cultures and those cultures that the literary text carries. By the same token, De Carlo (1998 : 92) postulates that narration, for instance, has the capacity of inventing stories that help the learners construct a new version of the world, which they can identify themselves with Undoubtedly, the shadowy understandings of literature that used to stratify it as a support of linguistic and a carrier of civilization are substituted for a model that portrays it as a venue for the interplay of the Self and the Other (Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher, 2001). Briefly put, literature is seen as a referential framework for interculturality (Cuq and Gruca, 2003 : 413).

Undoubtedly, each literary genre has its own cultural traits. However, some of these types depict current cultural facts that inform about the daily practices and customs of communities. Multicultural literature falls within the category pointed at. Howbeit, the recognition of the significance of multicultural literature had been established only by the late 19th century. Prior to this era, the inclusion of literary texts and textbooks that would not idealize reality as an ideal place would be removed from the curriculum. Zimmerman (2002:116) asserts: "*any reference to racial violence, hostility, or prejudice often spelled the removal of a textbook*". In the same line of thought, minority groups had not been represented in those means of instruction. The information that the learners used to get was mainly about some particular groups, say, those who belong to mightiest cultures (ibid.).

The implementation of literature and multicultural one, in particular, is crucial in the process teaching about other cultures. Broadly speaking, it abets the learners develop some understandings about the makeup of societies, including cultural dissimilarities. Under this spirit, Mendoza and Reese (2000:1) postulate that such kind of literature provides venues for learners to develop some understandings about others, and at the same time, affirming their diverse backgrounds. Ambrogi, Shoemake, and Watson (1996:1) illuminate how literature nurtures global and encompassing visions about different cultures, as it describes: *"the conflict that many groups were forced to endure, and ... celebrate the rich diversity that can be found in America today"*.

Other cultural benefits of including multicultural literature relate to its effectiveness in developing attitudes of acceptance, cultural sensitivity, comfort in relation to classroom settings, and reshaping identities on grounds of tolerance and forgiveness. More important than this, it underscores differences and similarities among cultures, and bridges the gap between the cultures involved. Arellano enlightened this statement as he commented:

Literature allows students to see diversity and relate information back into their own lives. Making connections within their own lives helps them make connections and begin to not only look at differences, but similarities as well (Arellano, 2011).

It commonly known that literature is one among the means that teachers use in classrooms to enhance learners' linguistic repertoires. Reading literary texts is believed to nurture streams of new vocabularies and expressions. According to Povey (1972) reading literature familiarizes learners with subtle vocabulary usage and new and complex syntax, and through this it contributes to the extension of language usages and linguistic knowledge. Arthur (1968:199) mentions two ways in which literature can promote language learning. The first one is the large repertoire of vocabulary that is used in literature compared to speech. The second one relates to the unique syntactic patterns which are only found in written English, especially literature, for example, the use of passive voice, frequent

occurrence of subordinate clauses, subordination within subordination and stylistic order inversion. Howbeit, opponents of such a claim contend that constraining literature to mere new expressions and words would harm the whole learning process, since it renders it a robotic and a boring task. They carry on stating that literature is one of the means of instruction that motivates the process of learning, and hence it should be kept as a source of learning and pleasure.

Modern approaches of language learning have abandoned teachers' centeredness in favor of learners' centeredness. Within the latter perspective, learners' are encouraged to develop their own strategies of learning. These new prospects are believed to enhance learners' autonomy and personal growth. In connection with this, literature is believed to occupy a central role as far as autonomy and personality are concerned. The third perspective of literature is grounded on the belief of personal growth. Within this venue, learners are encouraged to establish a kind of affiliation with the literary texts. This engagement excels the classroom boundaries, as it stems from appreciation of literature, and not from instrumental incentives. This perspective foments learners' centered learning, whereby learners are motivated to explore the literary texts they come across. Along this process, learners are encouraged to evaluate the target literary pieces they read. Additionally, McKay (1982:529) postulates that as learners approach literary texts, they become aware of social positions and divergent contexts that would be useful in their personal life. The most important aspect of literature is displayed in its ability to generate motivation and readiness to experience the target culture among the learners. In connection with this, learners are prone to foment their reading skills, as they establish an affiliation with the text, in terms of meanings, intentions, and purposes.

Galani (2009) postulates that literature has affective and emotional aspects that incite the learners to personally involve themselves in the whole learning process. It appeals to the readers, in our case to the learners, since it provides grounds for personal relevance. In the light of this claim, the learners are encouraged to live the story that the literary text carries. This link can excel mere imagination of the stories, as it may be applied in their actual life. A sound

argument that can back up the use of literature is its ability to diversify information via its divergent genre and themes. This would systematically subsidize learners' interest, not only in literature, but in the whole process of learning, too. Undoubtedly, the most salient feature of literature relates to its relevance in developing learners' critical thinking, since it offers for them the opportunity to dive deeper into the ambiguous meanings the texts carry. It also allows them develop different interpretations, and hence a possible exchange of ideas via interactions. Lazar (1993) says that literature can be used as a tool for creating opportunities for discussion, controversy, and critical thinking.

Literature also enhances learners' personal growth, as it abets them retrieve information from their past experiences to use them in communicative acts. Mursi (2011) asserts that literature connects the past to the present, as it portrays the customs, the values of past societies and links them to modern ones. Under this spirit, literature subsidizes the unity of communities, since it transmits their pillars to the readers. Saoussany (n.d.) believes that within everyone's memory, there exists a number of stories, myths, and histories. Undoubtedly this cultural information that is stored in the brain is vital for both individuals and nations. In relation to this, a successful teaching hinges on investing what is familiar for the learner, and inviting them to partake in their memory zone, where they explore their language and other cultures rigorously (Montredon, 1995).

Inconvertibly, there are many means that can be used to inform the learners about some aspects of the target culture, yet some of them are close a real depiction of that trait, while others are highly fictitious. Literature, under this vista, plays a leading role as far as authenticity is concerned. In addition to teaching literary skills and history of diverse groups, multicultural literature backs up authenticity that learners need to link the cultural information they get to their actual life. The concept of authenticity strongly affiliates to the traits of multicultural literature. Steiner (2001) portrays it as an "*accurate representations of the cultural attitudes, feelings, and perspectives, both visually and literally*". In connection with this, Bishop (2003: 28) outlines authenticity as "*the success with which a writer is able to reflect the cultural perspectives of the people about whom he or*

she is writing, and make readers from inside the group believe that the writer 'knows what's going on'."

Classroom collaboration, too, functions as a support for language and culture learning. This process allows learners to exchange ideas, perspectives and views. Literature subsidizes such a process by means of the activities it displays for both teachers and learners. According to MacGillivray and McQuillan (1995:37), literature circles create a sense of cooperation among the learners. Ergo, in learning another language, the learners are inclined to develop some links with other people. By the same token, they are encouraged to express their feelings and attitude in relation to the literary text and their classmates' views. At a broader level, the learners are prone to develop positive attitudes towards the target cultures and the foreigners. Li illustrates this claim as he mentions one of the learner's argument:

When I discussed the article with my group, we had good time and relationship. Before, we didn't know each other new students but right now, we have know each other and we are talking a lot (Li, 2005).

In the bygone years, learners were stratified within a one static mould that hinges on same aptitudes and capacity of learning languages. In a way, teachers were used to present their lessons, eschewing variables of age, gender, styles, and strategies. Howbeit, modern prospects of language acquisition have falsified such static and rigid perspectives in favor of diversity and dissimilarity. Now, teachers are cognizant of the fact that each learner exhibits a certain strategy and style of leaning. Literature is elemental in mixed-ability classes, where the learners have different language level and distinguished learning styles. Within modern approaches, learning is believed to be an arduous activity that jumbles multifarious techniques and strategies. While Vygotsky (1978, thinks that for a learning process to be effective, it should be processed via interaction and mediation with others, including the learners and the teacher (cited in Li, 2005).

Leontiev (1978) asserts that learning can be enhanced by means of “tool-mediated and goal-oriented activities”, especially in the classes of literature. Under this spirit, literature can be introduced via short stories, novels, and plays, to meet the needs of every learner. Moreover, literature enhances the writing skill by means of encouraging creativity and enriching vocabulary. Learners may use all these acquired skills, along some other literary skills such as figurative speech to have, at the end, an effective writing.

Mahlawi (n.d.) thinks that literature has four main functions: educational, social, religious, and ethical duties. As to the educational properties, literature creates for the learners the opportunity to understand the target language, as they get clear ideas about divergent usages of language. Along developing learners’ critical thinking, literature informs them about achievements of writers, poets, including their history and cultures. From a social perspective, literary texts are believed to mirror societies, since they inform the readers about social issues, along peoples’ experiences. The literary style is so crucial for the spread of religions among people. This, Mahlawi (ibid.) believes, is the case since prophets have adopted such styles to preach about religions. From an ethical perspective, literature is believed to carry ethical issue that can influence learners’ attitudes positively. Due to the significance of literature, especially in relation to ethical issues, teachers should be chary in selecting appropriate literary texts for their learners.

Embi and Hwang (2007) summarize the functions of literature in language and culture classes in the following points:

- ✓ Models language structures;
- ✓ bridges the gap between the lessons and learners’ background knowledge;
- ✓ provides comparative ground that abet the learners see different cultural perspectives;
- ✓ develops learners’ cultural awareness;
- ✓ motivates learners to learn another language and about another culture;

- ✓ aids the learners to launch meaningful interactions;
- ✓ foment the development of an individual;
- ✓ nurtures language learning;
- ✓ introduces valuable language experience ;
- ✓ inculcates moral values through the teaching of morality.

3.5.1.3. Approaches of Teaching Literature:

While modern language learning approaches acknowledge the significance of literature in language and culture classes, antecedent prospects eschewed the salient benefits that its incorporation in educational milieus would bring to those processes. Within the vista of grammar translation method, literature had been introduced to back up learners' grammatical competence only. In connection with this, language learning was tightly affiliated with the development of the aforementioned qualification, and since literature exhibits complex and exceptional grammatical structures; however, it was not taken as an elemental aspect of that process (McKay, 1982). Maley (2001) contends that part of the reason why literature had not been given due importance in the bygone years is the lack of empirical studies that confirm its utility in any process of language and culture learning.

The advent of the theory of reception¹⁸⁹ in the mid 1970s has metamorphosed basic understandings of literature and its affiliation to the reader. Under this spirit, the literary text had been analyzed on grounds of communication processes, including the text and the reader. In connection with this, Albert and

¹⁸⁹ Reception theory “A branch of modern literary studies concerned with the ways in which literary works are received by readers. The term has sometimes been used to refer to reader-response criticism in general, but it is associated more particularly with the ‘reception-aesthetics’ (German, *Rezeptionsästhetik*) outlined in 1970 by the German literary historian Hans Robert Jauss”. (Retrieved from [http://www.oxfordreference.com /view/ 10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100407730](http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100407730)).

Souchon (2000) distinguish between the concepts of understanding and reception (cited in Pirolli, 2012). They believe that while understanding is bound to decoding the information within the literary text, reception encompasses contextual and non-linguistic variables. Here, the reader is the only agent who may update the reading of the text. The intentions of the author are also part of the literary communicative process. Jouve (2010:67) contends that “*the meaning of a text is not separable from the intention of the author. The literary text is indeed primarily the result of a project.*” (cited in *ibid.*). By the same token, Eco (1985: 61) defines the text as a «*chain of expressive devices that need to be updated by the recipient.*” (cited in *ibid.*) .Ergo, the role of the reader is to fill in the blanks in the text counting on his “*encyclopedic knowledge*”¹⁹⁰.

In the teaching of French as a second language, the status of literature has undergone various changes. Being bound to the target language, especially in its written form, literature was then rejected in favour of a more utilitarian and more effective communicational perspectives of language. Howbeit, within modern perspectives of teaching, literature has become the nucleus of the process itself, explained in Goldenstein’s (1990) leitmotiv “*entrer en littérature ,entrer en écriture*”¹⁹¹, which carries the fact the literature constitutes the infrastructure of writing (cited in Saoussany, n.d.). In connection with this, Migeot (1994: 54) argued that literature has gone beyond “*An object that is quasi religious whose production falls only within the scope of inspiration and gift, and whose functioning procedures are ineffable and inexplicable*”¹⁹²(cited in *ibid.*).

Today, a new approach to the literary texts is adopted. It entails the fact of involving the learners in a language learning situation, including all features that go hand in hand with the targeted language. This approach takes the literary text as a milieu for observation of the target language and cultures, a

¹⁹⁰ **Encyclopedic knowledge:** “*pertaining to the nature of encyclopedia; relating to all branches of knowledge*” (Retrieved from [http://www. Thefreedictionary .com/encyclopedic](http://www.Thefreedictionary.com/encyclopedic)).

space of creativity, pleasure, openness, and a rediscovery of that language by the learners themselves. All these features render the process of teaching literature pour in the stream of language learning, what Jean Peytard calls “*language laboratory*” (cited in Saoussany, n.d.).

3.5.1.3.1.The Contents of the Subjects of Literature Within LMD System:

In this section, the contents of the subjects of literature within LMD system are going to be explored. Our analysis targets making an analogy between the novel milieus of language and culture learning, namely online platforms and the actual cultural information that teachers serve to the learners via literary texts. We are not judging the value of the literary texts¹⁹³; our investigations inspect the match that can be drawn between the literary texts that depict past societies and the actual world that is mediated by technology and chauvinistic representations. This section tries to find answers to the following questions “Do the literary texts that are introduced to the learners depict the actual world? Are teachers of literature contributing to fomenting learners’ awareness of stereotypical relationship that brings the native and the target cultures together? Are we really developing learners’ intercultural skills that match the needs of a 21st century world?

3.5.1.3.1.1. First Year Subject of Literature:

Most of the learners who are registered in their first year do not have a fully-fledged linguistic competence that allows them penetrate literary works, namely novels that depict the bygone centuries. At this level, only some basic literary concepts are taught to the learners within the subject of “Literary Genres”. The content of the subject in question is presented in the figure below:

¹⁹³ The literary texts are analyzed on the basis of :

- The era they depict ,
- the themes they portray.

		Literary Genres			
		First Semester		Second Semester	
Poetry	Drama				Prose
Dramatic	Tragedy	Comedy			Novel
Narrative					Short story
Epic					Criticism
Lyric					
Fable					
prose					
poetry					

Table 3.5 The Content of the Subject of Literary Genres

In the first semester, learners deal with poetry and drama. The topic of poetry is detailed, as these learners get to know its divergent types (dramatic, narrative, etc.). The genre of drama is divided into tragedy and comedy. The second semester is dedicated to ‘prose’. Here, learners are introduced to the main genres of prose such as novel, short story, and criticism. Lucidly, the subject of literary genres introduces basic literary concepts to the learners. This will enable them recognize different types of texts by referring to certain aspects. Parallel to this, learners are taught poems and short stories. The latter gives them the chance to practice what they have learnt (literary concepts). Under this spirit, one can suggest that this subject does not foster learners’ intercultural communicative competence, since it is merely about literary genres which are only appropriate for analyzing literary texts. This means their use is limited to the classroom contexts, to achieve instrumental goals. The stereotypical

relationship that brings the Self and the Other ¹⁹⁴together is not emphasized within this subject. Admittedly, the role that literature plays in mediating cultures is not exploited as far as the content of this subject is concerned.

3.5.1.3.1.2. Second Year Subjects of Literature:

At this level, second year learners are introduced to both British and American literatures. However, each type is dedicated to one semester only. The table below displays the contents of the subject of British literature:

	British Literature	
Poetry	Daffodils (1807)	William Words Worth
Novel	Robinson Crusoe (1719)	Daniel Defoe
	Pride and Prejudice (1813)	Jane Austin

Table 3.6.: The Content of the Subject of British Literature

At this level, British literature provides a rich knowledge in relation to divergent literary genres, including poems and novels. The contents of the subject of literature broaden learners' understandings of the main literary concepts they deal with in the first year. The teachers of literature introduce the learners to the wide scope of poetry. However, at this stage, they excel mere processes of literary concepts' memorization. They are encouraged to dive deeper into the main ideas of the poems. Undeniably, such a process develops their critical thinking and skills of interpretations. The teachers select the poem of Words Worth for its easiness and usefulness. "*The Daffodils*" is a romantic poem that had been published in 1807, and then revised in 1815. What needs emphasis is that the poem, undoubtedly, develops learners' knowledge as far as the eighteenth century cultural aspects are concerned. The cultural knowledge can broaden

¹⁹⁴ We believe that these literary concepts are of great utility, but we think that if these genres are exploited via recent works of literature, learners would develop some cultural understandings about the actual features of the world.

learners' cultural repertoire, but it seems of little use as it comes to an intercultural world that is ideologically mediated, where the Self and the Other are in constant clash of representations and stereotypes. Parallel to this, most of the themes that this poem centres on "the beauty and the power of nature, and hence do not depict the actual world. Beyond shadow of doubt, this information does not help much in developing an intercultural competence that the learners need to communicate globally. The learners deal with the poet "Samuel Coleridge¹⁹⁵". However, the learners informed us that they have been given some information about the poet, but they did not deal with any single work of his. This leads us to ask the following question: if literature, "the carrier of cultures" is constrained to teaching about past cultures, how would our learners be intercultural communicators, who are able to suspend disbeliefs and accept difference?

The second part of the first semester is dedicated to the "novel". The learners are introduced to the characteristics and the elements of the novel. These theoretical backgrounds are followed by some readings activities in relation to the novel "Robinson Crusoe" by Daniel Defoe, published in 1719. It marks the beginning of realism in relation to literature. The novel depicts various themes, including the ambivalence of the concept mastery that denotes both self-reliance and chauvinistic relationships among humans. It also details some ideas about the significance self-awareness and repentance. Here, too, the cultural knowledge that the learners deal with depicts past cultures of the 17th century. The same thing can be said about the novel of "*Pride and Prejudice*" by Jane Austin, a literary work that depicts issues of wealth, marriage, style and class in relation to past British cultures. The learners who develop some negative attitudes from online platforms and other sources are not likely to discuss them in such contexts. So, are the literary works that depict the modern world of no use and therefore are not worthy to be introduced to the learners' of English? Undeniably,

¹⁹⁵ **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**, (1772- 1834, London), "*English lyrical poet, critic, and philosopher*" (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/125261/Samuel-Taylor-Coleridge>).

this question needs through analysis and exploration. Below is the content of the subject of American literature:

	American Literature	
Novel	The Scarlett Letter 1850	Nathaniel Hawthorne

Table 3.7. The Content of the Subject of American Literature

The second semester is dedicated to the subject of American literature. Teachers of literature at this level are limited by time that they claim is short. Therefore, few literary works are introduced to the learners. Among other literary works, the teachers choose “*The Scarlett Letter*”, a work of fiction written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1850. The teachers of literature select such a work for its usefulness in depicting the literary movement known as “Romanticism”. The latter is among the movements that charted the 18th century era. It also treats some significant themes such as “free expression of the individual, the significance of imagination and originality, significance of nature, and the renewal of one’s consciousness”. Undoubtedly, the remoteness of time and cultural differences that demarcates between this era and our learners’ would definitely obstruct the learning process. This is the case since most of the topics depict some cultural aspect that some learners may find irrelevant. The literary work embodies topics such as puritan legalism, and rebellion. Once again, the content of the literary works do not help much in developing intercultural competencies¹⁹⁶.

¹⁹⁶ We do not claim that past literature is not significant in the intercultural process, but we suggest that the inclusion of updated literary works would enhance the learning process.

3.5.1.3.1.2. Third Year Subjects of Literature:

British Literature		
Short story	Odour of Chrysanthemums (1911)	D. H. Lawrence
Novella	The Virgin and the Gypsy ¹⁹⁷ (1930)	D.H Lawrence

Table 3.8. The Content of the Third Year Subject of British Literature

As to the third year, the learners of English are introduced to various literary works depicting multifarious movements such as the enlightenment, romanticism, realism, and naturalism. At this level, both American and British literatures are taught all along the academic year. As to the subject of British literature, teachers begin the first semester by some theoretical backgrounds in relation to the famous literary movements. But, what needs focus is the utility of these movements in relation to 21st century intercultural communication, where virtual communities and online learning dominate the learning scene. To begin with, the enlightenment, known as the age of reason, had been a cultural movement of intellectuals that occurred during 17th-century in Europe. The same thing can be said about romanticism that befell during the 18th century. This theoretical literary chain is followed by two other movements known as “realism and naturalism. The former appeared in the mid -nineteenth century, while the latter appeared by the end of the same century.

In the first semester, the learners are introduced to the short story “Odour of Chrysanthemums, written by D.H Lawrence in 1911. Teachers opt for this literary work, since they believe it to be suitable for the depiction of realism. The main themes of this story centre on “isolation of human soul, nature of love, suffocation, and darkness”. However, beyond the significance they bear, they are

¹⁹⁷ This literary work will be used in the section of assessment along some analysis of its main themes.

grounded on past cultural information. In the second semester, the learners are introduced to the novella “ *The Virgin and the Gypsy*” , published in 1930. This novella also portrays past cultural contexts that, undoubtedly, do not match the traits of contemporary societies.

	American Literature	
Play	The Crucible (1953)	Arthur Miller
Novel	The Great Gatsby (1925)	F. Scott Fitzgerald
Poem	Madness Is Divinest Sense (1890)	Emily Dickinson
Play	The Glass Menagerie (1944)	Tennessee Williams
Novella	Of Mice and Men (1937)	John Steinbeck

Table 3.9 The Content of Third Year Subject of American Literature

Noticeably, the contents of the subject of American literature is richer than that of the British literature. All the literary works at this stage depict “ the American Dream” , a dream that emerged along the American Declaration of Independence, and which hinges on hard work and prosperity. In the first semester, the learners are introduced to the play “*The Crucible*”, written by Arthur Miller in 1953. The main themes of the play centre on religious conservatism and disobedience. It also depicts the value of reputations in social organizations. Inconvertibly, this information is valuable, since it informs the learners about some cultural traditions practiced in the 20th century. Nevertheless, after a century period, the information might have changed. These changes, unfortunately, are not transmitted to our learners in any of the above-cited works. This literary work is followed by another novel “ *The Great Gatsby*” by F. Scott Fitzgerald, published in 1925. The story deals with human aspiration to start over again, social politics and its brutality, betrayal of one's own ideals and of people's, honesty, decay, violence, gender roles, class religion and , World War. Once again all these themes portray past societies, and hence do not boost an updated intercultural competence. The poem of “*Madness Is Divinest Sense*”, published in 1980 is the work with which the first semester ends. This work

hinges on the dichotomy “sanity versus madness. Here, too, these themes are contextualized in past societies and cultural practices.

The second semester starts with the play “*The Glass Menagerie*”, written by Tennessee Williams, published in 1944. This literary work also depicts the features of the American Dream, mainly the difficulty of accepting reality, the impossibility of true escape, and the unrelenting power of memory. The content of the third year subject of American literature ends with the novella “*Of Mice and Man*”, written by John Steinbeck, published in 1937. Teachers introduce such a work at the end of the year to depict the fall of the American dream. This novella describes the main features that characterize the decay of the American Dream, including seeking independence, economic and social decay, the effects of great depression, predatory nature of human existence, and the impossibility of the American Dream.

It becomes lucid that the contents of the subjects of literature nurture cultural information that goes back to the past centuries. Undeniably, this kind of knowledge is so crucial in developing learning awareness about past cultural practices. But, as it comes to processes of intercultural communication, it does not help much in making the learners aware of how the relationship between different cultures is established. More important than this, the learners are not likely to use this information in their intercultural encounters, and hence their learning would be limited to instrumental aims, to get a mark that allows them pass to the next grade. We believe that including literary works that depict 21st century cultures would enhance the desired intercultural process, a process that includes the actual views about how the Self and the Other interrelate.

3.6. The Assessment of Intercultural Learning:

Positively, the analysis of the contents of the subjects of the literatures within the LMD system has unveiled the seamy side of the process of teaching about cultures in the Algerian universities. Admittedly, the content of the subject of “literary genre” that is introduced to first year learners of English does not help much in fomenting learners’ intercultural competence that allows them discuss issues of contemporary societies. On the contrary, such content enhances their instrumental motivation¹⁹⁸, as learners seek good marks in their exams only. Undeniably, an intercultural communication excels such conceptual repertoire and accounts for critical issues that characterize a technology-determined world. As to the contents of the subjects of literature introduced to second and third year learners, most of the literary works portray some values and cultural norms practiced during the bygone centuries. As matter of fact, the process of learning that, undeniably, befalls in various contexts, namely online platforms, and the one that takes place in classes of language constitutes asymmetrical extremes that do not coexist.

Truly, the learners are prone to express their thoughts and ideas in language classrooms. In most cases, these learners are shy to air their views in oral sessions, given the presence of the teacher and their classmates. Per contra, when it comes to writing performances, they are more likely to express their attitudes and views about some aspects of the lectures, including the cultural aspects they are not accustomed to. Our sample had been motivated by such a claim. Learners’ writing performances had been chosen on the basis of the nature of the topic and its religious and ethical dimensions. We found those learners’ performances in the exams of literature suitable for our analysis. This section is instigated by the following questions “do teachers of English believe that intercultural learning accompanies language leaning, and therefore should be assessed? Do they prioritize learners’ linguistic competence in their assessment of learners’ writing performances? How do they deal with learners’ stereotypes,

¹⁹⁸ Instrumental motivation suggests that learners study languages and about other cultures to pass exams and get good marks.

prejudices, and negative attitudes? But, before answering such questions, the difficulties of assessing intercultural competence will be debated.

3.6.1. Predicaments of Intercultural Assessment:

Dervin (n.d.) believes that intercultural competence has become a doxic concept that is , in most cases, taken for granted. However, as it comes to practical grounds, namely in education, it does not receive due interest. Inconvertibly, much has been said about it, yet few attempts had been launched to test its efficaciousness in real contexts. Dervin (ibid.) argues that “*in research it remains relatively fragmented, with little crosscutting discussion about methodology*”. Teachers are inclined to present some cultural information that may contribute to the development of an intercultural competence, but the methodologies and the strategies that are likely to enhance the process of instruction and evaluation of the debated competence are not accentuated.

Assessment as a process does not only trigger off educational connotations. Per contra, this process is used in divergent fields of life and study. Le Goff (1999) shares this view as states that today’s world is engraved in soft barbarity” of assessment. The process of assessment is knotty “*because one cannot but assess as “learners tend not to pay attention to what is not assessed and therefore demand that good assessment tools be developed”*” (Sercu 2004: 74, cited in Dervin, n.d.). The difficulty of assessment relates to the subject to be assessed. Unlike the other subjects that are easy to observe like the mastery of grammar rules, cultures escape such an easiness of observation. Therefore, many scholars like Byram (1997); Kramsch (1993) have accentuated the perplexing nature of such kind of assessment. The difficulties of assessing intercultural competence also emanate from the predicaments that assessors find to achieve reliability, validity, fairness and consistency for interculturality (Tagliante, 1994).

Not only is the process of teaching about other cultures difficult, but the phase of evaluation of learners’ intercultural learning, too, is even knottier than the antecedent process. Undoubtedly, the reasons that nurture such quandaries

spring from divergent sources, including the perplexing and unfathomable understandings of the very nature of intercultural competence that, according to different scholars, denote divergent understandings. The same thing is applicable to divergent fields of study where the concepts of cultural competence, global competence, and multicultural competence pour in the stream of intercultural competence. In the same line of thought, Fantini (2005) argues that these conceptual ambiguities encompass the review of the literature in relation to the intercultural competence and the tools that are used in its assessment. In one view, “competence” is abstract and cannot be witnessed directly; consequently, it must be inferred by observing how one performs. Hence, competence and performance are interrelated, one being abstract and the other observable. In this view, then, one infers competence by observing and monitoring performance, rather than by talking about it only in abstraction (ibid.).

Actually, the assessment of the traits of intercultural competence is tangled, but rewarding since it provides feedback to both teachers and learners as far as the intercultural learning process is concerned. Likewise, it informs teachers about the nature and level of their learners’ intercultural performance. It is important to note that in intercultural evaluation, the focus is not on how much cultural information has been obtained by the learners during a course, but on how intercultural performance has been employed by those learners in the debated process (Skopinskaja, 2009).

Rubben (1989: 235) has indentified many shortcomings that any assessor is likely to come across when doing an evaluation of the competence in question. Truly, diaries are among the tools that can be used to measure the progress the learners achieve along their life experiences and classroom learning. Howbeit, in reflecting about their experiences in their diaries, learners tend to be careful and less authentic. Intercultural learning, however, is prone to be developed in natural ways, what Rubben (ibid.) calls “*vagabond learning*” that encompasses some of the cultural features that some learners prefer to veil. By the same token, the assessment of learners’ diaries is obstructed by means of problems of validity, interpretation and objectivity. In the process of observing learners’ attitudes and behaviour towards other cultures, the assessor is hindered by

various shortcomings, including subjectivity that can be enhanced by means of the fatigue, feelings and representations (Gillespie and Cornish 2009, cited in in Dervin, n.d.). Ergo, the process of observing intercultural behaviour is a kind of knowledge construction that, undoubtedly, leaves room for subjectivity (Bensa 2008:325).

The assessment of intercultural learning is intricate and arduous, and hence obligates the intervention of multifarious strategies and techniques. Howbeit, this process of evaluation needs to be preceded by a clear-cut understanding of intercultural competence that, according to Deardorff (n.d.) would determine the nature of the tools to be used along the evaluation process and the intercultural aspects that need to be stressed. Pottinger (1979:30) stresses that *“how one defines the domain of competence will greatly affect one’s choice of measurement procedures”*. Assessment may focus on some aspects of intercultural learning such as understanding others’ perspectives, which by means of being the focal point of the evaluation process, occupies the central goal of the assessment phase. As assessors accentuate particular goals and aspects of intercultural learning by means of involving other learners in searching for valid ways to enhance the targeted cultural aspect, they may enhance a global objective that subsidizes the whole process of intercultural learning.

Hall and Teeling (2012) postulate that the process of assessment and training should be employed to develop learners’ intercultural competence. However, despite the elemental nature of assessment of intercultural competence, some lists of assessment tools are provided without practical guidelines as to which contexts suit particular tools. Fantini, 2009 and Deardorff (2009) articulate that Deardorff outlines many ways of assessing intercultural competence; however, her models offer broad guidelines about how to evaluate the process in question, and do not delimit the oceanic nature of intercultural assessment (cited in Hall, and Teeling, 2012). Hall and Teeling (ibid.). The same scholars have pointed to the fact that some models of intercultural assessment had been useful, since they hinge on critical thinking skills. Within this category, one finds Byram’s (1997) model of portfolios, a tool that allows room for learners’ critical self-reflection (Byram, ibid.).

Hall and Teeling (2012) argue that the tools that scholars have suggested are grounded on commercial and economic platforms. This makes the application of such tools to other settings unbecoming. Moreover, such tools target the evaluation of something abstract and illusive. In connection with this, the potential of quantifying the attainment of intercultural competence is inspected. The perplexing nature of intercultural assessment is stressed by Byram (1997:108) who claimed that competences “*require a shift of perspective, not a movement along a scale*”. Van de Vijver and Leung (2009: 413) share the same view as they maintain that ““*most often the assessment instruments that are used in intercultural competence research are based on self-reports, which have well-documented limitations*”. Trompenaars and Woolliams (2009:438) subsidize the inefficiency of some assessment tools that are not grounded on solid platforms, and that each tool seems to have its own parameters and rules, which in most cases does not suit some pertinent cultural aspects. Trompenaars and Woolliams (ibid.) stress a very crucial point in relation to the making of assessment tools, pointing that most of these tools have Western origins, and therefore their adequacy in non-western contexts is debatable.

Since the process of identifying the main aspects of the intercultural competence is cardinal in relation to evaluation processes, teachers should take the necessary time to determine the most salient intercultural traits. More importantly, all the individuals who partake in this process should be taken into account. Deardorff (n.d.) comments: “*The process itself often involves dialogue and discussion with key stakeholders, including students, to determine which specific elements of intercultural competence should be the focus of programmatic efforts and assessment endeavors*”. She adds that:

It is important that prioritization not be a one-time discussion but rather an ongoing process since priorities may change from program to program, from course to course, or from year to year. Generally, it is advisable to choose two or three specific aspects to assess at a given time, to control the amount of time, effort, and resources needed in the assessment efforts Deardorff (n.d.).

Due to the perplexing nature of intercultural competence, assessors are asked to use divergent methods and perspectives of assessment. Deardorff (ibid.) argues that the use of pen-and-paper test had been chastised at different planes , since such a tool does not account for the most salient aspects of intercultural competence. The latter is believed to be influenced by the setting, the individual, and hence goes beyond the capacity of mere papers. These tools are not as informative as one may think, since the learners are the ones who judge the intercultural learning process. This subjectivity can be overcome when another person does the evaluative process, determining the appropriateness of learners' behaviours and attitudes. Other complexities that the assessment of intercultural competence generates emanate from other sources, including the perspective to adopt, the standards to follow, the persons who do the evaluation, and the degree that determines the development of an intercultural competence. In connection with this, Deardorff (ibid.) maintains that.... *“given the complexity of this concept, it would be challenging—if not impossible—for one tool to measure an individual's intercultural competence”*.

In addition to the aforementioned cardinal elements of intercultural assessment, the assessor should be cognizant of the fact that the goals of intercultural learning should meet the needs of the learners. Therefore, some goals would be befitting in a given course while others are useless. In relation to this process, teachers should plan the outcomes that they want to achieve, and then design the assessment package, including various tools of evaluation.

3.6.2. The Study Sample:

Number of Exam-Copies	Bad Marks	Average Marks	Good Marks	Very Good Marks
115	30	60	20	05

Table 3.10 : Description of Learners' Exam –Copies

The aim of this section is to shed some light on how teachers deal with learners' stereotypes , prejudices, and attitudes. It also reconnoiters the possibility of any mach between learners' online journeys and classroom evaluation. Learners' exam-copies have been selected to investigate the above-mentioned questions. Our sample consists of first year learners' exam- copies of the subject of "History of Cultural Ideas", second year learners' exam -papers of the subject of 'British literature', and third year learners' exam -copies of the subject of 'British literature '.There has been no random selection of subjects. The subject of the History of Cultural Ideas has been selected, since it includes some topics which may show students' attitudes towards some aspects of the target culture (s). Literature has been chosen for the second and third years since culture is not taught as a single subject in these two levels, but rather retrieved through the study of the literary production of English-speaking countries like Britain. 115 copies have been selected (the three years). Exam- paper sampling intentionally included those with different marking (weak, average, good) to cover various categories of learners.

While analyzing learners' exam-copies, we came across some symbols teachers use when correcting learners' mistakes and other linguistic shortcomings:





Symbols	Meaning (s)
	It stands for spelling mistakes and grammatical ones.
	It stands for syntactic mistakes
	It stands for ambiguity of meaning
	The red underlining was added for the sake of the study to highlight the mistakes.

Table 3.11: Teachers' Symbols Used in the Correction of Learners' Exam-copies

3.6.3. First Year learners' Views About the Other:

In the subject of the “*History of Cultural Ideas*”, first year learners deal with various topics. Among these topics is “Christianity”. The latter was among the issues discussed in the first term exam¹⁹⁹. The lecture that teachers give to the learners in relation to Christianity cover the role of this monotheist religion plays during the Middle Ages. Ergo, the learners are supposed to objectively treat the issue. The learners had been asked to discuss the changes that Christianity brought to the social life during the medieval era. Admittedly, this question had provoked the attitudes of the learners, as some of them deviated from the main scope of the question. **50** exam copies had been taken to assess first year learners’ intercultural competence. The cultural shortcomings had been identified in **26** copies, and then grouped in terms of specific criteria pointed at earlier. For the impossibility of presenting all the shortcomings, some of them had been selected. In addition to this, some shortcomings were similar in their meanings; therefore, there was no need to repeat them.

First year learners of English have expressed various types of ethnocentric attitudes, including value-judgments, cultural shortcomings and negative attitudes towards some aspects of the target culture. Value-judgments indicate students’ lack of intercultural awareness that induces ethnocentrism, usually expressed through the use of expression like ‘good’, ‘better than’, ‘the best’ ‘bad’, ‘worse than’, and ‘the worst’. As it will be shown, most of the cultural shortcomings resemble the ones identified in the previous chapter²⁰⁰. This confirms the claim that the stereotypical relationship that relates the self to the Other is partly shaped in online platforms and brought to language classroom settings. Here are some examples that illustrate learners’ value-judgments:

¹⁹⁹ The exam question goes this way “*Discuss the role of Christianity during the Middle Ages*”.

²⁰⁰ See learners’ attitudes towards online representations of the Self and the Other.

The particular role played by Christianity is
 the important and necessary religion the second
 monotheist religion during the middle ages.
 It means Christianity was very developed in this
 moment and the best religion.

Figure 3.1: First Year Learners' Value-judgments

Another learner postulates:

People of middle ages are very naive because they
 believe at every thing and the particular role is
 belief in their religion Christianity and respect
 it.
 And the religion is judicium it is not interesting by the
 during the middle ages.

Figure 3. 2. First Year Learners' Value- judgments

Lucidly, the intercultural journey that learners live in both online settings and classroom milieus represents a heterogeneous contrast that jumbles various settings and cultural environments. This is translucent in the findings of both chapters one and two, where learners develop some negative views about the Other. Under this spirit, analogous analysis would enlighten the claim. In chapter two, learners revealed their negative perceptions about some aspects of

the Other, including the religious aspects, most importantly. Their ethnocentric views about religions had been lucid, as the interview learners falsified the online representations of the religious Other by means of developing counter-stereotypes. The same thing is said when it comes to learners' writing performances. Learners pre-judge the Other on literary grounds, and at the same time on personal and subjective panoramas. For example, in (figure 3.1), the student value-judges Christianity as being the '*Best religion*'. However, another learner (figure 3.2) sees Judaism as being '*not interesting*'. Nevertheless, this collision of negative views does not represent the end of the dark side of the marginalization of the intercultural process within English teaching in Algeria. The process of intercultural assessment epitomizes the peak of that neglect. It is the case since in both learners' writing performances; the teacher focuses on correcting learners' linguistic shortcomings and denies the intercultural ones.

Other cultural gaps are identified in relation of misuse of cultural concepts. Cultural shortcomings are made due to a lack in learners' cultural knowledge. They are usually expressed by mixing culture-specific words. The learner uses concepts from their own culture (religion) to talk about some aspects of the target culture. In Christianity, one should speak of God and not of Allah, a term used in Islam. Here the cultural shortcoming²⁰¹ made by this learner is sidestepped by the teacher; the focus is on other mistakes. This is clear in the following paragraph:

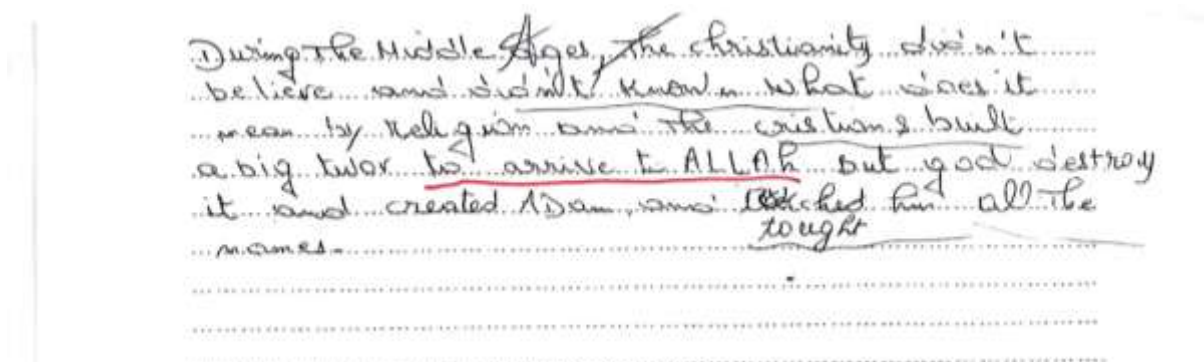


Figure 3.3: Learners' Cultural shortcomings

²⁰¹ Other cultural shortcomings are displayed in appendix two.

Negative attitudes are developed due to stereotypes, prejudices and ethnocentrism. Learners with negative attitudes are less successful in intercultural communication. Here, this student, though implicitly, suggests that Christianity is not as important as their religion. This is clear when stating: ‘so Christianity was and still until now the second famous religion in the world.’ They may might have espoused the idea of their religion (Islam) being ‘the first famous religion in the world.’(though, statistically and chronologically , Christianity is the first religion in the world). The following paragraph illustrates this idea best:

The Middle ages had come after the decline of Rome, it was between (500 and 1476). It was appeared after the coming of the German because they bring it to Rome at the first and after that it developed in all the countries, because they estimated with the appearance of Islam in the north of Africa and south of Asia and, it was followed by a great number of people so Christianity was and still until now the second famous religion in the world. it had united Europe and gave a meaning to its life.

Figure 3.4: First Year Learners' Negative Attitudes

Another learner states:

The first people were succeeded by the rise of Christianity, the new holy book, the people were living in pagan without believe in god. Jesus was a Jew who that it divided into two Christianity, eastern and western. The people believed in one Christianity. The religion were respected the rule of Christianity in the aspects they use them like pilgrims and slaves when they were patients, they taught to them spelling persons because the ordinary people were naive they were ignorant and the religion consider them selves as mediators between the people and their god (pope) they were more intelligent because they were educated and translated the word into the old testament and new testament when the people became less ignorant and the decline the bible and Turat but the succeed book is the part of Quran and they understood

Figure 3.5: First Year Learners' Negative Attitudes

Here, the learner shows their attitudes towards Judaism as being incorrect and Islam as being the “*successful religion*”. Attitudes²⁰² towards the target culture (s) are not emphasized when exam- copies are corrected. This suggests that assessment at the level of the first year is focused on correcting students’ spelling, grammatical, and syntactic mistakes. In other words, the linguistic competence is emphasized. First year students’ cultural mistakes, value-judgments and attitudes towards the target cultures are ignored, which means that assessment of learners’ intercultural competence is not a pertinent criterion of their evaluation.

3.6.4. Second Year learners’ Views about the Other:

Second year learners of English had been asked to discuss some themes in relation to the British novel “Pride and Prejudice”. 40 exam-copies²⁰³ had been chosen for the sake of analyzing learners’ views about some aspects of the target culture displayed in the literary work. While studying second year corpus, 8 cases of cultural shortcomings had been identified. Here are some examples:

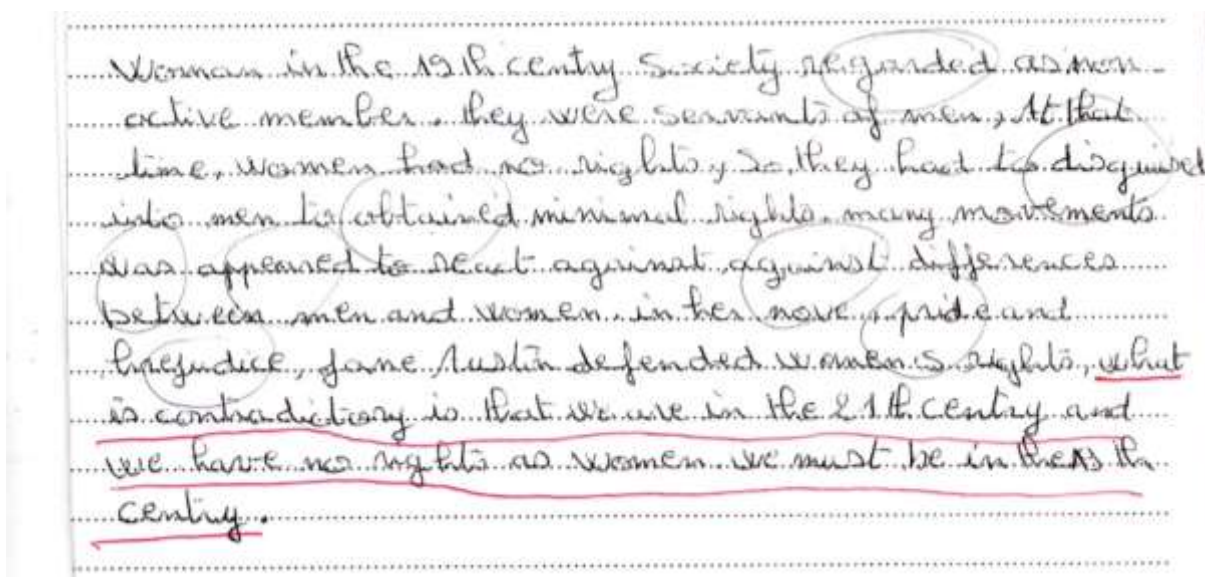


Figure 3.6 : Second Year Students’ Attitudes

²⁰² For more examples about learners’ attitudes, see appendix two.

²⁰³ The exam -question goes this way: *Early 19th century society was based on appearances and disguises. Discuss this statement referring to the novel of 'Pride and Prejudice.'* Here, second year LMD learners were supposed to deal with the literary movement which covered the 19th century (Feminism). In her novel ‘Pride and Prejudice’, Jane Austen depicts the different aspects of abuses women had to endure at that period.

Truly, learners' attitudes towards online representations of the Self and the Other are carried along language classrooms. This is the case, since some interviewed learners have claimed that Arab women are targeted by Western ideologies and manipulations of world consent. This had been identified in relation to how learners' reacted towards the online representations of the veiled Muslim women, and hence responded to these representations in a negative way, since they grouped these faked portrayal within one construct, the Other, the enemy of the Self. These negative cultural attitudes figure in learners' writing performances in the subject of literature, and are eschewed by the teacher.

Some learners expressed their disagreement with the idea of "equality between men and women"; while others believe this sex is not given its rights. Lucidly, the student, here, has made a lot of mistakes. The latter, which are identified by the teacher, are mainly grammatical such as 'regarded instead of was regarded', 'to obtained instead of to obtain', etc. In parallel to this, the student expresses opposing attitudes¹² when saying: '*...what is contradictory is that we are in the 21st century and we have no rights as women. We must be in the 19th century.*' These attitudes which are so important when it comes to students' intercultural competence are overlooked.

In the same way, another student denounces the way women were treated during the 19th century. They state:

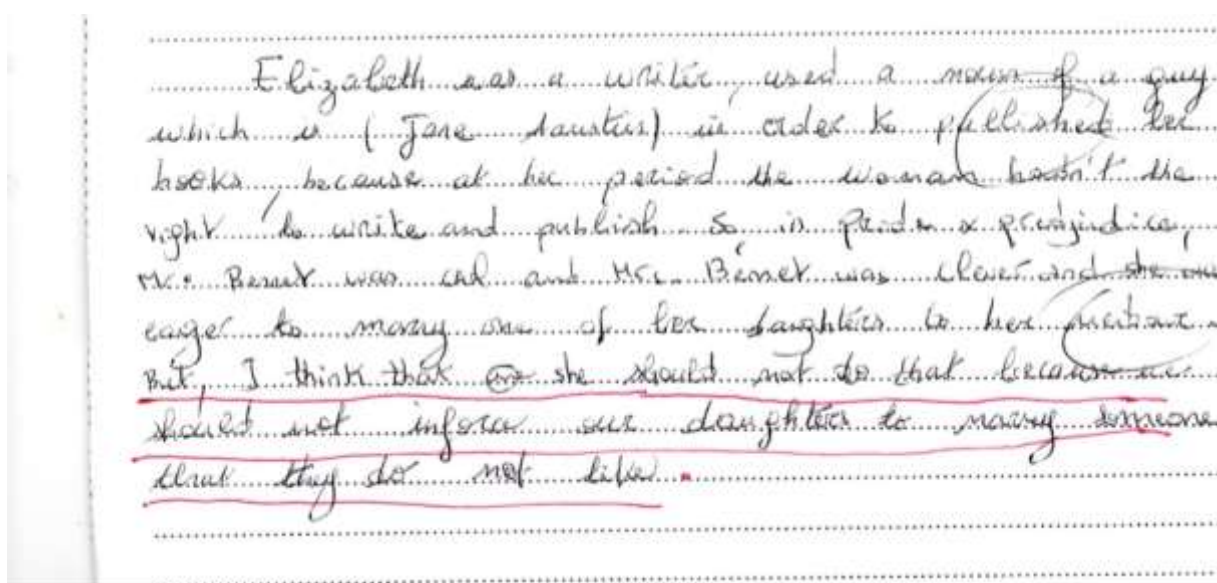


Figure 3.7: Second Year Students' Attitudes

Other students disagree with the idea of equal share for both men and women (in terms of rights). This is vivid in the following paragraph:

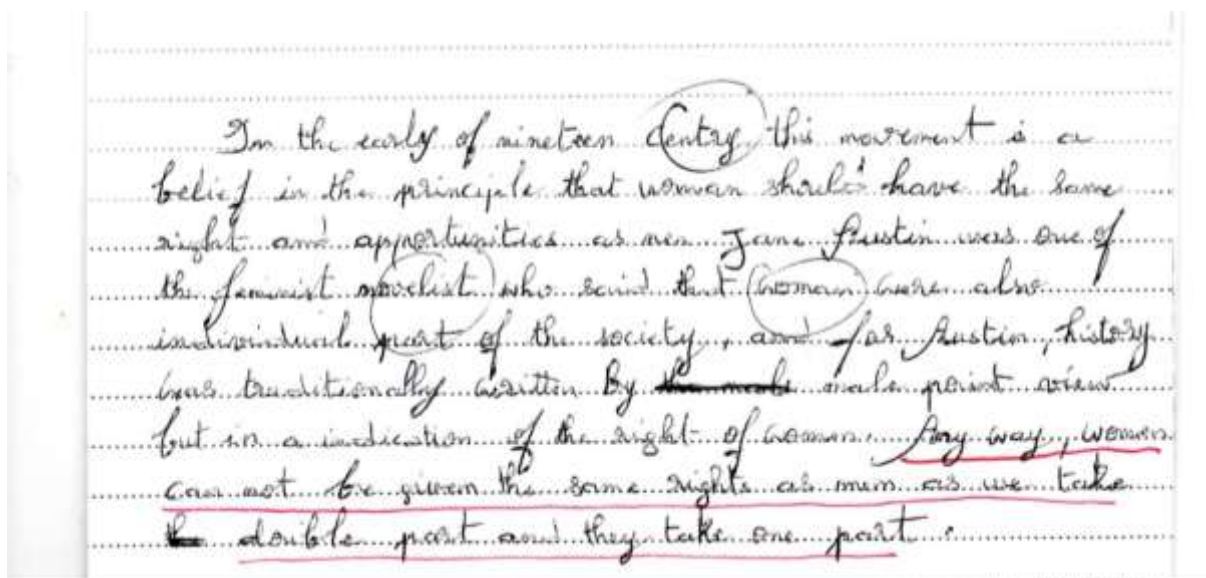


Figure 3.8 . Second Year Students' Attitudes

Reading the above paragraph, one can identify many spelling mistakes made by the student. Examples of such mistakes are : “centry instead of century, novelist instead of novelists, woman instead of women, etc”. The student concludes their paragraph by expressing their opposition to equality between the two sexes. These attitudes are not identified by teachers.

Another student censures the position of women within their society. They state:

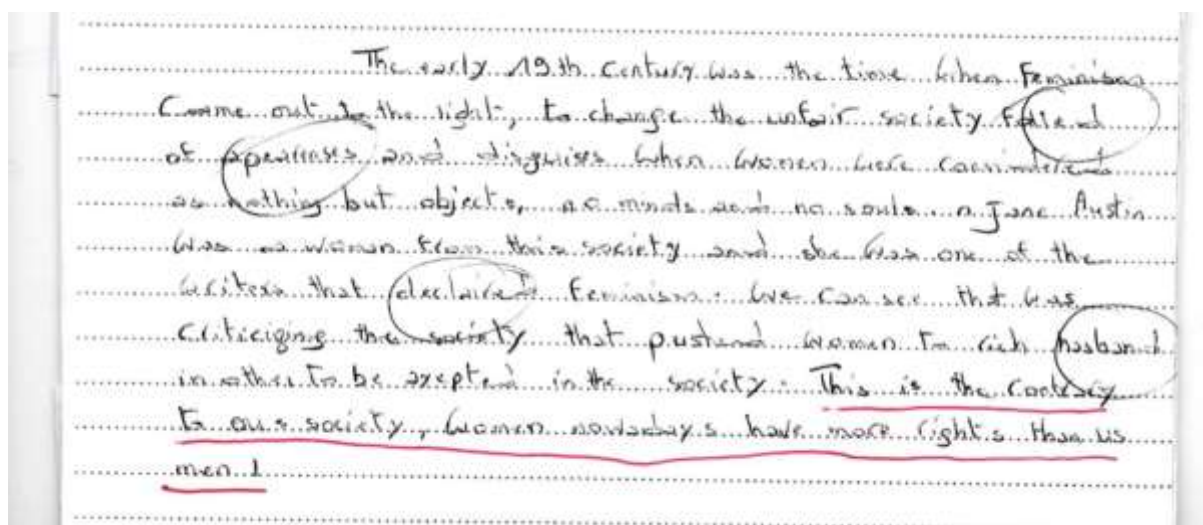


Figure 3.9 . Second Year Students' Attitudes

Clearly, a lot of spelling mistakes have been made by this student. Other non-linguistic shortcomings have been made too. Students' attitudes are made too, yet not highlighted. At the level of the second year, emphasis is on spelling and grammatical mistakes, which fall under the headings of students' linguistic competence. Students' attitudes that constitute an essential part of students' intercultural competence are bypassed.

3.6.4. Third Year learners' Views About the Other:

The same story is recounted as one deals with third year learners' performances that, in most cases resemble the ones revealed in relation to online representations. Learners approach the other with ethnocentric lens that depict it as a construct that portrays bad values and intentions towards the Self. When analyzing third year students' exam -copies²⁰⁴ we found that some of these students (03 students) express their points of view which are in most cases expressed by means of opposing the ideas that the novella describes. Here are some examples:

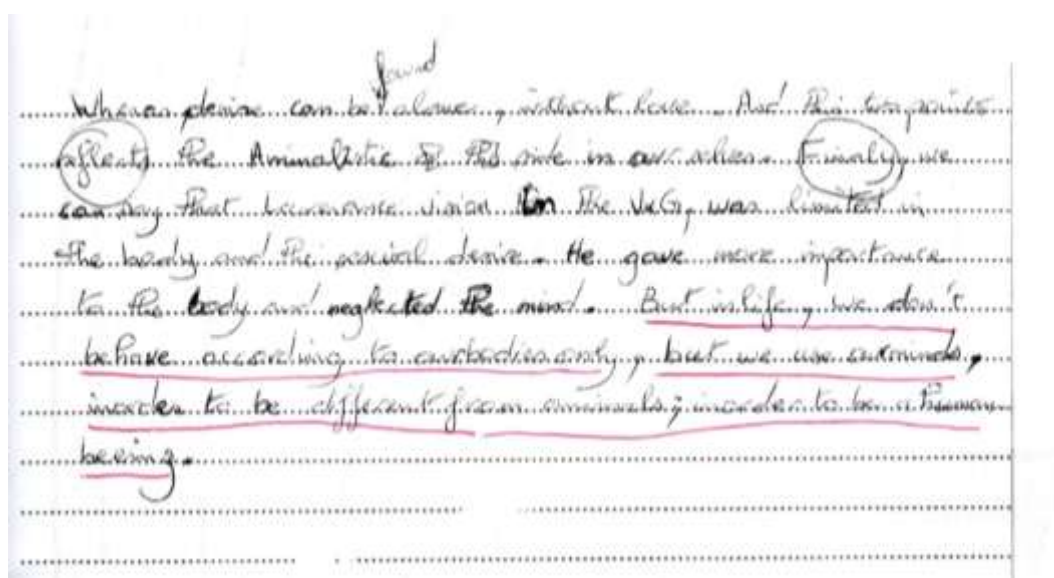


Figure 3.10 : Third Year Students' Attitudes

Another student expresses their negative attitudes towards the Other as they claimed

²⁰⁴ Exam -Question "Discuss DH Lawrence's view of man- woman relationship".

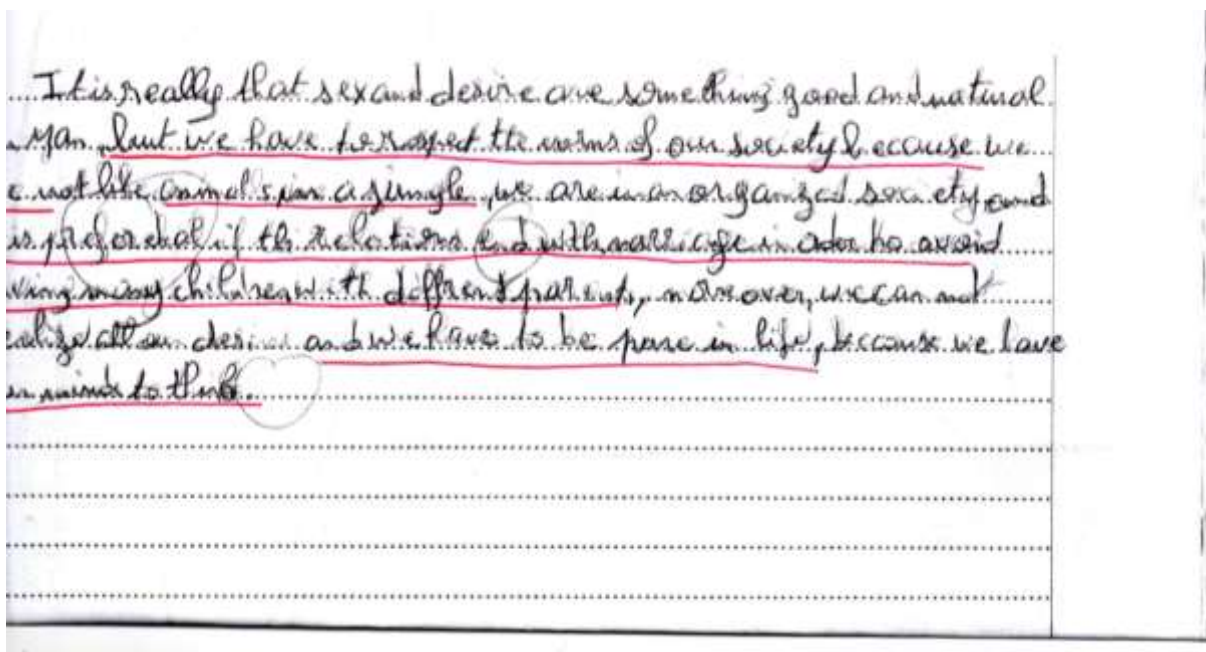


Figure 3.11 : Third Year Students' Attitudes

According to the learner's statement in figure 3.10, one ironclad norm should be attired to what normality and ethics. That is, the Self for them represents righteousness, while the other typifies unethical behaviour. The process of essentialising, the Other within a mould of the Self is pictured in the second learners' argument (figure 3.11), who believes that one should not disrespect the norms set out by the society. According to them, one should be guided by their mind. This student's attachment to their culture seems vivid when they state that relationships between a man and a woman should end with marriage. These negative attitudes reflect an intercultural competence's incongruence; in the sense that the student apply their cultural codes to a foreign society which has its own. Undoubtedly, the student is not asked to judge the society in question, but rather to see how the writer views his society's cultural codes in relation to woman-man relations, and whether he vindicates or denounces them. Yet, these problems are overlooked by the teacher. The table below summarizes the findings of the analysis of learners' exam-copies:

	1 st Year learners	2 nd Year Learners	3 rd Year Learners

Value-judgments	05	0	0
Cultural mistakes	13	0	0
Negative attitudes	09	08	03
Total	27	08	03

Table 3.12. Learners' Cultural Short-comings

Indeed, both the findings of the second and the third chapters have common points in relation to learners' approaching the Self and the Other. Learners' writing performances have elucidated the fact that learners develop certain attitudes towards the Other, in most cases attitudes that are the product of stereotyping and value-judging some cultural aspects that do not fit a fair portrayal of the Other. However, the findings also uncover a paradox that would lead to fruitful results, if case it gets due attention. This paradox outlines the fact that "while the context of teaching about other cultures within Algerian universities is not that rich and effective, along the online representations that learners come across on a regular basis, learners of English decrease their attitudes towards the Other as they pass from one degree to another.

The above table showcases the cultural shortcomings found in learners' exam copies. First year learners are likely to value-judge some aspects of the target culture (**05 cases**). In the exam -copies of second year learners, no case of value-judgment had been identified. Mixing culture-specific terms is a common feature spotted in first year exam- copies (**13 cases**). These mistakes are absent in the second and third years. First year learners develop negative attitudes towards some aspects of the target culture (**09 cases**). These attitudes are also found in the second year learners'

copies **(08 cases)**. However, only **(03 case)** had been identified in the third year exam- copies.

The above analysis suggests that cultural mistakes are reduced as students pass from one level to another. The findings gathered from the analysis of students' exam- copies has shown that the learners are prone partake in the clash of the Self and the Other, a clash that is nurtured within traditions, social norms and beliefs. More important than this, this stereotypical rapport is enhanced in virtual platforms, as the some cultures are empowered while others are chastised and discriminated. Admittedly, writing performances constitute a fertile ground for learners to express their attitudes and beliefs in relation to the Self and the Other. Here, the duty of the teacher as an intercultural mediator is elemental as to lubricating the two extremes. Unfortunately, what takes place in the educational scene is not that promising. Though, the assessment of learners' cultural shortcomings is vital, most of the teachers take it for granted, as spelling, syntactic and grammatical mistakes are emphasized during the phase of correction (assessment). These mistakes fall within learners' linguistic competence. However, learners' cultural mistakes and negative attitudes are not identified. Thus, intercultural competence is disregarded during evaluation. De-emphasizing learners' intercultural competence during the correction of exam- copies may be due to the following potential reasons:

- ✓ Learners make lot of linguistic mistakes which shift teacher's attention to their correction;
- ✓ the number of students is huge, and therefore, teachers cannot pay attention to every single mistake made by every learner;
- ✓ teachers may be limited by time;
- ✓ the main focus of teaching English in the Department of English is learners' linguistic competence;

- ✓ difficulties in finding an appropriate model to refer to in order to assess learners' intercultural competence;
- ✓ teachers are not trained to teach and assess culture leaning;
- ✓ cultural learning is vague, since it includes classroom learning, online learning, and other sources of knowledge retrieval, and hence it is intricate and demanding.

3.7. Conclusion:

Truly, in this global world, one needs to possess the required skills that abet them communicate successfully with persons from divergent cultures. Therefore, language mastery should be enhanced by cultural instruction that targets lubricating venues of tolerance, mutual respect and forgiveness. As it had been previously outlined, the change that technology had brought to the human life has altered the very understandings of social activities and ways of life, including economic and political orders. This metamorphosis has been identified in relation to educational processes, namely the instruction of foreign languages. Under this technological vista, learning has become multidimensional, since it has become available via online platforms and settings. However, the debated process is prone to be ideologically and stereotypically mediated, as some online platforms distort some features of the Self and the Other. In relation to this, learners who are part of online communities are likely to develop some negative attitudes about the Other, since there is no facilitator, the role teachers occupy in language classrooms.

Language classrooms are among the venues that may foment learners' development of intercultural skills. Undoubtedly, learners who have developed some negative attitudes about the other are likely to express them in classrooms, either in oral sessions or writing ones. The role of the teachers is momentous as far as lubricating the rapport between the Self and the Other is concerned. Howbeit, what takes place in language and culture classes does not reflect a healthy process of intercultural education. We find that Algeria has rushed to adopt a system "known as LMD" that hinges on developing global skills and enhancing learners' mobility. By contrast, the content of such system, especially the contents of the subjects of literature, are contextualized in past cultures. Literature does not help much informing our learners about how the world functions in modern times. Additionally, the process of teaching about other cultures, like other processes, needs to be assessed. In the Algerian universities, namely the Department of English (University of Mostaganem), teachers of English eschew learners' cultural shortcomings, and focus on their linguistic mistakes.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FOUR: Insights Into Culturally- Responsive Pedagogy: Reducing Learners' Stereotypes, Providing Solid Grounds of Intercultural Assessment, and Emphasizing Teachers' Intercultural Education

4.1. Introduction	291
4.2. Strategies for Reducing Learners' Stereotypes and Prejudices	294
4.2.1. Identifying Common Goals of Learning	295
4.2.2. Knowledge Construction	296
4.2.3. Intergroup Contacts	298
4.2.4. Stereotype Suppression	299
4.2.5. Cognitive Strategies	300
4.2.6. Coping Strategies	301
4.2.7. Other Strategies	302
4.3. Practical Guidelines for the Assessment of Learners' ICC	313
4.3.1. Models of Intercultural Assessment	315
4.3.1.1. Deardorff's (2006) Model Intercultural Competence	315
4.3.1.2. Objective-Oriented Approaches	317
4.3.1.3. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity	321
4.3.1.4. Scarino and Liddicoat's Assessment Cycle (2009)	323
4.3.1.5. Hammer's Intercultural Development Inventory	331
4.3.2. Tools of Intercultural Assessment	332
4.3.2.1. Direct vs. Indirect Assessment	334
4.3.2.1.1 Direct Assessment	335
4.3.2.1.1.1 Portfolios	337
4.3.2.1.1.1.1. Assessment of Portfolios	339
4.3.2.1.1.2 Learners' Self-Assessment	346
4.3.2.1.2. Indirect Tools	347
4.3.2.2. Other tools of Assessment	348
4.3.3. Assessment of the Components of ICC	350
4.3.3.1 Assessing Attitudes and Behaviours	350
4.3.3.2 Assessing Intercultural Knowledge (Savoirs)	353
4.3.3.3 Assessing Intercultural Know-How/Savoir Faire	354
4.3.3.4 Assessing Intercultural Being (Savoir Etre)	355

4.3.3.5 The Assessment of Meta-cognitive Strategies	356
4.3.4. Features of Effective Assessment	357
4.4. Teacher's Intercultural Education	365
4.4.1. Socio-cultural Consciousness	372
4.4.2. Affirming Attitudes towards Diversity	373
4.4.3. Diversity in Teachers' Education	374
4.4.4. Acting as Agents of Change	376
4.4.5. Constructivist Views of Learning	377
4.4.6. Learning about Students	378
4.4.7 Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	380
4.4.8. Discourse Approach to Intercultural instruction	382
4.4.9. Cognizance of the Context of Intercultural Instruction	383
4.6. Conclusion	387

4.1. Introduction:

The previous chapters have elucidated the fact that online platforms are among the futile grounds where a digitalized clash between the Self and the Other takes place. Admittedly, this tension between the two constructs is initiated in individuals' first socialization and along schooling (second socialization). Nevertheless, the study had been limited to online and classroom learning for the reason that these virtual settings had not been given due significance as far as empirical researches are concerned.

Truly, learners' journey in online settings is accompanied by implicit and explicit kinds of reality distortion via representations, stereotypes, and prejudices. However, such a biased mediation is fuelled, given the absence of teachers as intercultural mediators in online settings. Learners are prone to come across stereotypes about their cultures that represent them as aggressive and uncivilized people. Logically, these learners are going to respond negatively to the already-mentioned representations. In most cases, learners represent the Other as "colonizer and unbeliever". Under this spirit, the ideological features of online platforms are confirmed, since these settings had been attired a "human suit²⁰⁵", a suit that does not fit some waned cultures.

It is momentous to state that a clear-cut distinction between learners' various settings of cultural learning is mythical and utopian. In other words, learners develop some knowledge about other cultures from multifarious milieus, including language classes, to boot. The intercultural learning, it is significant to note, is a continuous process that goes along different stages and places. As far as this study is concerned, learners are prone to develop certain stereotypes and prejudices about the Other in various settings and bring them to language classes. As it had been shown (see chapter three), learners showcase their stereotypes in writing performances, especially when the task triggers off cultural differences. In relation to this, language classes are deemed vital as far as mitigating learners' intercultural shortcomings are concerned. Howbeit, in

²⁰⁵ By human suit, we mean that online platforms are being manipulated by human ideological intention.

English language classes at the University of Mostaganem, most of the syllabi introduced to the learners' depict past societies and hence do not abet learners develop an intercultural competence. Moreover, the process of assessment that may determine learners' progress in the intercultural journey is eschewed, since the emphasis is put on detecting learners' linguistic shortcomings only. The graph below elucidates the obstructions that come in the way of developing learners' intercultural competence:

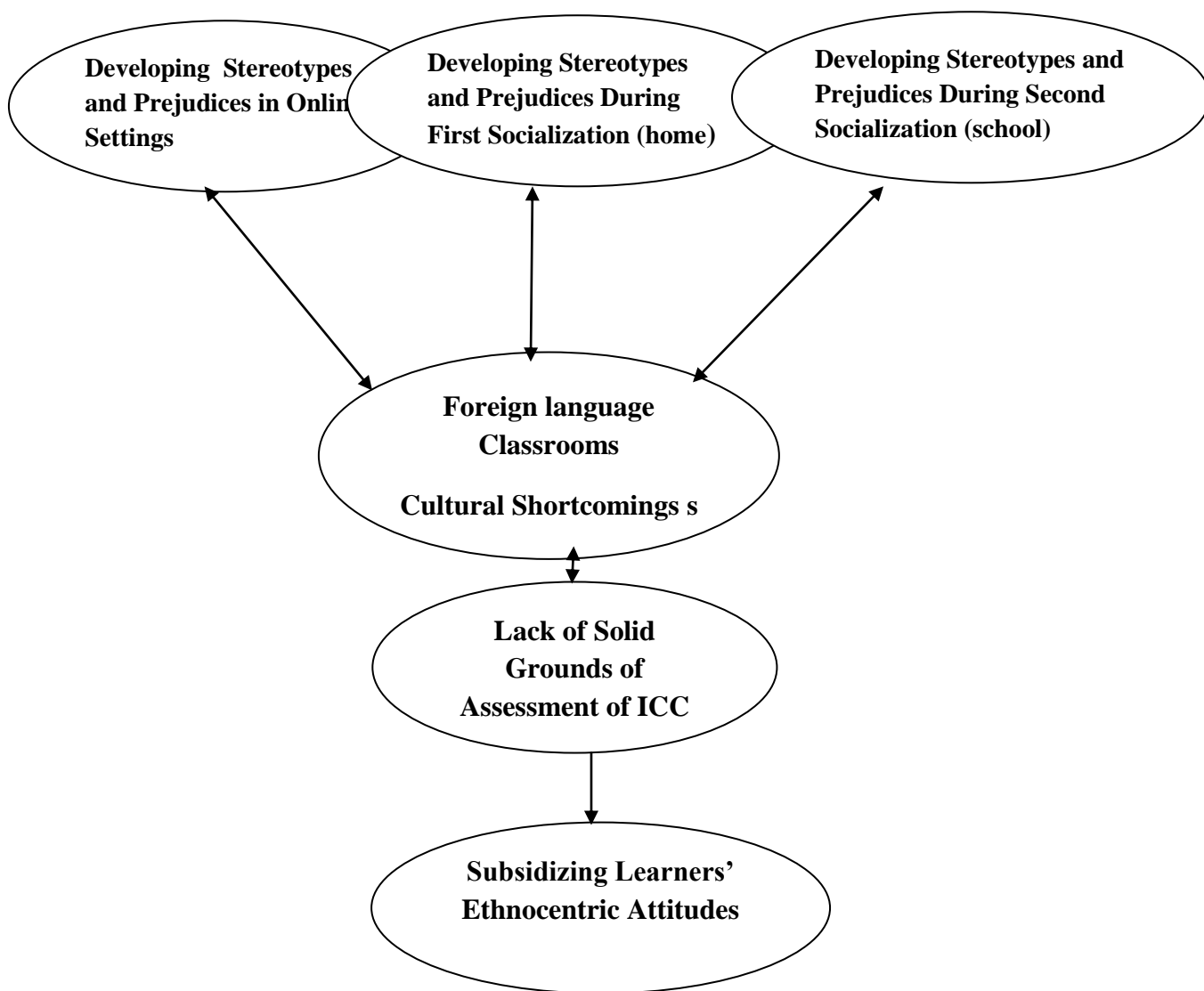


Figure 4.1.: Obstructions of Developing Learners' Intercultural Competence

Probably, the above-mentioned shortcomings revealed in this study are among many other reasons that hinder the intercultural process that foreign language learners need to undergo. The scheme that epitomizes the gaps in teaching about other cultures is contrasted by another one that this study advances, and which proposes certain promising ways to enhance the intercultural instruction. The framework hinges on three main dimensions: reducing learners' stereotypes via certain strategies, applying practical guidelines to the assessment of learners' cultural performances, and subsidizing teachers' intercultural education. The figure below expounds the proposed scheme:

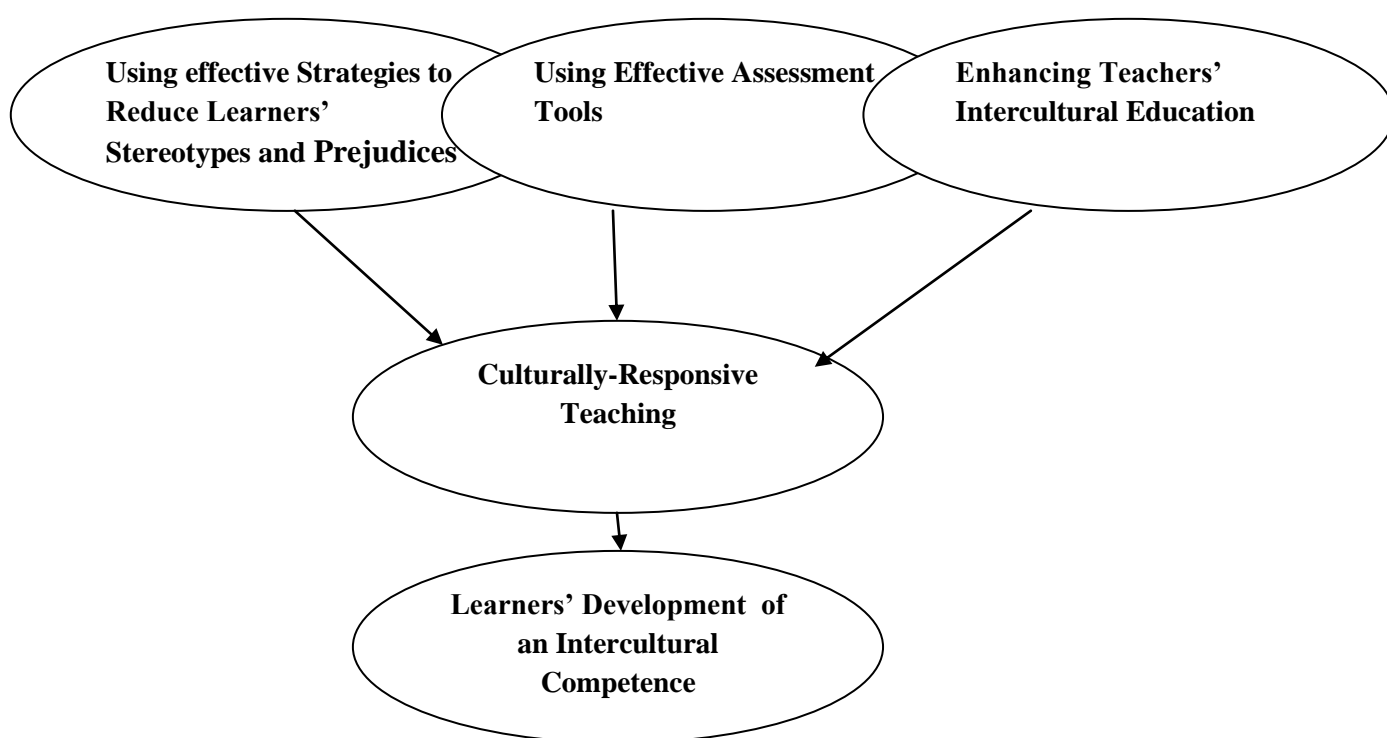


Figure: 4.2. The Proposed Scheme for Enhancing Learners' Intercultural Competence

4.2. Strategies for Reducing Learners' Stereotypes and Prejudices:

It is lucid that learners develop stereotypes and prejudices in divergent settings. These types of reality distortion are expressed and fomented in foreign language classes. Within this vista, educators play a central role as to minimizing learners' stereotypes and prejudices about the Self and the Other. To mitigate the threat of stereotypes, representations, and prejudices on learners' attitudes and performances, teachers need to be cognizant of their features and reasons. Levy (1996) suggests that stereotypes are known for their pervasiveness²⁰⁶. In other ways, these kinds of reality distortion are not constrained to one category of people, but relate to other members from divergent cultures; the non-stigmatized groups (cited in Singletary and Ruggs, 2009). In order for learners to develop an intercultural competence, they need to adopt positive stances and get rid of their stereotypes about other cultures. Scollon and Scollon (1995:157) state developing such a competence can be possible in case: *'comparisons between groups should always consider both likenesses and differences, that is, they should be based upon more than a single dimension of contrast, and it must be remembered that no individual member of a group embodies all of his or her group's characteristics'* (cited in Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005).

Most importantly, and this had been clearly shown in learners' exam performances, teachers need to be aware of the fact that learners may have lower performances in case they are influenced by the stereotype. Within this vista, learners may praise certain cultures and underestimate others²⁰⁷. Claiming the occurrence of such biased processes, learners who feel touched by the unfair portrayal are likely to develop negative attitudes about the teacher and the subject studied. Under this regard, teachers occupy a central role as far as helping their learners overcome the stereotype to achieve academically. However, instructors, the ones who are supposed to reduce the stereotypes, may foment them indirectly via their teaching practices. Moreover, the significant duty of instructors is established on grounds of mediating and mitigating learners'

²⁰⁶ See the results of both second and third chapters.

²⁰⁷ Here, we claim that some teachers', for instance, may devalue some African traditions; the same thing is applicable to other European cultures that are taken from biased religious grounds.

stereotypes and prejudices. These strategies encompass “identifying common goals, coping, suppressing, knowledge construction, group contact, and many other techniques”. In the same vein, teachers’ awareness of stereotype threat is vital. Singletay and Ruggs argue that teachers should be:

....aware of stereotype threat, its causes, and effects. Such knowledge will enable educators to avoid engaging in behaviors that may reinforce domain-related stereotypes, which may in turn decrease the negative outcomes that are related to stereotype threat. (Singletay and Ruggs, 2009).

4.2.1. Identifying Common Goals:

Banks (1994) outlines certain aspects of intercultural education, within which, he emphasized the process of prejudice reduction as an elemental aspect for the debated process. Parker (2003) argues that within educational milieus, both cultural differences and common goals are likely to come into contact. Accordingly, this atmosphere is a futile ground for the flourish of both prejudice reduction and intercultural instruction. Camicia (2007) underscores the fact that when learners, by employing their cultural differences to achieve common goals, are prone to generate high levels of consciousness. Camicia (ibid.) expounds this idea as she states: “*In other words, students can become aware that there are multiple perspectives concerning social conditions or the best course of action for their community*”. Under this spirit, a process of prejudice reduction targets enhancing learning milieus that guard against carrying “*societal prejudices*” to language classrooms (ibid.).

4.2.2. Knowledge Construction:

Researchers have proposed a strategy that bottoms on information generation in guarding against stereotypes and prejudices (Fiske and Neuberg, 1990, cited in Bauer and Baltes, 2000:239). Teachers who develop an intercultural competence are likely to apply some strategies that may decrease learners' stereotypes and prejudices. Among the multifarious options that instructors may use, is knowledge construction. Truly, as learners develop knowledge about other cultures, they are more likely to abandon their biased views about the Other. Camicia puts this claim in a nutshell as he states:

The process of knowledge construction is simultaneously a process of knowledge deconstruction. As students examine alternate narratives of out-groups, they begin the deconstruction of hegemonic mainstream narratives that perpetuate social inequality. For example, rather than a monolingual voice in subjects such as history, students are able to listen to many voices that describe history from a variety of perspectives (Camicia, 2007).

Under the same line of thought, Banks (2002:15) accentuates the necessity of cultural knowledge in relation a change at various planes, including the cultural norms that people consider a blasphemy. Banks expounds the idea in the statement below:

By revealing and articulating the inconsistency between the democratic ideals within a society and its practices, transformative knowledge becomes a potential source for substantial change". The transformation of knowledge includes asking different questions and reexamining what Apple (1990) terms "official" knowledge ²⁰⁸(Banks, *ibid.*22).

²⁰⁸ **Official knowledge** epitomizes the elevation of mainstream narratives to the status of being "truth," "normal," or "natural." Since "official" knowledge is often carried along school curriculum, a critical exploration of the curriculum is a significant dimension of intercultural education (Camicia: 2007).

Camicia (2007) states that multifarious examples of official knowledge are available in textbooks that, in most cases, nurture information about the Eurocentric²⁰⁹ nature of certain cultures, for instance French cultures, within a given curriculum. Likewise, this kind of intact knowledge presumes that other cultures like the American one is non-Eurocentric. Banks (1994:16) contends that learners are prone to examine such ironclad information as they embrace an intercultural education that affords various venues for cultures to come into contact.

Both scholars King (1991:133) and Cortés (2000) allude to the central role schools and media play in scattering stereotypes and prejudices among learners, and hence nurturing official knowledge. Bandura (1977) underscores how media influence learning. Under this spirit, media shape behavior and attitudes (cited in Camicia, 2007). Most importantly, since learners have constrained exposure to diverse cultures, *“the symbolic modeling of culture through media, such as the television, often encourages individuals to essentialize²¹⁰ other cultures”*. (Camicia: *ibid.*). King (*ibid.*) and Cortés (*ibid.*) point to the momentous duty of intercultural education in guarding against these doxas. King (*ibid.*:134) accentuates the fact that certain school curricula foster hegemonic views about cultures, as they advertise for the neutrality of knowledge²¹¹. Camicia (*ibid.*) outlines the fact that *“claims of neutrality render critical student inquiry of such claims difficult. Because students are not encouraged to question the source, perspective, or quality of knowledge claims”*.

Teachers may significantly contribute to the process of knowledge construction, as they develop their awareness of how various elements intervene in fomenting prejudice and stereotypes. For example, Cortes (2000) revealed that media jumble a set of bans and boons, since they widen the scopes and the perspectives for the users and implant prejudices and stereotypes in one’s lens. Claiming the quintessential nature of such a reality, teachers need to make

²⁰⁹ **Eurocentric nation means:** the nation of immigrants.

²¹⁰ **The process of essentializing** is intensified in communities in which media are the only sources of knowledge. Admittedly, schools are ideal milieus for learners to critically analyze media representations and the role of media in the construction of prejudices (Camicia 2007).

²¹¹ Here, King means that schools do not help the learners question the knowledge they get, and they take it as neutral and truthful.

learners cognizant of the manipulations of reality delivered by all kinds of media²¹². Therefore, emphasis should be put on the biased nature of media representations. Within this vista, the learners who construct a befitting cultural knowledge are prone to examine the hidden assumptions carried by such means (ibid.).

4.2.3. Intergroup Contacts:

Undoubtedly, as teachers aid their learners challenge the “*official knowledge*” and develop a knowledge that abets them see the world as a set of diversified cultures, they indirectly motivate them to partake in the practices of other cultural groups. Positive intergroup contact conditions subsidize positive attitudes that help all learners reduce prejudice and learn equitably. Within this perspective, teachers, by means enhancing cultural contacts among groups, foment intercultural encounters. Pettigrew (2004:775) outlines that “*intergroup contact typically reduces intergroup prejudice,*” and the “*changes wrought by contact are broad. Intergroup contact reduces many different manifestations of prejudice*”. Pettigrew explicates this idea in the statement below:

Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status²¹³ contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e., by law, custom, or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups (Pettigrew, ibid.281).

Moreover, learning contacts are significant in relation to the whole learning process, since they enhance learners’ autonomy. In relation to intercultural assessment, learning contacts bring both the teacher and the learner into contact. At this level, learners may partake in designing the goals and the objectives of the intercultural process, and hence do their best to achieve them. In the same vein, learners would be aware of the relevance of effective learning.

²¹² This idea is expounded in the second chapter.

²¹³ Allport’s (1979) four conditions of positive contact are equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support (Camicia, 2007).

Knowles (1975) adds that learning contacts entail the idea of learners getting in touch with their teachers, including the time allocated to the process of learning, the aims, and the methods that will be used to deliver the cultural message (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

4.2.4. Stereotype Suppression:

As it had been argued above, while some individuals adopt some coping strategies by means of disidentifying themselves from the stigmatized domain, others rely on stereotype suppression. This process is used “*as a means of clearing the mind of negative stereotypic thoughts, as they believe it will allow them to focus on the task at hand*”. Nevertheless, this process turns to be a double-edged sword, displaying some bans and boons. One of the disadvantages of such a cognitive mechanism is outlined in “the reduction of working memory capacity” (Schmader and Johns, 2003, cited in Bolton, 2013:157). Wegner (1994) postulates that the process of stereotype suppression is too demanding, and therefore controlling processes of stereotypes are incapable of finding distracters, which means that the automatic process goes unchecked (cited in *ibid.*158).

In the same line of thought, other attempts had been carried along the strategy of forcing or motivating the participants to eliminate their stereotypes via seeking accuracy. Nevertheless, forcing the individuals to abandon their stereotypes had been unsuccessful, since instead of minimizing the effects of stereotypes, this strategy fomented and emphasized them (Macrae, and Bodenhausen, 1994, cited in Bauer, and Baltes, 2002:239). By contrast to the afore-mentioned strategy, motivating the participants to be more accurate in dealing the Other had been more promising (Nelson, Acker, and Manis, 1996, cited in *ibid.*). Howbeit, despite the shiny side of this strategy, motivation had been found to abet the process of decreasing one’s stereotypes; however, it does not eliminate them (Fiske,1998, cited in *ibid.*). As the issue of stereotypes and prejudices is revealed in language classrooms, teachers should be aware of the nature of those kinds of reality distortion. That is, teachers should not act pedagogically so as to stop the learners from producing and generating

stereotypes. Bauer, C. and Baltes (ibid.) assert that: *“is not feasible to propose that all managers with traditional stereotypes be stopped from making evaluations of women”*. Per contra, the duty of teachers should relate to employing certain strategies to help learners reduce their stereotypes.

4.2.5. Cognitive Strategies:

The failure of the afore-mentioned strategies in guarding against stereotypes led other researchers in the field of social cognition to opt for novel ways to achieve positive results. This scientific activity led to the advent of what is known as *“structured free recall”*, a strategy that stems from social cognition platforms. Researchers qua Baltes and Parker (2002) have confirmed the usefulness of such a strategy in reducing learners’ stereotypes and prejudices. Within this cognitive vista, learners are encouraged to recall certain behaviours they came across, and then engage in the task to be assessed. Parker and Baltes (ibid.) underscore the significance of this strategy as they commented: *“This should reduce the raters’ reliance on judgments, which are influenced by stereotypes.”* Relaying on previously observed behaviour is likely to alter certain cognitive processes. Feldman and Lynch (1988, cited in Parker and Baltes, ibid.) advanced two main concepts: *“accessibility”*²¹⁴ and *“diagnosticity”*²¹⁵ of information. They believe that these two sub-processes directly relate to one’s evaluative judgments. The common ground that reconciles between both accessibility and diagnosticity relates the role they play in deciding upon the use of a particular prior cognition, a kind of an input in judgment production. In connection with this, Baltes and Parker (ibid.) argue that the process of recalling previous behaviours would increase the accessibility of certain memories in relation to the observed behaviour, and hence decrease one’s stereotypes.

²¹⁴ **Accessibility** refers to the ease with which a cognitive construct can be brought into awareness (Parker and Baltes, 2002).

²¹⁵ **Diagnosticity** refers to whether or not previous judgments or stored information are perceived to be relevant to subsequent judgments (Parker and Baltes, ibid.).

4.2.6. Coping Strategies:

Teachers may reduce learners' stereotypes and prejudices as they teach them strategies of coping. The latter, Belgrave and Allison (2010), state, denote the efforts to master environmental demands when a previous attempt is unavailable or ineffective (cited in Bridges, 2011). By the same token, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) outline coping as the process whereby individuals attempt to manage, via cognition and behaviour, external or internal variables that are believed to exceed their resources. These cognitive and behavioral efforts are twofold: positive²¹⁶ or negative²¹⁷ constructs. (Berman, Kurtines, Silverman and Serafini, 1996, cited in Bridges, *ibid.*). Under this line of thought, it is significant to mention that positive problem-focused strategies enhance performances and outcomes, whereas negative strategies generate difficulties (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, cited in *ibid.*).

In relation to coping strategies, one should emphasize the reciprocity that links both stereotypes and stress tighter. Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, cited in Bridges, *ibid.* agree that both stress and coping strategies are affiliated with what is termed "*cognitive appraisal*"²¹⁸, a process produced by the stressor along certain external /internal resources. The cognitive appraisal outlines the significance and meaning linked to the stressor. While the internal resources encompass personality and beliefs, the external resources include social relationships (*ibid.*). Both scholars underscore the fact that cognitive appraisal, internal and external resources enhance one's coping strategies that, in their turn, foment adaptive strategies.

²¹⁶ **Positive coping strategies** (e.g., problem-solving efforts, seeking information, and social support) include social approach behaviors which are focused on self-care or on changing the problem situation (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, cited in Bridges, 2011).

²¹⁷ **Negative coping strategies** (e.g., distraction, withdrawal, self-criticism, aggression, blaming others, wishful thinking, and resignation) consist of a social or antisocial avoidant behaviors that are focused on the stressor itself Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, cited in *ibid.*

²¹⁸ **Cognitive Appraisal** is a theory of emotion which relates people's personal interpretations of an event in determining their emotional reaction. This theory dives deep in interpretation events along their causes. (<http://psychcentral.com/encyclopedia/2008/cognitive-appraisal-theory/>).

Among the multifarious coping strategies, two ways had been empirically confirmed: problem -focused coping strategies and emotion-focused coping techniques. The former delineate ways of dealing with unmatched rapports with the environment and within the individuals themselves. Per contra, emotion-grounded strategies relate to adaptation systems such as avoiding the source of the stress, in our case stereotypes of the Self. This adaptation also includes reinterpreting the meaning of the events that individuals come across (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, cited in Bridges, *ibid.*). Under this spirit, teachers need to be aware of the fact that coping strategies are context-bound. That is, the environment that happens to be the context of the coping strategies determines the nature of the strategy as well as the norms of adaptation. Plummer and Slane (1996) state that certain coping strategies that may be regarded as maladaptive (e.g. avoidance or distancing) or adaptive under some settings, and some coping strategies that are viewed as adaptive, may be maladaptive under other circumstances (cited in *ibid.*).

4.2.7. Other Strategies:

Positively, stereotypes had been the subject of heated debates over the past years. Logically, researchers have developed certain strategies along the previously mentioned ones that may be used by teachers to reduce the debated types of reality distortion. Truly, among the consequences of stereotype threat is “a process of disidentification from the stereotyped fields”. Hence, culturally responsive teaching should mediate the stereotypes threat, the stigmatized domains, and learners’ stigma consciousness to afford an atmosphere that foments intercultural instruction. Bolton, (2003:158) underscores the significance of this interplay in the statement below: “*Thus, as a consequence of their predisposition to stereotype threat, HSC²¹⁹ students are at greater risk than LSC students for academic disidentification*”. In relation to this, the review of the literature advances various strategies that include: “reframing the task, deemphasizing threatened social identities, providing role models, having the test administered

²¹⁹ It refers to High stigma consciousness.

by a member of the stigmatized group, affording external attributions for difficulty, and assuring individuals that they are capable performers”.

To begin with, teachers may use the strategy of “reframing the task”. The latter outlines the fact of using different linguistic ways when delivering the task to the learners. Singletay and Ruggs (2009) argue: “*One method for doing so might include modifying task descriptions or instructions so that stereotypes are not invoked*²²⁰. *Changing the description can eliminate stereotype threat because the stereotypes are not primed*²²¹.

Moreover, another technique that is at the disposal of teachers relates to “*deemphasizing threatened social identities*”. In connection with this, teachers may remove demographic and cultural identifiers from the tests and the exams; in case they cannot, they should mitigate them. In both cases, learners who are affected by the stigmatized identities²²² are likely to perform better (Singletay and Ruggs, *ibid.*) It is believed that when learners develop their awareness about certain stereotypes and prejudices, their likeliness to embrace intercultural perspective is high. This prospect also relates to the process of stigmatization. This process is experienced by individuals divergently. Bolton (2003.*ibid.*) states: “*Whereas some people do not allow a self-stigma to affect their experiences, others are constantly aware of, and therefore affected by, this self-stigma*²²³”. The awareness of this stigma, which is termed “stigma consciousness” excels mere cognizance of such a process, as it encompasses a “*fixation on one’s stigmatized status*” (Pinel, 1999, cited in Bolton, *ibid.*). Moreover, the individuals, in our case the learners, when developing a high level of stigma consciousness, are likely to be aware of the stereotypes and prejudice they come across. Low stigma consciousness, per contra, lubricates ways for intercultural encounters.

²²⁰ Here, teachers may change the exam questions in relation to some cultural traits that trigger learners’ stereotypes of (see the question that relates Christianity in chapter three).

²²¹ **Priming:** A phenomenon, often used as an experimental technique, whereby a certain stimulus sensitizes the subject to later presentation of a similar stimulus (at: <http://psychcentral.com/encyclopedia/2009/priming/>).

²²² **Stigma:** “*a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something*” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stigma>).

²²³ According to Bolton (2013), awareness of self-stigmatization increases the potential for individuals to be affected by it.

Another effective strategy to guard against stereotypes can be established on grounds of showing the learners some people who belong to certain cultures and who have succeeded in fulfilling a given task²²⁴. This strategy will enhance their self-esteem and positive representations about their cultures²²⁵. Under the same spirit, stereotypes about the Self and the Other may be reduced in case the teachers who teach and design the activities are from the stereotyped groups (Pinel, *ibid.*). In addition to the afore-mentioned ways that may minimize stereotypes, teachers need to help learners develop a kind self-affirmation (Greenberg, and Schimel, 2006). This process is so significant since it hinges on identifying the points of strengths learners have and disregarding the negative ones. According to Singletay and Ruggs (2009) “*Self-affirmation consists of having individuals think about aspects of themselves that they value or believe are important aspects of their esteem*”. No doubt, learners who undergo certain stereotypes may need assistance and awareness. Here, teachers may provide them with knowledge about the stereotypes that may occur along the lectures. Singletay and Ruggs, (*ibid.*) postulate: “ *It may perhaps be beneficial to openly discuss what stereotype threat is with students so that students have an outlet which they can contribute feelings of anxiety to during the test*”.

Within this vista, the intervention of teachers is vital. Teachers may make their learners aware of the fact that performance has nothing to do with their race or belonging. Moreover, the learners, as they become cognizant of the fact that failure in the learning process excels mere racial and ethnic features, they focus more on issues that cause their failure qua revision, practice, Intelligence, etc (Walton and Spencer, 2009, cited in Western, n.d.). Casad (2009:12) states that teachers may eliminate stereotype threat by altering the academic environment to become safe for the learners who represent different cultures. Likewise, Stroessner and Good (2009) propose the following strategies that may contribute to minimizing the debated process(cited in Casad, *ibid.*):

²²⁴ Here, teachers may include non-Muslim scholars who contributed to the emergence of some fundamental theories in relation to foreign language and culture learning.

²²⁵ Here, we include the negative stereotypes about the Arabs and the Africans.

- Encourage self-affirmation;²²⁶
- emphasize high standards of learners' capabilities; ²²⁷
- provide external attributions for difficulty;²²⁸
- remove cues that trigger worries about stereotypes;²²⁹
- convey That Diversity is Valued;²³⁰
- create fair tests and present them as serving a learning purpose;²³¹
- value learners' individuality;²³²
- improve cross-group interactions;²³³
- aid learners manage feelings of stress and threat;²³⁴
- support learners' sense of belonging;²³⁵

²²⁶ Learners, who affirm their self-worth in a domain unrelated to the stereotype can mitigate the threat, emphasize positive personal characteristics, skills, or values that are important. (Stroessner and Good (2009, cited in Casad, 2009).

²²⁷ Teachers' expectations about their learners' abilities can greatly affect learners' performance. Under this spirit, teachers are supposed to communicate to all students high expectations and convey confidence that students can achieve them. (cited in Western, n.d).

²²⁸ Positively, anxiety and distracting thoughts nurtured by stereotype threat undermine learners' performance. In such a way, as teachers explain to the learners the reason for anxiety, they alleviate stereotype threat. (Stroessner and Good, 2009, cited in Casad, *ibid.*).

²²⁹ The role of teachers is central to this aspect, since it is their duty to reduce prejudice (Logel et al., 2009) and to remove physical cues that make it seem that a school setting is defined by the majority group (Cheryan et al, 2009, cited in Casad, *ibid.*).

²³⁰ Teachers, to value diversity, need to communicate a multicultural ideology that explicitly counts for diversity (Purdie- Vaughns et al., 2008, cited in Casad, *ibid.*).

²³¹ Teachers are asked to use gender- and race-fair tests, and to explain to the learners that these tests are being used to facilitate learning, not to measure innate ability or reify stereotypes (Good et al., 2008; Spencer et al., 1999; Steele and Aronson, 1995, cited in Western, n.d.).

²³² Teachers need to emphasize learners' individual identities (Ambady et al., 2005; Gresky et al., 2005, cited in *ibid.*).

²³³ As intergroup relations are fostered, learners may decrease stereotypes; teachers need to remind learners of similarities among groups and in this way foment cooperative classrooms (Aronson and Patnoe, 1997; Cohen, 1994, cited in *ibid.*).

²³⁴ By means of teaching learners about stereotype threat they, attribute anxiety to stereotype threat rather than to the risk of failure (Johns et al., 2005, cited in *ibid.*).

- focus on improving rather than proving ability; ²³⁶
- give learners opportunities to reflect on valued characteristics and to view themselves as complex and unique ;²³⁷
- provide learners with external attributions for anxiety during testing. ²³⁸

Dervin (n.d.) argues that for learners to develop an intercultural competence, two models are worth dealing with. The former, advanced by Holliday, Hyde and Kullman (2004) can be used by teachers to conduct various kinds of assessment, including summative, peer, and group assessments. The framework outlined below encompasses three touchstones: identity, otherization, and representation. In developing intercultural features in relation to the three central elements, learners are prone to understand and tolerate the Other:

Identity: This criterion outlines the fact that learners need to develop an understanding of other identities. To achieve it, the following guidelines are proposed:

- Avoiding preconceptions about the Other;
- appreciating cultural complexity;

²³⁵ Teachers should make their learners aware that worries about belonging in school are normal, not unique to them or their group, and are transient rather than intact (Walton and Cohen, 2007, 2011, cited in Casad, 2009).

²³⁶ Stereotypes assume that capacities are intact. However, learners who believe that capacities are malleable are insulated from stereotype threat (Inzlicht and Good, 2004). Ergo, to help learners see their capacities as malleable, it is useful for instructors to cultivate a “growth mindset” as opposed to a “fixed mindset” (cited in *ibid.*).

²³⁷ Research showcases that negative stereotypes create less threat when stereotyped learners are given the opportunity to focus on valued aspects of themselves and to think about themselves as complex and unique (Gresky, Ten Eyck, Lord, and McIntyre, 2005; Martens, Johns, Greenberg, and Schimel, 2006, cited in *ibid.*).

²³⁸ When learners are faced with high-stakes testing situations ,teachers need to prepare them by talking about the fact that they might be anxious, but emphasize external explanations for their anxiety (cited in *ibid.*).

- avoiding over-generalizing from immediate individual instances;
- responding to people from real contact with them rather than from certain stereotypes and prejudices;
- avoiding easy answers about how people are;
- appreciating the fact that every society is as diversified and culturally varied as your own;
- considering what people say about their culture as a personal observation which does not necessarily applies to other people who come from the same background;
- understanding people's ways of creating and negotiating their cultural identity along communicative processes;
- valuing the fact that the creation and negotiation of cultural and personal identity are more or less the same thing.

Otherization: For learners to objectively deal with the Other, they need to seek a profound understanding of the prejudices, preconceptions and discourses which lead them to otherize people from different cultures. The following points put forward may help the learners tolerate the Other:

- Avoiding falling into the culturalist trap of reducing people to less than they are;
- being cognizant of fact that what happens between the individual and others is influenced very much by the environment within which they conduct communicative processes;
- becoming aware of preoccupations in order to construe what people from other backgrounds are responding to;
- avoiding being influenced by previous experiences;

- monitoring one's language along an awareness of the destructive, culturalist discourses within linguistic usages.

Representations: The last yardstick of the proposed model embodies a set of objective representations of the Other. To achieve such an intercultural salient feature, learners need to seek a deeper understanding of the representations of the foreign Other, which are perpetuated by society. In addition to this, learners need to:

- be aware of the influence of media, political and institutional settings on ways of perceiving the world;
- trying to consider alternative representations in dealing with the Other;
- being aware of dominant discourses which are instrumentalised by the media, and which lead the individual to 'think as usual' that familiar images of the foreign Other are 'normal';
- being au-courant of the fact that even images projected by sensitive, intellectual sources can seduce one's own sensitivities and intellects into believing that they are 'true'.²³⁹

The second model perpetuates the salience of interaction as it underscores relationships in intercultural encounters. This framework also underscores how one co-constructs their own identity by means of interacting with others. Likewise, representations permeate the very heart of interactive processes. " (Ogay, 2000: 166) argues: *"in any act of interaction, it is well known that one never communicates with the person as s/he really is, but with a representation which we have of him/her and his/her groups of belonging, just as this person brings in the interaction act her own representations"*.

²³⁹ See the influence of images on learners' attitudes in chapter two.

The model proposed by Dervin (n.d.13) is befitting for learners' self-assessment. It includes three main interrelated competences; two savoir- faire and one savoir agir. By the same token, the advanced model permeates discourses over cultures and processes of dissociative acts. Dervin (ibid.) describes the framework in the statement : *“There is no progression (no “levels”) and it is open, flexible and should be reworked and adapted to learners' needs. Every component is expressed in the first person so that learners can use the model for self assessment.* In connection with these salient features, the framework affords venues for learners to *“check their actions/reactions/strategies for an adaptation of the concept in intercultural communication”* (ibid.). Learners may enhance the three components of the afore-cited model by means of the following guidelines:

- Savoir-faire I (Detect identification):
 - Being fully aware that every individual (including the learners themselves) is multiple and complex;
 - knowing how to note and objectively analyze pieces of evidence of identification in learners' own discourse as well as in the other's discourses;
 - trying not to present oneself through national images, stereotypes, generalizations and exaggerations.
- Savoir Faire II (Paying Attention to Discourses):
 - Being able to listen to discourses that the learner comes across (theirs as well as others');
 - knowing how to ease such discourses by means of linguistic markers such as modalities and be as explicit as possible by reformulating;

- bearing in mind that there is a potential gap between discourses and acts in other words.

- Savoir Réagir/ Agir: Controlling One's Emotions/Behaviours :

- making an effort to remind oneself that individuals are human beings and that they have emotions, feelings, experience bad/good moods, personal problem that, to a great extent, influence their reactions;

- trying not to draw quick and culturalist conclusions which may harm my relationships with others.

Despite the fact that learners need to develop an intercultural competence that allows them communicate globally, the status quo of teaching about other cultures within the LMD system in Algeria does not help much in fomenting the debated process. For such a reason, teachers and syllabus designers need help their learners achieve certain intercultural skills that excel mere knowledge about other cultures. An intercultural competence does not befall via learning about another culture, or because individuals from divergent backgrounds contact one another (Allport, 1954, cited in Deardorff,n.d.). According to Deardorff (n.d.), intercultural competence can be enhanced by means of tailoring learners' experiences an intercultural dimension, what is often known as “*internationalizing the campus*”. To achieve such a global perspective of education, the courses that are introduced to the learners need to focus on salient cultural features that aid them communicate globally²⁴⁰. As it had been shown, the teaching about other cultures is mainly limited to the subjects of literature which, according to Deardorff, is insufficient. She (ibid.) believes that intercultural competence needs to be taught along different subjects, often abbreviated in acronym “STEM”, referring to science, technology, engineering,

²⁴⁰ The main cultural features of the courses introduced to our learners focus on past cultural information.

and mathematics. The current study has shown that culture is mainly taught via the subjects of literature. However, intercultural competence can be taught along all the subjects instructed via English language such as civilization, grammar, oral expression, written expression, and others²⁴¹. Deardorff (ibid.) maintains that for a course to target intercultural goals, it needs to tackle different perspectives and issues, and to aid students see from divergent cultural perspectives.

Moreover, teachers of English need to be aware of the fact that intercultural competence is a transformational learning. That is, the learners who develop such a competence are likely to alter their views, attitudes and behaviours, as they embrace positive attitudes towards the Other. Likewise, a successful transformation cannot be achieved in language classrooms only; however, it needs to be backed up by means of learners' off-classroom experiences²⁴². Deardorff (n.d.) points to the fact that the intercultural process may be subsidized by means of service learning²⁴³ and education abroad. It is important to note that both strategies foment intercultural abilities and experiences, since they hinge on the essence of cultural contacts nurtured by contact theory. The latter, according to Erickson and O'Connor (2000:63) "*was introduced and developed by social psychologists to examine and evaluate the various conditions under which face-to-face contact would promote greater personal and social understanding between members of different ethnic and racial groups*".

Service learning is so crucial for the process of intercultural education, since it "*involve[s] students in relationships across human differences, e.g. gender, race, age, economic status, national origin, faith, sexual [and gender orientations], and/or educational attainment*" (Slimbach, 1996:102). According to Deardorff (n.d), service learning may be assessed via learners' cultural responsiveness and critical reflection. Both criteria are momentous for the evaluative process; since

²⁴¹ For a detailed view about the syllabi of English, see chapter Three.

²⁴² Here, we include online learning.

²⁴³ **Service Learning** Service learning is a method of teaching and learning that encourages learners to learn academic content and skills by planning and participating in community service activities. (Retrieved from <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/education/service-learning>).

they aid the assessors identify the degree to which their learners embrace their own identities and the others.

Learners may also subsidize their intercultural competence as they get the chance to visit foreign countries. In this sense, education abroad is beneficial since it aids the learners experience the target culture and contact the native speakers. The extent to which learners have benefited from the visit may be assessed via pretesting, post-testing and surveys. In addition to the aforementioned tools of assessment, learners may be evaluated by means of the critical reflection they develop in relation to the experiences they had there. In the same line of thought, teachers may observe learners' interactions and detect the progress they have achieved from their education abroad. Deardorff explains the significance of education abroad in developing learners' intercultural competence is the following comment:

Learners are better able to articulate the learning that occurs, beyond declaring that it "changed my life." This adequate preparation means helping students with an understanding of intercultural competence frameworks, vocabulary, and concepts so that they can apply them to the learning that occurs before, during, and after the experience (Deardorff, n.d.).

Undoubtedly, not all the learners can afford a visit to another country. For such a hindrance, the process of intercultural learning needs to be backed up by other strategies such as the process of "*internationalization at home*" (Nilsson, 2003). The latter can be achieved by means of curricular and co-curricular²⁴⁴ activities that teachers introduce to the learners in the classrooms. In implementing well-designed programmes, the target of language and culture learning will shift from mere social needs to account for intercultural skills that connect the learners to the whole world. In the same vein, learners need to be encouraged to exercise their intercultural learning in their daily activities. Bok (2006:248) articulates that "*the best way for undergraduates to learn from one another*

²⁴⁴ Cocurricular "*Complementing but not part of the regular curriculum*" (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/cocurricular>).

is not through taking classes but in the dorm room discussions, mealtime conversations, and other group activities” (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

4.3. Practical Guidelines for the Assessment of Learners’ ICC:

Indeed, the milieus that support the interplay of the cultures of the Self and the Other are various and miscellaneous. The online platforms and classrooms are but a sample from wider categories. Learners of English, as the previous chapters showcased, develop some attitudes and stereotypes about the Other in online settings. Likewise, this stereotypical process is even enhanced given the absence of the teachers as intercultural mediator. This distorted representation of the Other is brought to the classroom, the milieu that is supposed to mitigate its prejudicial connotation and racial grounds. Nevertheless, language and culture classrooms in Algeria, the University of Mostaganem in particular, do not remedy the shortcomings learners develop in off-classroom settings. This is the case, since learners’ cultural shortcomings are eschewed in the evaluative phase. Ergo, this section targets providing practical and useful guidelines as far as the assessment of learners’ intercultural competence is concerned.

The process of intercultural competence, as any other learning process, obligates the implementation of solid grounds of assessment. Howbeit, as Deardorff (n.d.) outlines, any process of assessment that aims at detecting learners’ cultural shortcomings requires a clear-cut definition of the debated competence²⁴⁵. Fantini (2009), argues that it is vital to develop a definition of intercultural competence before proceeding with any further assessment endeavors. The latter is among the labyrinthine concepts that generate divergent understandings across different disciplines and approaches. These new coinages include “global competence in the field of engineering, cultural competence is social science, etc. In the same vein, Fantini (ibid.) adds that multiculturalism, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence, international communication, trans-cultural communication, global competence,

²⁴⁵ Despite the fact that many concepts define interculturalality, we prefer using the concept intercultural competence, since it denotes interactions across divergent cultures.

cross-cultural awareness, and global citizenship are all used to refer to the process of cultural encounters.

Lussier, et al. (2007) postulate that the process of intercultural assessment had been mainly associated with the evaluation of individuals' acquisition of cultural information, what is known as "*saviors*". This knowledge had been assessed by means of pen-and paper tests and other subjective tools of assessment. Teachers had been used to focus on the way learners identify the similarities and the differences between cultures, including the features and the characteristics of the involved cultures. Under this spirit, teachers considered three main approaches that provide various grounds for the acquired information. The humanistic approach targeted the information that the individuals who represent the target culture hold collectively. The anthropological approach sought identifying the diversities that are noticed in relation to ways of life in other cultures. The sociological approach prioritized the socio-cultural aspects of the target cultures (ibid.).

Indeed, the emphasis that had been put on the cultural knowledge that the learners develop had been done at the expense of other significant components of intercultural competence. The assessment of "know how" (*savoir faire*) had been assessed from on pure linguistic ground. That is to say, learners had been judged the linguistic side of their communicative actions, including the fluency and the correctness of their language. However, in intercultural assessment, more importance should be given to the way learners apply their cultural knowledge and skills to interact in divergent cultural settings. (Lussier,et al. :ibid.).

4.3.1. Models of Intercultural Assessment:

4.3.1.1. Deardorff's (2006) Model:

Deardorff's (2006) model of intercultural competence is among the frameworks that have enlightened the scope of intercultural assessment²⁴⁶. According to her, intercultural competence comprises attitudes and knowledge that lubricate the intercultural encounters. However, these two main components need to generate some external and internal outcomes. In applying this, model, teachers of English may get to know if their learners have developed the desired knowledge and attitudes by means of evaluating learners' performances, in this case, their writing performances, as they analyze their behaviours, flexibility, and views (cited in Deardorff, n.d).

Deardorff (n.d.) suggests that these aspects of intercultural competence are broad, and hence require the intervention of the teacher by means of adapting them to particular contexts. Likewise, she asserts that intercultural competence needs to be assessed for a couple of sound reasons. To begin with, it is an ongoing process that obligates some phases of evaluation over time. What needs emphasis within this model of intercultural competence is learners' development of critical thinking. The latter, according to her, constitutes the most important part, since it outlines the ability to acquire new knowledge and evaluate it on objective grounds. Deardorff (ibid.) comments "*this means that critical-thinking assessment could also be an appropriate part of intercultural competence assessment*". In the same line of thought, the assessment of learners' attitudes and global perspectives are central to the targeted process. By means of evaluating these aspects, teachers may know if the learners develop positive or negative attitudes about the Other. Furthermore, assessment of intercultural competence needs to take learners' cultural knowledge into account, a knowledge that excels ethnocentric ideas. Deardorff (ibid.) maintains that "*Thus any assessment of culture-specific knowledge needs to go beyond the conventional surface-level knowledge of foods, greetings, customs,*

²⁴⁶ See the review of the literature for more information of the above-mentioned model.

and so on". Deardorff (ibid.) postulates that any process of intercultural assessment needs to go through the following steps:

Providing a Clear-cut Definition of Intercultural Competence



Prioritizing Goals Related to Intercultural Competence.



Stating Measurable Objectives

Figure 4.3. : Deardorff's Model of Intercultural Assessment

Positively, the process of intercultural learning is broad, since it stems from the knotty concept of culture. Therefore, in addition to the need for a precise understanding of the concept, teachers are supposed to delimit the scope of assessment by means of identifying the goals they target in both their lectures and evaluation processes. From a practical perspective, teachers may underscore learners' adoption of other perspectives that embrace tolerance and forgiveness. In relation to the data showcased in this study, teachers of English may accentuate how learners perceive other religions, and therefore make them as the focal point of their assessment. Identifying the goals of assessment, Deardorff (n.d.) states, would be enhanced if the teacher works cooperatively with other teachers in group sessions. In the same vein, the process of intercultural assessment should be taken as an ongoing and changing process that needs constant modifications and adaptations. Likewise, she emphasizes the significance of time and collaborative work in relation to intercultural competence as she commented:

The process of prioritizing various aspects of intercultural competence is an important one and should not be done too quickly or taken lightly. The process itself often involves dialogue and discussion with key stakeholders, including students, to determine which specific elements of intercultural competence should be the focus of programmatic efforts and assessment endeavors (Deardorff, *ibid.*).

The second stage that teachers need to be aware of relates to identifying a set of objectives²⁴⁷ of their assessment process. Inconvertibly, the process of identifying the objectives links to the previous phases. In connection with this, teachers are likely to question learners' achievement of already planned objectives. Examples of intercultural objectives are learners' ability to communicate effectively with others, the cultural knowledge they have developed, etc.

4.3.1.2. Objective-Oriented Approaches:

Positively, there are various understandings and approaches to the concept assessment. Howbeit, the intercultural realm is preoccupied with how learners and individuals conduct effective successful cultural communication. Under this spirit, Upcraft and Schuh's (1996) understanding of assessment is paramount. According to them, assessment is "*any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes...effectiveness.*" Truly, the availability of numerous approaches of assessment does not mean that teachers who conduct an intercultural evaluation need to use them all. Per contra, teachers need to use the approach that targets their aims of evaluation more effectively. Stufflebeam, Madaus and Kellaghan (2000) underscore the significance of objective-oriented approaches to assessment (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

²⁴⁷ Goals “are long-term aims that you want to accomplish”. Objectives “are concrete attainments that can be achieved by following a certain number of steps”. (dictionary.com).

The processes of learning and assessment should be based on sound objectives that curriculum designers, syllabus designers, and teachers should carefully plan. In relation to this, objective-oriented evaluation is central to the intercultural assessment, since it hinges on outlining the salient cultural aspects that learners aspire to achieve, and which teacher target along the evaluative process. Byram (1997:29) notes that “*clearly formulated objectives are essential to proper assessment, and assessment itself is therefore indirectly affected by contextual factors*”. By the same token, Tyler (1949:106) underscores the significance of clear-cut objectives in evaluation, as he stated “*The process of evaluation is essentially the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realized...*” (cited in Deardorff, n.d.). Tyler (1949:117) maintains that an effective intercultural assessment should be linked to the use of a variety of assessment tools, and most importantly to a significant change in learners’ behaviour. He comments “*It should be clear that for most purposes the appraisal of human behavior should be an analytic one rather than a single score summary*” (cited in Deardorff, *ibid.*). Furthermore, he emphasizes the significance of reconciliation between learners’ own experiences and the target culture (s). Under this vein, Tyler (*ibid.*) advances an objective-based approach that hinges on the following criteria:

- ✓ The objectives an organization (university) should plan to attain,
- ✓ the learning experiences required to accomplish those objectives,
- ✓ the organization of the learning experiences for effective instruction,
- ✓ the evaluation of the effectiveness of the learning experiences (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

Taylor’s approach had been the stepping stone for other scholars qua Popham (1993:11) to launch their frameworks. Popham (*ibid.*) underscored the significance of the use of a variety of assessment tools, as he proposed a triangulation model. In the same line of thought, Stark et al. (1989) reinforces the significance of objectives in the assessment process as he pointed to the

elemental role of taking learners' goals of learning into account along the debated process. Boys (1995:45) support this claim and commented that *"assessing competence effectively depends on defining and describing what the learner is intended to achieve..."*

Another objective-oriented approach of evaluation is advanced by Bonne (1985:173). This panorama underscores the accountability of educational programmes. It could be applied to the programmes introduced to the learners of English, since it inspects the effectiveness of certain programmes and contents in relation to the achievement of particular objectives. It is advisable that syllabus designers of English subjects take this approach as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes that are served to the learners of English. Boone (ibid.) contends that this approach is processed by means of *"making informed judgments about the effectiveness of the planned program and plans of action based on established criteria and known, observable evidence"*. Deardorff (2004) adds that accountability of particular programmes can be achieved via a measurement of outcomes and the implementation of the findings to the renewal of the programmes. It is worth mentioning that in assessing any programme, the assessor needs to take the context into account. Boone (ibid.) elucidated such a claim as he commented *"The fact that programming occurs in an organizational context brings up the notion that a planned program's success depends on its context at least as much as on the efforts" to deliver the program "*.

Stufflebeam (1971:298) has also developed a new approach in relation to assessment via the mode he advanced (cited in Deardorff, 2004). His model underscores significance of the context of evaluation, the process of evaluation, the input and the output. Stufflebeam (1971, cited in ibid.) maintains that the evaluation process needs to take into account both positive and negative aspects of learning. He states that evaluation: *"should assess intended and unintended outcomes and positive and negative outcomes"* (cited in ibid.). Likewise, assessment is said to be effective when taken from *"vantage points" including the aggregate, subgroups and "sometimes for individuals"* (ibid.). In the same vein, teachers should be aware of the continuous nature of intercultural assessment. He (ibid.) contends that assessment can be conducted via *"continuous program matrix*

sampling testing technique” in which students’ progress is measured in the aggregate over a period of time to determine their progress (cited in *ibid.*300). Teachers may evaluate their learners at the beginning by indentifying their strengths and weaknesses in relation to intercultural learning, and then teach them about other cultures along a given time, and finally evaluate their output on grounds of effectiveness and viability that can be observed in learners’ performances (cited in *ibid.*).

Another model of relevance to the process of intercultural evaluation is Upcraft and Schuh’s (1996). This model also accentuates seeking objectivity in the process of assessment. This objectivity, according to Astin (1991:39) should respond to questions like: “*From whose perspective are we attempting to assess outcomes?*” (cited in Deardorff,2004). Deardorff (*ibid.*) suggests that different agents may be included in this process, including administrators, teachers, and the learners, to boot. In the same line of thought, Baird (2003) outlined the fact that students’ development models should help change the traditional ways of assessment and learning processes as a whole. According to him, a reconceptualization process of the understanding of assessment is more than required. The process of reconceptualization should deal the following points:

- ✓ A new appreciation of learners as active and diverse individuals,
- ✓ a view of the multiple environments of learning,
- ✓ the understanding of different patterns of students’ interactions,
- ✓ the recognition of outcomes as individually chosen by students.

4.3.1.3. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity:

The fact that intercultural learning is a process that goes across different stages outlines the fact that assessing it in a particular stage would be misleading. According to Polyak, Ker, and Tardos (n.d.), assessment of intercultural learning has to be preceded by clear-cut understanding of what the assessor should assess and the possibility of doing so. In relation to the developmental nature of intercultural competence, Bennett's (2004:65) model can assess learners' stages of intercultural competence. Within this framework, three main levels of evaluation can be identified: cultural level, intercultural level, and the level of intercultural experience.

Bennett (ibid.66) stratifies the first level within the perspective of knowledge. At this level, the assessor, teachers in our case, are interested in making comparative analysis in relation to the involved cultures. This level presupposes that an individual is said to be interculturally competent in case they develop some cultural knowledge about the other cultures. Nevertheless, Polyak, Ker, and Tardos, (n.d.) falsify this claim as they suggested "*the two do not necessarily correlate: one can be competent without knowledge, and knowledge does not guarantee competence either*". The second level, known as cultural level, evaluates the interaction across cultures. It also accentuates the cross-cultural psychological effects on interaction, including personality, attitudes, and behaviours. The third level, Bennett (2004:67) suggests, is the most important part as far as assessment is concerned. This claim is backed up by the fact that in psychological analysis of cultural interactions, emphasis is put on linear relationships within intercultural encounters. This psychology-based approach is deemed impractical as far as complex intercultural dimensions are concerned. On the contrary, the level of intercultural experience dives deeper in assessing learners' complex intercultural interactions from divergent perspectives.

Within the developmental vista, Bennett (ibid.) advances a model of "*Intercultural Sensitivity*", a framework that underlies six main stages: three ethnocentric panoramas (denial, defense, and minimization) and three ethnorelative stages (acceptance, adaptation and integration) An individual who

is supposed to develop an intercultural competence is the one who showcases sensitivity towards cultural differences (Chen, 1997); Bennett (2004). Polyak, Ker and Tardos (n.d.) outline that “*Sensitivity indicates the complex perception of cultural differences, the ability of an individual to construct alternative cultural experiences, while competence implies that a culturally sensitive individual shows appropriate and effective behaviours in other cultural environments.* According to these scholars, a person whose socialization had been brought in a single culture is not likely to develop sensitivity, whereas the individual who has been in touch with other cultures is prone to immerse themselves in divergent cultural contexts. The figure below showcases the six stages of Bennett’s developmental model of intercultural sensitivity:

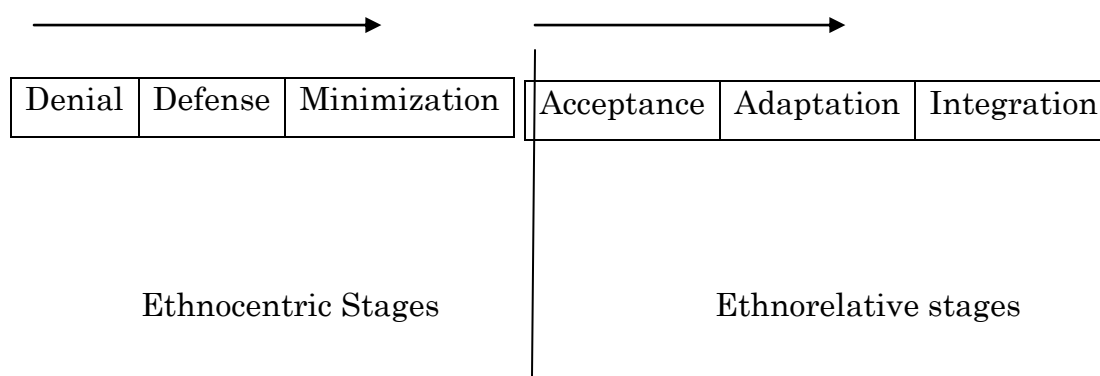


Figure 4.4: Bennett’s (2004) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

To begin with, teachers may design their own tools to assess learners’ ethnocentric stages. At the first level, the learners are inclined to develop some denying reactions towards the target cultures. This reaction is displayed at a superficial level, particularly at the level of observable cultural facts like food, customs, and traditions. This attitude enhances judgmental processes that clearly identify boundaries between the Self and the Other. Teachers may design questionnaires to assess learners’ cultural knowledge, and hence identify ethnocentric views the learners bring to the classroom. In some cases, learners are likely to construct a kind of a shield to protect their identities and cultures

from any foreign influence. Here, too, teachers may identify these negative attitudes, but this time via interviews. In the same vein, minimization entails the fact that assessors should focus on how learners prioritize similarities between cultures at the expense of more significant cultural aspects (Bennett, *ibid.*).

By means of formative assessment that undergoes a given period of time, teachers may identify the transition that learners make from ethnocentric into ethnorelative stages. The first level of ethnorelativity entails acceptance, a feature that displays appreciation of cultural differences and similarities in relation to the involved cultures. Teachers may also notice how their learners develop some new perspectives that are based on critical thinking and reflection. This phase of adaptation also implies adopting new behaviours and objective attitudes. In the last stage, learners develop an intercultural competence that allows them communicate globally. This stage of integration blurs the line of demarcation between the Self and the Other. Polyak, Ker and Tardos (n.d.) argue: *“the process of shifting cultural perspective becomes a normal part of self, and so identity itself becomes a more fluid notion. One begins to see one’s self as “moving around in cultures”*. Under this spirit, teachers may interview their learners at the end of the semester or year to see if they have adopted new perspectives about the target culture. In case they do so, the intercultural process is deemed successful, if not serious, reviews need to be launched.

4.3.1.4. Scarino and Liddicoat’s Assessment Cycle (2009):

As it had been pointed at earlier, it is better for teachers to assess their learners’ intercultural learning over an extended period of time. This implies the fact that the use of formative assessment suits the intercultural realm more than the one that is conducted after each test or exam. Within this vista, the review of the literature affords some models that enhance intercultural assessment along formative criteria. Among the frameworks that hinge of assessing learners’ progress over time is Scarino and Liddicoat’s (2009) framework of *“Assessment Cycle”* that comprises four main parts of evaluation: conceptualization, eliciting, judging, and validating. Scarino and Liddicoat (*ibid.*) propose the following frameworks that can be used to design suitable criteria for the assessment of

learners' intercultural performances in both receptive and productive skills. As the second chapter revealed, culture teaching is mainly limited to literature as the carrier of cultures. Nevertheless, culture can be taught along other skills such as “reading, speaking, listening, and writing. The figure below showcases the debated model:

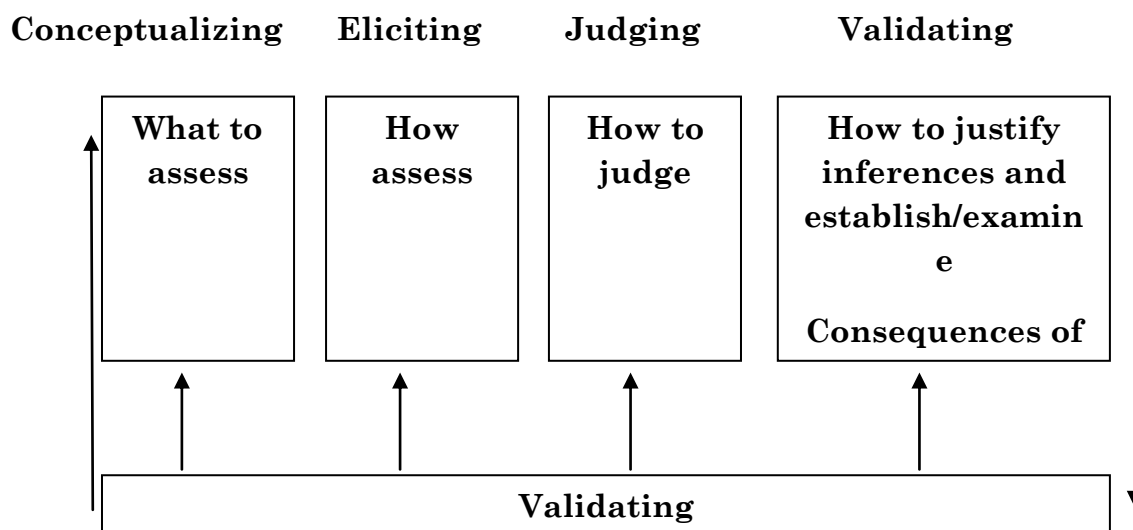


Figure 4.5 Scarino and Liddicoat's Assessment Cycle (2009)

To begin with, the first process that intercultural assessment should start with relates to conceptualization. Here, the teachers need to be versed in the cultural aspect they want to evaluate. Assessing intercultural competence requires from the teachers to be aware of the main features that constitute intercultural competency, including the knowledge of how people from divergent culture perceive the world around them. This knowledge should be extended to account for how peoples interact and undergo process of decentering and adopting novel perspectives. Truly, this process of conceptualization determines the main traits to be assessed, the means to be used and the objectives to be attained. (Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.) mention the following issues that can enhance a better conceptualization of intercultural competence:

- ✓ what learners know and can do in the target language and culture;
- ✓ how they construe and interpret things ;
- ✓ what they mean when they interact;
- ✓ the ways they use language and culture;
- ✓ how they are participating in activities;
- ✓ what positions they are fomenting in relation to each other;
- ✓ what identities they are developing as part of their own growing self-awareness.

Eliciting is the second phase that intercultural assessment undergoes within the debated framework. At this stage, teachers need to call upon learners' oral and written performances. The written performances are displayed in notebooks, projects, tests, etc. The oral ones are carried along conversations, interviews, etc. These platforms are taken by teachers as grounds for their analyses. The process of eliciting the evidence from learners' performances excel mere acquisition of cultural knowledge to account for skills, experiences, meaning, languages, cultures, and enacted identities (Moss, 2008, cited in Scarino and Liddicoat, 2009).

Teachers may employ various tasks so as to elicit the evidence from learners' performances, including receptive²⁴⁸ and productive tasks²⁴⁹. In relation to our study, the second chapter revealed the fact the process of teaching about cultures in limited to particular subjects such as literature. Nevertheless, culture should accompany other subjects such as the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.) showcase how culture could be fused with the four skills along teaching English and assessing the cultures that it carries to the learners. Both scholars maintain that in receptive tasks, learners

²⁴⁸ Receptive tasks include reading and listening.

²⁴⁹ Productive tasks include writing and speaking.

are prone to observe, notice, compare, interpret, and interact with the texts they come across. Under this spirit, teachers need to select the proper texts to enhance learners' motivation. Scarino and Liddicoat argue:

To ensure active engagement it is important to select texts that are meaningful to students, and to develop questions that encourage understanding and responding to the content, and also noticing, comparing, observing those subtle but fascinating things about the choice of words, tone, meaning, biases, implications, linguistic and cultural comparisons across languages, etc. (Scarino and Liddicoat, *ibid.*)

The above-mentioned skills that join observation, noticing, comparing are of due significance for both the teachers and the learners. As to the learners, this meta-awareness of language and culture aids them develop critical skills that abet them penetrate some complex meanings delivered in the target cultures. It is also of due significance for the teachers, since it allows them assess learners' intercultural competence. This meta-awareness is also needed for the assessment of productive tasks qua writing and speaking. In relation to this, teachers may focus on learners' development of "critical moments", a skill developed in intercultural encounters and exchange of ideas and views (Scarino and Liddicoat, *ibid.*). Moreover, teachers should be aware of the fact that intercultural learning is a continuous process that develops over time. This continuity suggests that new strategies of eliciting should be adopted by teachers. The tables provided below showcase elemental criteria that teachers may use to culturally assess learners' performances in receptive and productive skills:

Receptive Tasks: Listening and Reading	
✓ Nature and the scope of interaction	Level of sophistication /complexity
✓ Understanding of the theme/concept from social life in texts, tasks, and experiences	
✓ Recognition of diverse assumptions/perspectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Response to different perspectives ✓ Noticing/ deciding ✓ Explaining/ comparing ✓ Connecting/ relating ✓ Applying/ valuing ✓ Abstracting/ questioning/challenging 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understanding the process of interpretation/understanding themselves as interpreters/ability to reflect ✓ Questioning assumptions (own and others)/conceptions ✓ Managing variability (understanding how language use is enmeshed with variable contexts of culture). 	

Table 4.1.: Criteria of Judging Learners' ICC in Receptive Skills (Scarino, A. and Liddicoat, J. (2009)

The table below addresses designing suitable criteria for the assessment of intercultural competence is productive skills:

Productive Tasks (Speaking and Writing)	
✓ Nature and scope of interaction	Level of complexity/sophistication
✓ Spoken or written in ‘critical moments’ (ie moments where students’ responses matter to their identity)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Managing the interaction ✓ Giving a personal perspective/personal information ✓ Responding to other(s) ✓ Openness to the perspectives or expectations of others ✓ Noticing/ comparing ✓ Deciding/ explaining ✓ Connecting/ relating ✓ Valuing/ applying ✓ Abstracting/ questioning 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understanding the process of interpretation/understanding themselves as interpreters/ability to reflect ✓ Interpreting contexts, roles, relationships ✓ Managing variability: understanding how language use is enmeshed with variable contexts of culture. 	

**Table 4. 2. : Criteria for the Assessment of ICC in Productive Skills
(Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.)**

Scarino and Liddicoat (2009) also advance a useful framework that can be used to conduct formative assessment of learners’ intercultural learning. By the same token, it explicates ways f designing befitting criteria for long-term assessment. The table below explicates long term assessment along intercultural learning:

Long-term Perspective of ICC Assessment	
✓ Cumulative questions to be addressed while building up a long –term picture of learning include the following:	Level of complexity/sophistication
✓ What connections can the student draw within and across themes, topics and concepts?	
✓ What connections can the student draw between his/her responses/comments and those of others?	
✓ How has the student come up with these connections?	
✓ Does the student’s engagement with these questions and his/her own/others’ responses to them provide variable ways of understanding social life-worlds in the language and culture being learned and any other languages and cultures? How?	

Table 4.3: Long-term Assessment of Learner’s Intercultural Competence

Teachers may use the following strategies to elicit learners’ intercultural stances:

- ✓ enhance intercultural communication among the learners;
 - ✓ elicit learners’ construal of the social, cultural, and linguistic construction and interpretation of human experience;
 - ✓ foment learners’ cognizance of their awareness;
 - ✓ encourage learners to be both language user and language learner in interaction;
 - ✓ assess if the learners benefit from the ongoing direct experience of the target language and culture;
 - ✓ use a range of assessment-types including interviews, conferences, journals, observations,
 - ✓ emphasize self-assessment that outlines learning as a personal process
- (Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.).

According to the proposed framework, after the process of conceptualizing and eliciting the targeted aspects and the tools whereby the evidence can be detected, teachers are likely to move to the stage of identifying suitable criteria for their evaluative judgments. Undoubtedly, this phase relies on the success of the previous stages. Despite this fact, this step is elemental, since it determines the main features of successful and effective intercultural learning. Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.) contend “*most frequently, they are set in advance, as part of the process of designing assessment procedures so that they can be communicated to students*”. They also point to the fact that within the new approaches of teaching, the teachers are not the only agents who decide upon the pertinence of educational goals. Per contra, learners also partake in the debated process. In relation to designing appropriate criteria of assessment, learners’ performances and experiences may enlighten the process of evaluation. Likewise, the process of judging learners’ intercultural competence needs to be carefully processed. Scarino and Liddicoat detail this idea as they comment:

What is important is that teachers consider carefully the bases of their judgments both at the point of designing assessment procedures and criteria and at the point of judging, and that they are able to articulate these to their students and colleagues. (Scarino and Liddicoat, ibid.)

The last stage is termed “validating”. At this level, teachers are asked to reconsider their analysis on the basis of sound and objective grounds. This is the most significant aspect of assessment, since it marks learners’ performances. In relation to this, teachers need to be convinced about their unbiased judgments. Scarino and Liddicoat (ibid.) argue that validation is effective when it “*occurs in dialogue with others through opportunities to compare students’ work at a district or state level*”.

4.3.1.5. Intercultural Development Inventory:

Hammer (2014) claims that most of the tools of intercultural assessment do not benefit the changing and encompassing nature of intercultural competence. Ergo, when these means are applied to such a competence, most of the time, they accentuate individual discrete concepts such as “emotional intelligence²⁵⁰, and open-mindedness. The other salient feature, however, are sidestepped by tools pointed at. By the same token, these evaluation means do not provide solid grounds as far as how teachers should use them to achieve reliability and objectivity. Claiming the deficiencies outlined in relation to some tools of assessment, Hammer (ibid.) proposes the use of “*Intercultural developmental Inventory*”. He (ibid.) underscores its utility as he mentions the following quotation: “*The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is the premier, cross-cultural assessment of intercultural competence that is used by thousands of individuals and organizations to build intercultural competence to achieve international and domestic diversity and inclusion goals and outcomes*”. By the same token, both educational institutions and organizations accentuate its usefulness in relation to developing positive behaviour and effective training:

- ✓ Interculturally competent behaviour is fomented as individuals are being orientated and assessed by the IDI²⁵¹.
- ✓ Training and leadership are more successful when they are based on the individual's or group's underlying developmental orientation as assessed by the IDI.
- ✓ IDI is a cross-culturally valid and reliable measure of intercultural competence along the validated intercultural development continuum.

²⁵⁰ **Emotional intelligence** “*Emotional intelligence, appeared by the 20th century, to signify the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge*” (Retrieved from [http:// www.britannica. com/EBchecked/topic/ 1335389/emotional-intelligence](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1335389/emotional-intelligence)).

²⁵¹ **IDI** is the abbreviation for ‘ Intercultural Development Inventory.

- ✓ IDI has been demonstrated through research to have high predictive validity cross-cultural outcomes in organizations and intercultural goal accomplishments in education.
- ✓ The IDI is theory-based.
- ✓ The IDI is developmental.
- ✓ The IDI provides practical, in-depth information.
- ✓ IDI results are actionable.
- ✓ The IDI applies across a wide-range of cultures.
- ✓ The IDI has wide application.
- ✓ The IDI is customized for educational and organizational use.

Hammer (ibid.) offers the following statement to explain the significance of IDI in relation to intercultural assessment. He states:

The IDI generates profiles of an individual's and a group's capability for shifting cultural perspective and adapting behavior toward cultural differences and commonalities—that is, their intercultural competence orientation. When used to assess an individual's level of intercultural competence, an IDI Individual Profile Report is prepared for that individual. In addition, a customized, Intercultural Development Plan® (IDP®) is also prepared for the person. This IDP provides a detailed blueprint for the individual to further develop his/her intercultural competence (Hammer.ibid.).

4.3.2. Tools of Intercultural Assessment:

Truly, a clear-cut definition of intercultural competence judges the set of tools to be used by teachers and assessors. Pottinger (1979:30) argues: *“how one defines the domain of competence will greatly affect one's choice of measurement procedures”*. In the same way, both the objectives and the planned goals influence

the tools to be used. Moreover, the necessity for the use of multiple means of assessment is backed up by the knotty nature of intercultural competence that had not been fairly assessed by means of mere pen-and paper tests, due to its changing nature in relation to multifarious milieus. To mitigate these difficulties, teachers are asked to identify different parts of intercultural assessment and not to take intercultural competence as homogenous construct. More important than this, teachers need to be cognizant of the fact that learners cannot assess their intercultural learning process by themselves, since they cannot determine how effective they were in particular interactive processes (Deardorff, 2006, Deardorff, n.d.). All these obstructions allude to the arduous nature of intercultural assessment. Deardorff maintains:

Such assessment involves effort, and there is unfortunately no silver bullet regarding an assessment tool; given the complexity of this concept, it would be challenging—if not impossible—for one tool to measure an individual's intercultural competence (Deardorff,n.d.).

For the process of intercultural assessment to be effective, teachers need to be cognizant of the main criteria of effective evaluation of culture learning. The features relate to formative assessment, continuity, direct or indirect means, and holistic or analytic approaches. To begin with, the assessment of intercultural competence should be conducted over a considerable period of time. Along formative assessment, teachers get to know how learners make progress in their attitudes; they may also identify the weaknesses and the strengths of their learners' performances in relation to the planned outcomes. According to Lussier, et al. (2007) intercultural assessment should not be summative *“because it (summative evaluation) sums up attainment at the end of a course with a grade, is not the function to be emphasized when assessing ICC. Since ICC covers the behavioural, affective as well as cognitive domains, evaluation should rely more on formative evaluation”*. Formative assessment triggers off another salient feature of effective assessment that mainly relates to continuity. In this sense, continuous

assessment points to both teachers' and learners' evaluation of their own performances by means of particular tools (ibid.).

In relation to the review of the literature, effective tools of assessment display the following features: measuring what they claim to evaluate, the availability of consistent data, and their economical nature. Undoubtedly, the interplay of the three criteria foment an objective evaluation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. According to Skopinskaja (2009:136), *“ensuring test validity, reliability and practicality in the field of ICC assessment, it is necessary, first of all, to specify the kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes we are judging”*.

4.3.2.1. Direct vs. Indirect Assessment:

The review of the literature in relation to intercultural assessment affords multifarious approaches, methods, and tools of assessment for assessors and teachers. These various means of identifying the intercultural progress of language and culture learners are stratified in four main categories “direct methods, indirect methods, discrete, and global frameworks.” This system of categorization does not imply the fact that the use of one is sufficient for the debated process. Per contra, is it advisable that both of them are used complementarily. The first taxonomy embraces learning contacts, portfolios, critical reflection, and performance. The indirect methods encompass “surveys, and inventories, etc.. The figure below showcases the four assessment platforms:

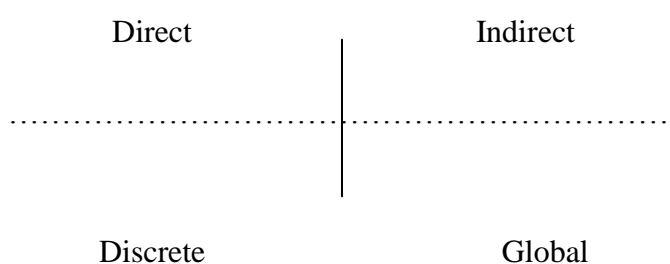


Figure 4.6.: Quadrant of Assessment Formats (Fantini, 2009)

4.3.2.1.1. Direct Assessment:

Intercultural learning may be assessed by means of direct and indirect methods. The first one is more reliable, since it hinges on real observations conducted by the teachers. The latter may apply such a means to evaluate learners' interactions and communication about their cultures and the target ones. In such a case, this method is suitable for the evaluation of both the "know how" and the intercultural being". The indirect ways of intercultural evaluation mainly bottom on learners' responses to the questions that figure in a pen-and paper tests, and which focus on assessing learners' cultural knowledge (Fantini,ibid.).

According to Bazgan and Norel (2013:96) contend that explicit (direct) ways of assessment obligate clear-cut responses from the teachers. In relation to the current study, teachers of English may ask their learners direct questions about their cultural knowledge, views, and other culturally related information that do not require spontaneity. However, indirect assessment is said to call upon learners' voluntary intentions, the use of cognitive efforts, and thus is controllable and manageable. The implicit evaluation is favored over the explicit one, since it objectively assesses aspects of the target culture. By the same token, teachers may get the data they need from the clues of learners' unconscious responses. Tulbure (2011:156) maintains that indirect evaluation is identified as such if it has the following criteria:

- ✓ the learner is not aware_of that construct;
- ✓ they have no conscious access to that construct;
- ✓ they cannot control the given answers.

The above-mentioned understanding of indirect evaluation is in tune with the concept "unconsciousness". This term, despite the meaning it triggers off, leads to some confusion. Bazgan and Norel (2013) suggest that this gloomy interplay of meaning can be overcome as one uses the term automatic instead of

unconscious. Under this spirit, implicit evaluation turns to be “*a test result that reflects the construct measured through an automatic processing. A task performed using the automatic processing is fast, without effort, does not require conscious control, and can also be done without the presence of voluntary attention* (Bazgan and Norel, *ibid.*). Effective automatic evaluation is said to be effective as it encompasses less cognitive efforts, attentional processes, and most importantly when the evaluated item influences learners’ performances. The same scholars add that evaluation follows an automatic processing, if it displays the following traits:

- ✓ involuntary,
- ✓ unconscious,
- ✓ effortless,
- ✓ independent of conscious goals,
- ✓ Uncontrollable as the individual is not capable to initiate, modify, stop or avoid the automatic processing. (*ibid.*).

Indirect evaluation contributes to objectivity in relation to the debated process, since it does not give the learners the chance to provide fake answers and modified information. It does so, as it operates at the level of the stimuli that some questions provoke. In relation to this, learners are supposed to answer as quickly as possible. In relation to the context of assessing learners’ intercultural competence in our universities, teachers may use the implicit ways of assessment to get to know how the learners see the Other. Under this spirit, teachers may use interviews with their learners, where they employ certain planned questions that trigger learners’ stimuli. Questions may relate to topical issues such as religion, attitudes, behaviour, etc.

Within the direct assessment formats, contacts are significant in relation to the whole learning process since they enhance learners’ autonomy. In relation to intercultural assessment, learning contacts bring both the teacher and the learner into contact. At this level, learners may partake in designing the goals

and the objectives of the intercultural process, and hence do their best to achieve them. In the same vein, learners would be aware of the relevance of effective learning. Knowles (1975) adds that learning contracts entail the idea of learners getting in touch with their teachers, including the time allocated to the process of learning, the aims, and the methods that will be used to deliver the cultural message (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

4.3.2.1.1.1 Portfolios:

Portfolios are among the means that are used to assess learners' intercultural learning in various settings. According to Isaac and Jackson (1994:64), a portfolio is *"a purposeful collection of a learner's work assembled over time that documents one's efforts, progress, and achievements"* (cited in Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen, 1999:492). This means it is believed to be efficient in relation to intercultural assessment, since it encompasses the most salient features of intercultural learning that other means would disregard (Wolf, 1991:130, cited in *ibid.*). According to Wolf (*ibid.*), portfolios are of due significance as they *"embody an attitude that assessment is dynamic and that the richest portrayals of . . . performance are based on multiple sources of evidence collected over time in authentic settings"* (cited in *ibid.*). Most importantly, this means enhances learners' self-assessment instead of receiving assessment feedbacks from others. Paulson et al. (1991: 63) accentuates this point in their statement: *"the student is a participant in, rather than the object of, assessment. Above all . . . it provides a forum that encourages students to develop the abilities needed to become independent, self-directed learners"*. (cited in *ibid.*) .By the same token, portfolios foment evaluative process by means of the reflections the learners display, and which develop their cultural awareness. Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen mention one of their learners' reactions to the use of portfolios:

Actually, when I got this portfolio assignment, I felt kind of frustrate, and oh, just it was really hard, and I didn't want to do this, but I couldn't realize I've learnt, but when did this assignment, I could realize oh, I'm learning culture, and so it was a really good portfolio Thank you Wayne (Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen, 1999:491).

In addition the afore-mentioned criteria that foment the use of portfolios in intercultural assessment, informing the teachers about the cultural contexts that learners hinge their perspectives on, is even more significant. Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen clarify this point in the quotation below:

The complex nature of intercultural competence is part of what makes a portfolio an attractive option for assessing it. Intercultural competence cannot easily be portrayed as generalized knowledge or skills, but rather, must be situated in particular contexts; it necessarily includes elements of the individual learner's actions and interpretations as well as those of individuals native to the culture being learned. Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen, *ibid.*).

Byram (2005:14) reinforces the utility of portfolios in intercultural evaluation, as he stated that this means is focalized on the identification of problems and misunderstandings that are brought about in culture classes. The role of portfolios is to identify them in a way that makes the learners experience differences and act upon them objectively. According to him, portfolio is an autobiography of intercultural experience that is “ *problem-focused, it only deals with experiences which reflect difference and there may be a tendency to focus on difficulties rather than pleasurable experiences, but ‘key experiences’ are not necessarily difficult or problematic*” (cited in Xiaole and Manli, 2012).

Likewise, portfolios may be used as another means to assess learners’ intercultural competence. These tools are of due significance, since they reflect the intercultural competence the learners achieved along a particular period of time. They encompass diversified documents that my enlighten teachers’ views about how far their learners have gone in relation to the debated process. In Byram’s view, portfolios are more effective in informing the teachers about their learners’ progress, since they showcase real performances. According to Byram (1997:109), the boons of using students’ portfolios to assess intercultural competence include the following:

- ✓ Portfolios encompass a combination of specific and holistic assessment;
- ✓ they the means to tracking the connection between assessment and teaching/learning;
- ✓ they allow for a combination of criterion-referenced documentation as well as norm-referenced tests if desired;
- ✓ they afford various levels of competence to be set within the specific context of the situation.

4.3.2.1.1.1. Assessment of Portfolios:

Jacobson, Sleicher, and Maureen (1999:492) allude to the fact that the assessment of portfolios and intercultural competence should be carefully done. Under this vista, teachers should not delimit the scope of portfolios to particular aspects of cultures or a given cultural perspective. On the contrary, this means should portray the diversified nature of intercultural learning. Intercultural competence reflects social interactions that, according to Furnham and Bochner, (1986: 217) is “*mutually organized, skilled performance . . . [resulting] from the participants having a shared, although often only implicit understanding of the bases on which the interaction is taking place*”(cited in Jacobson, Sleicher and Maureen, 1999:491).

Schulz (2007:17) underscores the fact that teachers should formulate their objectives before handing the portfolios to the learners. This would facilitate the process of evaluation. She exemplified her model as she mentioned the steps that teachers may follow to assess learners’ awareness of other cultures. Under this spirit, learners are likely to draw some relations between some cultural constructs such as geography and society. In Schulz’s terms, “*Students develop and demonstrate awareness that geographical, historical, economic, social/religious, and political factors can have an impact on cultural perspectives, products, and practices, including language use and styles of communication.* (cited in Lund, 2008:95). However, learners are believed to develop an intercultural competence as they

“develop and demonstrate an awareness of some types of causes (linguistic and non-linguistic) for cultural misunderstanding between members of different cultures. (ibid.). But, for these stages to be enhanced, Lund (2008:59) maintains, the following points need to be taken into account:

- The process should involve teacher guidance, feedback, but also self assessment and critical reflection.
- Collaboration with others, the use of many, different sources of evidence and personal choice in topics and approaches are other important aspects.

Teachers of English at the University of Mostaganem can design their own portfolios, hinging their designs on some cultural issues they want to evaluate. As far as the current study is concerned, the following topics may be explored:

- The Self and the Other in virtual spaces (learners may be encouraged to focus on) :
 - the similarities and the differences,
 - depiction of values in virtual places,
 - depiction of attitudes,
 - religions.
- Self and Other in literature:
 - The Other in literary works,
 - customs, traditions, etc.

Teachers may divide their portfolios into two main sections: the depiction of the Self and the Other in virtual platforms, and in educational materials, namely literature. In such kind of portfolio, learners are encouraged to assess their learning by identifying the similarities, the misunderstandings that may arise

from the intercultural experience and the differences between their culture and the target one. The tables below showcase the proposal that hinges on the Council of Europe's framework of portfolios best (cited in Lund, *ibid.*):

How I see the Self and the Other in literature ²⁵²			
The knowledge I got from the literary works which has made an impression on me			
When	Where	Experiences	Similarities and differences I became aware of ²⁵³
.....	

Table 4.4.: The Similarities and the Differences Between the Self and the Other in Literary texts

In relation to the depiction of the Self and the Other in literature, teachers may delimit the scope of exploration to the issues they see more salient than others. Lund (*ibid.*) comment: *“Obviously, the teacher needs to set certain standards as to how many observations and experiences the students should write about and how the reports should be written.* Teachers of English may explore the following issues across cultures:

- ✓ Religion,
- ✓ customs,
- ✓ traditions,
- ✓ norms.

²⁵² Here, it is the teacher who selects the literary works that the learners need to focus on in preparing their portfolios

²⁵³ Here, learners may mention the similarities and the differences between their own culture and the cultures carried via the literary texts.

How I see the Self and the Other in literature		
The knowledge I got from the literary works which has made an impression on me		
When (they mention the events, the pages, or the chapters	Misunderstandings that have arisen	And how I cleared them up

Table 4.5.: The Misunderstandings that May Arise from Exploring the Literary Texts

In the same way, teachers may assess learners' awareness of the interplay of both the Self and the Other in virtual platforms using this model of portfolio. The table below showcases the idea clearly:

How I see the Self and the Other in Online platforms			
The knowledge I got from the virtual platforms which has made an impression on me			
When	Where	Experiences	Similarities and differences I became aware of

Table4.6. : Learners' Exploration of the Self and the Other in Virtual Platforms

By the same token, teachers may assess learners' misunderstandings by means of the following section within the portfolio:

How I see the Self and the Other in Virtual platforms		
The knowledge I got from the virtual platforms which has made an impression on me		
When	Misunderstandings that have arisen	And how I cleared them up

Table 4.7.: Misunderstandings that can Arise from the Exploration of the Self and the Other in Virtual Platforms

Despite the fact that the above-mentioned topics displayed in the proposed portfolio are difficult to objectively evaluate, it is possible for the teachers to notice the progress their learners make along their preparation of a set of portfolios. Hasselgreen and Holm–Larsen (2003:) claim that despite the diversified nature of the topics that the portfolio displays, and which varies across cultures and contexts, teachers may identify how their learners use their cultural knowledge in relation to the intercultural exploration the portfolios provide to them. (cited in Lund, 2008:59).

To assess learners' intercultural competence, the Common European Framework affords some scales that identify different levels of learners' intercultural competence: lowest and highest level. In the same vein, Lussier et al (2007) think that the assessment of the three dimensions of intercultural competence should be based on clear-cut indicators that determine learners' level of proficiency: low performance, medium performance, and high performance. They add that “ *this assessment combines descriptors and criteria of performance to describe each level of ICC, presuming that concrete tasks may be performed with a particular degree of proficiency at one level rather than at another*” (ibid.). In the lowest level, learners may show their intercultural competence by means of showing “ *an awareness of cultural differences*”. By contrast, the learners are prone to develop a higher level of intercultural competence as they use the knowledge they have acquired in real intercultural competence (Lund, 2008. ibid.). Within this scale, learners may express the lowest level via the expression “*I am aware of basic features of religion, traditions, national identity and minorities of the country of the foreign language*” (ibid.53). In the high level, teachers may come across expressions like “*I can use what I know about politics, traditions, national identity and minorities in the country of the foreign language to adjust what I say and do*” (ibid.).

Admittedly, the first idea that teachers need to think thoroughly of, relates to the possibility of quantifying and evaluating learners' competence by means of distinguished levels. The answer to this gloomy inquiry had been proposed by the INCA project that describes intercultural competence from a performance vista.

INCA Assessor Manual advances the following understanding of the three kinds of competence:

- Level one :basic competence :

You are already willing to interact successfully with people of other cultures. You tend to pick things up and learn from them as you go along, but you haven't yet got the experience to work out any system of dealing with intercultural situations in general. You respond to events, rather planning for them. At this stage you are reasonably tolerant of other values, customs and practices although you may find them odd or surprising and approve or disapprove (cited in Sercu, 2010).

- Level 2: intermediate competence:

As a result of experience and/or training, you are beginning to view more coherently some of the aspects of intercultural encounters you used to deal with in a one-off way. You have a mental map or checklists of the sort of situations you are likely to need to deal with and are developing your skills to cope with them. This means that you are more prepared to the need to respond and adapt to the demands of unfamiliar situations. You are quicker to see patterns in the various experiences you have and you are beginning to draw conclusions without having to seek advice. You find it easier to respond in a neutral way to difference, rather than approving or disapproving (cited in *ibid.*).

- Level 3: Full competence:

Many of the competences you developed consciously at level 2 have become intuitive. You are constantly ready for situations and encounters in which you will exercise your knowledge, judgment and skills and have a large repertoire of strategies for dealing with differences in values, customs, and practices among members of the intercultural group. You not only accept that people can see things from widely varying perspective and are entitled to do so, but you are also able to put yourself in their place and avoid behaviour you sense would be hurtful or offensive. At this level of operation, you are able to intercede when difficulties arise and tactfully support other members of the group in understanding each other. You are confident enough of your position to take a polite stand over issue, despite your respect for the viewpoint of others (cited in *ibid.*).

The intercultural learning process is deemed unsuccessful, given learners' inability to reflect on their learning critically. According to Deardorff (2006), critical reflection is vital in the intercultural process, since it centers on what the learners' have achieved (cited in Deardorff, n.d.). Knefelkamp, (1989) suggests that learners may be asked the following question "*As a result of this learning, what will you do now?*" (cited in Deardorff, *ibid.*). Learners may describe their intercultural achievements by means of the following expression: "*I learned that. . . This is important because. . . As a result of this learning, I will . . .*" (Clayton, 2010, cited in Deardorff, *ibid.*). According to Rice and Pollack, (2000) cultural reflection is "*intentional, structured, and directed process that facilitates exploration for deeper contextualized meaning linked to learning outcomes*" (cited in Deardorff *ibid.*). Via such a skill, learners may examine their opinions, views, and attitudes, deepen their social ties, and broaden their cultural interactions as well (O'Grady, 2000; Rice and Pollack 2000, cited in *ibid.*).

Indeed, teachers cannot fully assess their learners' intercultural competence, if they do not analyze their performances²⁵⁴. In this regard, teachers may analyze learners' interactions inside the classroom. Performances are of due significance since they occur on well-defined context that can be observed with all the variables that go with it. By the same token, teachers may evaluate their learners' behaviour and judge it's ethnocentric and ethnorelative traits. More important than this, performance allows the learners to apply the cultural knowledge they have developed along the course in real situations.

Admittedly, not all the scholars in the field of intercultural assessment agree that this process of assessment should be preoccupied with learners' performances. Kim (1992:372) comes to be one of the opponents of such a perspective. He claims that assessment should not hinge on identifying learners success as well as failure in intercultural communicative acts (cited in Deardorff, 2004). The point that he makes relates to the fact that the intercultural realm is oriented by various variables that cannot be constrained to one or two persons' performances. Kim (*ibid.*) argues that reliance on performance solely "*tends to blur*

²⁵⁴ Here, learners' performances can be assessed in oral and writing performances (see learners' performances in chapter three).

the principle of multilateral causality in the interpersonal communication system” (cited in *ibid.*). Nevertheless, intercultural communication competence should be assessed in relation to a person’s “*overall capacity to facilitate the communication process between people from differing cultural backgrounds*” (Kim, *ibid.*, cited in *ibid.*).

There are others approaches of assessment that hinge on identifying particular aspects of learning: discrete and global formats of assessment. In discrete assessment, teachers may focus on whether or not their learners have understood a given cultural aspect, or certain skills. Global assessment, by contrast, encompasses various aspects of learning at the same time. That is, teachers, instead of focusing on a given skill, would include knowledge, behaviour, attitude, and skills altogether. Howbeit, despite the differences that distinguish these tools from one another, teachers are supposed to use both of them so as to cover the area of intercultural competence.

4.3.2.1.1.2 Learners’ Self-Assessment:

An effective intercultural assessment, Ottoson (2013) argues, hinges on learners’ as elemental agents in the debated process. She comments “*often traditional assessment methods of cross cultural understanding or ICC, conducted by the instructor, can suffer from a lack of validity*”. In the same line of thought, Damen (1987) stresses the fact that learners are the only ones who can provide reflections that may approximate objective evaluation (cited in Ottoson, 2013). Claiming the significance of learners’ reflections in relation the evaluative process, Byram’s model of intercultural self-assessment is worth mentioning. The table below exemplifies the afore-mentioned model:

Categories	Examples
A. Interest in other people's way of life.	I am interested in other people's experience of daily life, particularly those things not usually presented to outsiders through the media.
B. Ability to change perspective.	I have realized that I can understand other cultures by seeing things from a different point of view and by looking at my culture from their perspective.
C. Ability to cope with living in a different culture.	I am able to cope with a range of reactions I have to living in a different culture (euphoria, Homesickness.
D. Knowledge about another country and culture	I know some important facts about living in the other culture and about the country, state, and people.
E. Knowledge about intercultural communication	I know how to resolve misunderstandings which arise from people's lack of awareness of the view point of another culture.

**Table 4.8. Self-Assessment of Intercultural Experience
(Byram, 2000, cited in Ottoson (2013))**

4.3.2.1.2. Indirect Tools:

In addition to the afore-mentioned direct tools that teachers may use, other indirect means are at their disposal. The indirect tools may include many means along surveys, interviews, focus group, and inventories. However, the indirect method of assessment may be obstructed by the subjectivity that the learners bring to the evaluative process. For such a reason, Deardorff (n.d.) maintains that teachers need to find answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What are the goals and objectives to be targeted in assessment?
- ✓ What evidence is required for the indication of success at achieving these objectives?

- ✓ What does the tool target? Does it meet the stated objectives?
- ✓ What are the shortcomings and cultural biases of the tool?
- ✓ Does the tool enhance validity (accuracy) and reliability (consistency)?
- ✓ Is the tool theoretically founded?
- ✓ Does the tool measure human development relevant to intercultural competence?
- ✓ How will the data be used to provide feedback to learners on their own intercultural competence development?

4.3.2.2. Other Tools of Assessment:

Teachers need to bear in mind that an effective intercultural evaluation obligates the use of interplay of befitting tools. In relation to this, the teacher is the one who decides upon the adequacy of certain tools and their implementation. Fantini (2009) outlines the following tools that teachers may use in their process of evaluation:

- ✓ Readiness tests- employed to identify readiness for an intercultural experience.
- ✓ Placement tests- used to ascertain compatibility with specific cultural contexts.
- ✓ Diagnostic tests-used the strengths and the weaknesses of competencies.
- ✓ Aptitude tests-used to assess one's potential for learning a specific set of skills.
- ✓ Attitude test-used to explore one's disposition towards a specific culture or group of people.

- ✓ Proficiency, communicative, or competency based tests-used to assess performance.
- ✓ Criterion-referenced and non-referenced tests –used to test one’s mastery of a given aspect.
- ✓ Bilingual or culture-language dominance tests-used to determine one’s relative ability with two languages and/or cultures.
- ✓ Formative tests-used to measure one’s developmental progress at given moments over time.
- ✓ Achievement or standardized tests-used to measure one’s attainment with regards to a given set of criteria and/or a given population or group that serves as the norm.

The afore-mentioned discussion outlines the significance of the selection of diversified means of assessment. This selection, Deardorff (2004) claims, should hinge on carefully planned strategies that objectively respond to the following questions:

- ✓ Is the tool compatible with the assessors’ goals and objectives?
- ✓ Does it improve their overall assessment plan?
- ✓ Is it founded on a theoretical foundation?
- ✓ Does it have a cultural bias, or can it be used for any ethnic or national group?
- ✓ Is it appropriate for the age level and developmental level of the learners?
- ✓ What logistical aspects are involved in administering the tool, including cost, time, and other resources needed?

- ✓ What are the results intended for- that is, are the results for the students, used to inform the teaching/ learning process, or are the mainly for researchers, teachers, administrators, or supervisors ?

4.3.3. Assessing the Components of ICC:

4.3.3.1. Assessing Learners' Behaviours and Attitudes:

Inconvertibly, the above-mentioned objectives that had been thoroughly discussed are of due significance, as far as objective assessment is concerned. Nevertheless, Pottinger (1979) argues that assessment, even if it is based on objective grounds, portrays assessors' perceptions, beliefs, and values. Pottinger (ibid.) suggests that models of intercultural assessment need to focus on learners' behaviours . Under this spirit, he proposes "*Behavioral Even Analysis*" . The latter addresses learners' performances by means of direct interviews with the assessees who are supposed to be aware of behaviours delivered via the target cultures. What needs emphasis in relation to this model links to the communicative skills it targets in learners' performances. Likewise, it underscores the significance of intercultural skills as it focuses on empathy and positive biases through critical observation. Behaviour-oriented evaluation is central to intercultural assessment, since it indicates learners' transformation of thinking expressed in their behaviours. Finkelstein, Pickert, Mahoney, and Douglas argue:

it provides evaluators with concrete ways to assess the effectiveness of programs as well as reveal the effects of attitudes. ...Programs are most effective when a transformation in participants' thinking translates into behavior...that helps schools guide students to live successfully in a multicultural world...", (Finkelstein, Pickert, Mahoney, and Douglas, 1998:94, cited in Deardorff, 2004).

Some of the teachers escape the assessment of learners' intercultural competence due to the complexity of its features, namely those which stem from attitudes and behaviours. Simensen (2001) believes that attitudes should not be taken into account in evaluation because they portray one's affective side and personality issues. By contrast, scholars who have founded the model of "Intercultural Competence Assessment (ICA)"²⁵⁵. This model had been focalized on how learners and teachers experience attitudes in relation to both learning and assessment. Within this framework, openness may be identified and assessed via three levels of development. The lowest and the highest levels are expressed as follows: Lowest level: *"When uncertainty arises from cultural difference, I adopt a tolerant attitude as long as the issue is not a sensitive one for me"*. (INCA, 2004:14, cited in Lund, 2008). Learners develop an intercultural competence when teachers come across expressions that are similar in meaning to *"I fully respect the right of those from other cultures to have different values from my own and can see how these values make sense as part of a way of thinking"* (INCA, *ibid.*, cited in *ibid.*).

Sercu (2010) thinks that despite the fact that the assessment of some sub-competences of intercultural learning is deemed knotty; teachers may create their own tools of assessment. Admittedly, the most difficult dimensions of intercultural learning stem from the evaluation of learners' attitudes. This scholar claims that teachers may refer to the "continuous attitudinal scale of assessing tolerance of otherness"²⁵⁶. The figure blow expounds the stages that show the development of learners' attitudes:

----- X ----- X ----- X ----- X ----- X -----				
Preparedness to tolerate	Preparedness to respond to difference	Valuing the difference	Organizing the difference into one's mind map	Tolerance of otherness

Figure 4.7. Continuous Attitudinal Scale for Assessing 'Tolerance of Otherness' (Sercu ,2010)

²⁵⁵ This project is funded by the European Union within the Leonardo da Vinci framework and involves 14 partners from industry and research organizations all over Europe (INCA, 2004, cited in Lund, 2008).

²⁵⁶ It is a scale developed by L. Sercu (2010).

Teacher may use the above-cited scale to identify the progress learners make in relation to developing intercultural competence. By the same token, this scale may be used to study individuals' attitudes in relation to native cultures (Cabello, 2012). The utility of such a framework in relation to native cultures is established, since the learners are prone to come across novel cultural aspects within their own cultures. Clearly, the stages that the scale comprises showcase the metamorphosis that learners bring to their attitudes when they develop their intercultural competences. To begin with, a learner who has a lower level of intercultural competence is likely to be ready to tolerate, while the one who develops more knowledge about the target cultures is prone to be ready to respond to difference. However, learners are said to become interculturally competent when they value differences on objective and solid grounds. These critical skills allow them to move to the next stage whereby they organize the differences they have noticed into categories. However, intercultural competence is deemed fully developed when the learners acquire the ability to tolerate otherness. Under this spirit, teachers may use interviews or questionnaire to see how far their learners have gone in developing their intercultural competence. In the same line of thought, teachers may observe their learners' behaviour to assess their attitudes. Sercu claims that:

Teachers can gauge where students are in their attitudes towards interculture or towards a particular idea concerning interculture by observing how far along the dimension they are, as indicated by their verbal and non-verbal behaviours Sercu (2010).

Sercu (ibid.) outlines some significant issues teachers need to be aware of when assessing learners' attitudes, including a clear cut distinction between personality and attitudes. He mentions the following statement to develop teachers' cognizance of the interplay of both constructs:

Does education want to be prescriptive about the intercultural attitudes learners should develop and can learners be punished for not having particular desired personality traits, such as interest in cultures or positive self-image, which have been identified as characteristic of the effective intercultural person? (Sercu, ibid.)

4.3.3.2 .Assessing Intercultural Knowledge (Savoirs):

Valette (1977) contends that the assessment of learners' knowledge (savoirs) had been mainly constrained to the set of identifiable similarities and differences between the involved cultures (cited in Skopinskaja, n.d.). Within this narrow vista, the assessment of learners' intercultural competence had been limited to knowledge profile. Likewise, Corbett (2003: 196) outlines the fact that assessors relied mainly on objective tests such as “ multiple choice tests, true and false statements, which mainly enhanced the process of “shallow learning”. It is significant to note that this ineffective spectrum of teaching had been carried by means techniques of memorization of cultural information (cited in *ibid.*). By contrast to shallow learning, deep one, according to Lussier et al. (2007), “*would involve the learners' ability to compare, regroup, infer, appreciate, synthesise, and judge the information found in the texts*”. The three criteria that identify learners' cultural information are: low level of proficiency, medium level of proficiency, and high level of proficiency (Council of Europe, 2005, cited in Lussier, et al. *ibid.*).

The low level of proficiency in relation to learners' cultural knowledge, known as level of “recognition, is the stage where learners are prone to describe the target culture and find matches between the foreign culture and their own cultures. Under this line of thought, learners are likely to call upon certain stereotypes and representation when dealing with the target culture. At the medium level, known as stage of comparison, learners are supposed to have already collected information about the involved cultures, including their own cultures. At this phase, they engage in comparative procedure whereby they contrast between cultural facts and information, hinging in some cases on their life experiences. The high level, per contra, identifies the maturity of learners' savoirs. This stage is known as the section of analysis, since learners critically employ their knowledge in dealing with other cultures. Under this spirit, they can objectively appreciate, evaluate and interpret divergent cultural information (Lussier et al. *ibid.*). The figure below explains the process of assessing learners' cultural knowledge:

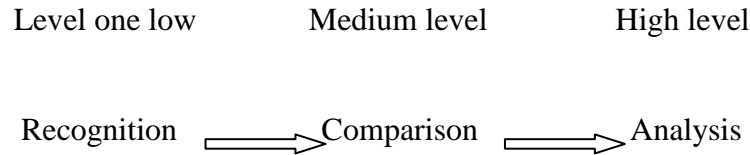


Figure:4.8 Assessment of Intercultural Knowledge

4.3.3. 3. Assessing Intercultural Know-How/Savoir Faire:

Admittedly, the process of developing intercultural competence does not only encompass acquiring a set of cultural information. Per contra, learners need to be assessed on grounds of their ability to act upon the knowledge they have developed along their studies. Howbeit, despite the significance of such a dimension, the bygone approaches of assessment mainly accentuated how learners acquire the linguistic capacities that had been sufficient for effective communicative activities. However, in modern trends of assessment, learners are evaluated in relation to many performance platforms, including the ability to use their experiences in intercultural communication (Lussier et al. 2007). Here, too, teachers may identify three main levels of proficiency as they assess learners' know -how. At the first stage (low level), learners are predisposed with the linguistic skills to communicate, but at the same time, they may come across some socially inappropriate gestures and attitudes. However, at the medium level, the social skills are developed as learners communicate effectively in intercultural encounters. Per contra, at the high phase, learners are prone to be skilled as far as adapting the acquired skills to the socio-cultural context is concerned. This ability allows them to solve critical cultural problems and mediate divergent cultures (Lussier et al. *ibid.*).

4.3.3.4 Assessing Intercultural Being/Savoir Etre:

Another component that had been neglected in relation to intercultural assessment had been the skill of “intercultural being”, savoir etre. That is, assessors had been oriented towards how learners identify the similarities and the differences between the cultures involved. Under this vein, intercultural competence development had been limited to the acquisition of “cultural awareness”. However, intercultural assessment should excel such a narrow scope and account for learners’ development of “critical cultural awareness” that helps them *“reshape their own values and integrate new perspectives so that they eventually become intercultural mediators when facing conflict-ridden situations.* (Lussier, et al. *ibid.*). Undoubtedly, the assessment of learners’ savoir etre is too knotty. Despite this fact, it functions as informative means whereby the learners can know about their cultural understanding and awareness. By the same token, it operates as effective indicators that inform the teachers about learners’ development of an intercultural competence. According to (Lussier et al. *ibid.*), the assessment of the third dimension of intercultural competence, known as “intercultural being” should go through three main steps: cultural awareness, critical awareness, and trans-cultural internalization. Therefore, at the low level, learners are prone to develop a cultural awareness whereby they develop some elementary understandings of beliefs, attitudes, and values within divergent cultures. At the medium level, however, learners experience the above understood dimensions. Here, they develop openness towards cultures and approach their own cultures critically, as they tolerate other cultural views and understandings. At the high level, by contrast, learners are able to feel empathy in dealing with cultural differences. More importantly, they are able to step in the shoes of the Other and see how things may look from other perspectives.

It is significant to note that despite the implementation of various tools of assessment by teachers, the evaluative process leaves room for subjectivity. Nevertheless, objectivity in relation to intercultural assessment can be achieved in case teachers jumble the three components of intercultural competence in their evaluation. Lussier, et al. (*ibid.*) argue that *“assessing ICC should imply that we take into consideration all three dimensions of ICC: not only knowledge but also the skills*

“knowing how” and the attitudes “being” as described in the previous section. Moreover, the assessment of these three elemental elements need to be assessed via divergent strategies. As teachers do that, they ensure that their evaluation is more objective, and at the same time develop their decision strategies, as far as the appropriateness of certain tools is concerned. Truly, learners’ skills of intercultural being cannot be assessed by pen-and paper tests. To get reliable data, teachers need to “rely on other sources of data, such as anecdotal records, observation checklists, observation rating scales, documentation of task-related behaviours, attitudes inventories, surveys, portfolios, journals, self-evaluation reports, collection of written products, interest inventories, logs, etc. (Lussier, et al. :ibid.).

4.3.3.5 The Assessment of Meta-Cognitive Strategies:

Even when assessing learners’ cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies, a couple of issues need to be discussed and construed. Among these issues, Sercu (2010) mentions the implications that result from the non-use or an unawareness of the use of a given strategy. He claims that a relationship between the ability to solve intercultural problems and the use of particular strategy is not always effective. Therefore, some learners may be effective in intercultural communication, yet they do not refer to strategies. More importantly, teachers are supposed to assess what they have already taught. In case they do not teach them explicitly, they cannot judge the learners on such grounds. Under the same line of thought, teachers should dive deeper into the reasons that lead their learners to fail in positively responding to intercultural dimensions of their lectures. Thus, the failure could be attributed to learners’ lack of intercultural competence and the cultural gap between the teacher, the learner, and the task (Sercu, ibid.).

4.3.4. Features of Effective Assessment:

Council of Europe (2001: 177) proposes that any process of assessment that targets learners' development of intercultural competence should take into account three main dimensions of evaluation: validity, reliability and feasibility (cited in Lussier, et al.,2007). Validity relates to the identification of an appropriate context of evaluation and a retrieval of credible information on which the whole process hinges. Reliability is concerned with the nature of data taken for the evaluative process. Here, the teacher should rely on stable data that enhances accuracy. Feasibility is also of due significance, since it ensures the practical side of the intercultural assessment. Lussier, et al. (ibid.) contend that the three features are required for any kind of intercultural assessment because they “*ensure equity and equality in our judgments when assessing students' performance, behaviours and attitudes.*”

Undoubtedly, any assessment needs to target objectivity and reliability. In relation to the evaluation of learners' intercultural competence, however, this criterion is the most difficult aspect to achieve. This is the case, since when dealing with culture, various agents partake in the process of determining what is appropriate and what it is not. In relation to education, the objectivity of assessment is torn between teachers' selection of appropriate cultural information, skills, attitudes and learners' needs and wants. This knotty nature of intercultural assessment led both scholars Atkinson, (1999); Sercu (2002) to inspect the possibility of calling upon objectivity when dealing with culture (cited in Sercu, 2010). Sercu comments:

Therefore, assessors must also ask themselves what score learners will be assigned when they put forward a personal interpretation of a particular cultural phenomenon that differs from the interpretation put forward in class, but which is perfectly feasible when accepting other cultural points of view. (Sercu, 2010)

For a more effective evaluation of learners' intercultural competence, it is advisable that teachers rely on divergent tools of assessment that, according to Deardorff (2004), stem but differ from “*the bits and pieces*” of more traditional ready-made approaches”. This kind of eclecticism enhances the process of evaluation as

it strengthens the use of multiple strategies that account for divergent contexts (Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick, 1997:183-184, cited in Deardorff, *ibid.*).

In addition to the afore-mentioned methods of intercultural assessment, tests may be approached from two divergent perspectives, objective and subjective vistas. In most cases, subjective tests are associated with teachers and assessors who are believed to bring their beliefs and impressions to the targeted process. Objective tests, by contrast, approximate objectivity since they hinge on learners' assessment of their performances. Under this spirit, it is believed that objective tests are more befitting in evaluating learners' knowledge. Per contra, skills and attitudes require other means of assessment (Skopinskaja, n.d.). Skopinskaja (*ibid.*) underscores the fact that *"for a more global assessment of all the three dimensions of ICC, subjective tests are preferable"*. By the same token, teachers may use other means of evaluation such as holistic and analytic types of assessment²⁵⁷. According to (Lussier et al. 2007), holistic assessment is an overall view and impression that the assessor has in relation to the learner's performance. The analytical prospect, however, obligates a close observation to learners' performances and contrasts them with the three dimensions of intercultural competence.

In addition to the outlined features, teachers need to plan some steps of assessment to achieve certain objectivity. The latter should hinge on the period of assessment (when to assess), the cultural aspects to assess (what to assess), and the means and the methods of assessment (how to assess). The first step of assessment, teachers should be aware of, is conducted before the teaching process. In doing so, teachers get the chance to retrieve valuable information from learners' experiences and backgrounds, which would influence the results of the evaluative process. Teachers may use both self –evaluation (culture log)

²⁵⁷ In addition to the afore-mentioned features, successful assessment should jumble both holistic and analytic means of evaluation. The former outlines the process of making some synthetic views about learners' performances. The analytic one digs deeper into the nature of learners' performances, as teachers critically analyze learners' intercultural attitudes and behaviours in their interactive performances. Lussier, et al. (2007) comment *"Analytic assessment" requires the assessor to observe closely all dimensions and subdimensions, or each one separately, in order to come out with different profiles of performance or competence"*.

and self-evaluation (profile diagram²⁵⁸) as a pre-test to determine the previously discussed features and information. Such tests may inform the teachers about their learners' perception about some cultural issues, and therefore may compare their attitudes at the beginning of the lesson with their attitudes after the teaching process. At this phase, teachers' creativity is required, since the evaluation of knowhow requires designing some activities that may enhance teachers' observation in classrooms. To support this process, teachers may use simulations²⁵⁹ and role plays that hinge on critical and conflict-ridden items and features. As to the intercultural being (*savoir etre*), teachers may use both “*self-evaluation (culture-log), self-profile (profile diagram) and the portfolio as reflective devices*” (Lussier, et al. (2007). Lussier, et al. (ibid.) offer the tables below that explicate the significant areas teachers need to focus on in the process of assessment:

²⁵⁸ A **profile diagram** “operates at the metamodel level to show stereotypes as classes” (Wikipedia) .

²⁵⁹ **Simulation:** “imitation or enactment, as of something anticipated or in testing”. (Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/simulation>).

When to assess	What to assess	How to assess
Before starting teaching	Knowledge/savoir Knowing how/savoir-faire Being/savoir-etre	Self-evaluation – Culture-log Portfolio Self-evaluation – Profile diagram
Before starting teaching the unit	Being/savoir-etre Knowledge/savoirs Knowing how/savoir-faire Being/savoir-etre	Survey to assess attitudes on love Use of the portfolio Eight tasks helping students to: justify, compare, explain, organise, analyse, appreciate and synthesise Five tasks helping students to: discuss, debate, solve problems and play roles
During the learning sequence	Assessing each ICC dimension separately Knowledge/savoirs Knowing how/savoir-faire Being/savoir-etre	Five tasks helping students to: compare, write an essay, solve a critical incident and justify their opinions
End of the unit	Assessing two ICC dimensions Knowledge/savoir Knowing how/savoir-faire Assessing all ICC dimensions	One task helping students to: identify, describe, compare and analyse One integrative task
After teaching the course or textbook	Knowledge/savoir Knowing how/savoir-faire Being/savoir-etre	Self-evaluation – Culture log Portfolio Self-profile – Profile diagram

Table 4.9. Steps of Effective Intercultural Assessment (Lussier, et al. :2007).

Baird (2003:598) alludes to different variables that are likely to influence the process of evaluation. He mentions the following criteria that any assessor should be aware of:

- Influences on learners' outcomes will be heterogeneous ,depending on learners' personal features;
- the meaning that students give to their experiences which can be measured via qualitative formats;
- understanding learners' backgrounds and their impacts prior on outcomes;
- administrators need to understand the multiple ways that learners employ to achieve specific outcomes (cited in Deardorff, n.d.).

Deardorff (2004) summarizes the main features of effective intercultural evaluation as follows:

- The assessment of learners' learning starts with educational values;
- assessment is most effective when it mirrors an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated process;
- assessment works best when the programmes it targets have lucid strategies and explicitly stated aims;
- assessment accentuates both the outcomes and the experiences learners bring to the classroom;
- assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic;
- assessment is effective when it is represents wider categories.

Truly, assessment cannot be effective if it is biased towards one agent only, in most cases the teacher. Other approaches of assessment like the one advanced by Lincoln and Guba (1985), known as “ *advocacy approach*”, prioritizes the integration of the learners in the process of evaluation. In addition to its learners'

centered features, it underscores the process of negotiating goals and the contextual variables that influence the learning process. The context of interaction is emphasized within this model because the findings of the evaluative process hinge on the interaction that brings both the assessor and the assessee together. (cited in Deardorff, 2004).

An effective assessment of learners' intercultural competence needs to take into account the contexts of learning. Byram (1997:9) postulates that assessment should take into account the context of occurrence. Accordingly, assessors need to be aware of the fact that intercultural competence does not need to be evaluated as a homogenous construct; on the contrary, it would be chavily analyzed, if it is divided into different aspects and skills. He comments that it may "*ultimately be appropriate to assess only part of what we define as intercultural competence*" due to the complexity posed by contextualization". Byram (ibid.111) contends that assessment must take into account all aspects of intercultural competence even if such assessment cannot be "represented statistically". Moreover, in evaluation, teachers are supposed to focus on their learners' abilities to exchange information with other partners, in most cases from different cultures, and their capacities to establish relationships with them.

Sercu (2010) maintains that the assessment of intercultural competence should be inclusive as far as the sub-competences within the framework are concerned. Ergo, the targeted process should evaluate learners at various grounds, including the ability to "*read relate and explicate cultures, the ability to systematically organize cultural information and information about intercultural*" (ibid.). More importantly, the assessment of intercultural learning should excel the knowledge acquired and account for how learners become intercultural beings able to mediate cultures successfully. Claiming the knotty nature of assessment of such a competence, teachers' roles as assessors is emphasized. That is to say, teachers contribute to designing suitable tools that allow them include their experiences in relation to the debated process.

The assessment of learners' intercultural competence is deemed knotty, due to the tight links that bring all its components together. Ergo, an effective evaluation needs to take into account how each dimension influences the others. Therefore, when assessing intercultural learning, teachers should be aware of how learners' cultural knowledge affects their skills of dealing with people from divergent cultures. By the same token, evaluating cognitive and meta-cognitive skills requires a cultural exploration of the tasks to be given to the learners, since different tasks call upon distinguished attitudes. More importantly, some learners may have approximate intercultural skills, yet perform differently. In this regard, teachers, when dealing with learners' performances, need to be aware of how communicative competence influences one's performances (Sercu .:ibid.).

An effective assessment of intercultural competence should be based on the interplay of clear-cut instructional objectives, course design, implementation, and solid assessment grounds. Fantini (2009) claims that the educators who are not adequately prepared to assess intercultural competence come across situations where they cannot bring harmony to the already-mentioned dimensions. She (ibid.) comments "*instructional objectives, course design, implementation, and assessment should be inextricably linked; otherwise, the educational process is comprised*". To put it in a nutshell, for teachers to achieve quality assessment, they need to fuse the before-mentioned pillars together.

Assessment is linked to resources, which in their turn, are related to the set of goals and objectives. The same is applicable to the other components. By the same token, the model underscores how assessment tightly links up to the designed goals and objectives. To put it differently, one may suggest that both the content that is to be instructed and its evaluation are double sides of the same coin. Fantini (2009) accentuates the fact that both a clear-cut understanding of the dimensions of intercultural competence and the way it relates to the aforementioned variables are elemental criteria as far as the debated process is concerned. In the same line of thought, Deardorff (2004:224) mentions the following criteria that may subsidize quality assessment in relation to intercultural competence:

- ✓ The purpose of assessment,
- ✓ the targeted audience,
- ✓ they explicitly of the aspects to be assessed,
- ✓ the use of proper assessment tools and strategies,
- ✓ the assessment procedures,
- ✓ avoiding bias.

Undoubtedly, the fact that intercultural competence is so broad in relation to the dimensions it calls upon, teachers, when evaluating it, need to focus on specific aspects and deemphasize others. This process is significant for an effective evaluation, since it reveals results that can approximate objectivity and reliability. In the same line of thought, teachers need to link their choices of the cultural aspect to be assessed to the already designed dimensions. Fantini argues that:

To begin with, one needs to determine which areas of intercultural competence are being addressed. Of course, this is ascertained by referring to the instructional objectives and may include any of the intercultural components cited earlier: attributes, the three areas (building relationships, communicating, collaborating), the four dimensions (awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge), host language proficiency, developmental indicators over time, or a combination of the above. (Fantini, 2009)

Truly, effective intercultural assessment of intercultural competence obligates the use of various means of evaluation. Fantini (ibid.) proposes the following tools:

- ✓ Closed and open-ended questions.
- ✓ Objective strategies that involve objective scoring (e.g., matching items, true-false questions, multiple choice- questions, or gap filling items).
- ✓ Oral and Written activities (e.g., paraphrasing, translation, essay).
- ✓ Active and passive activities.
- ✓ Individual and interactive activities in pairs or groups.
- ✓ Dialogue, interviews, debate, and discussion.
- ✓ Demonstrations, poster sessions, role-plays, and simulations.
- ✓ Structured and unstructured field tasks and experiences .
- ✓ Questionnaires that require self-evaluation, peer evaluation, group evaluation, and or teacher evaluation.

The afore-mentioned strategies of assessment are believed to enhance learners' centeredness in relation to the targeted process. That is, learners are not mere subjects who answer questions and respond to certain questionnaires; on the contrary, learners, by means of self-evaluation, reflection, and feedback, are active performer as far as evaluation is concerned (Fantnini, *ibid.*).

4.4. Teachers' Intercultural Education:

The previous section (chapter three) has shown that the syllabi of English do not foment learners' development of an intercultural competence that suits the requirements of modern societies. These shortcomings may be mitigated in case teachers of English exercise their duties as intercultural mediators in designing their syllabi and materials on grounds of effective intercultural instruction, and restructuring their beliefs and attitudes.

Positively, the intercultural process hinges, to a great extent, on teachers' ability and willingness to mediate cultures in the classroom. This significance had been identified as far as learners' online activities are concerned. Indeed, part the reason why learners of English develop negative attitudes towards the Other is due to the absence of teachers as intercultural mediators in those online settings. But, despite the fact that teachers are prone to come across learners' stereotypes and prejudices in their classrooms, the process of mediating and reconciling cultures is not accentuated, at least when it comes to the process of assessment and evaluation. Ergo, the aim of this section is to shed some light on the significance of teachers as intercultural mediators along the urgent need for the implementation of teachers' intercultural education.

As far as curriculum is concerned, Hickling-Hudson (2004) outlines the following duties for teachers:

- ✓ They must apply their intercultural perspectives to re-fashioning the concrete curricula and assessment systems in their discipline areas²⁶⁰;
- ✓ they must provide learners with opportunities to become multilingual;
- ✓ educators need to work with partnerships. (Nieto, 1999, cited in Hickling-Hudson (ibid.), and improving social relations between students.

Teachers are believed to be intercultural mediators only when they inspect their own beliefs and attitudes. Likewise, adopting affirming attitudes towards cultural diversity is possible only when teachers are ready to inspect their own perceptions. Villega and Lucas (2002) underscore this fact as they commented *"The more challenging tasks will be to motivate teacher candidates to inspect their own beliefs about students from non-dominant groups and to confront negative attitudes they might have toward these students."* Gay (2013:114) outlines the fact that an intercultural teacher is the one who judges his beliefs in relation to the following questions:

²⁶⁰ This means that they must be able to recognize racism and cultural ethnocentrism, counter it in their teaching, and design new curricula that deal creatively with the controversies between shared values versus plural ways of seeing the world (Hickling-Hudson (2004).

- ✓ What do I believe are the underlying causes of achievement difficulties of various culturally diverse students?
- ✓ am I able and willing to articulate and scrutinize my beliefs about cultural diversity in general and about particular ethnic groups?
- ✓ can I discern how specific beliefs about different ethnic populations are embedded in particular instructional decisions and behaviors?
- ✓ am I willing to consider making significant changes in my attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, and, if so, do I know how to proceed?

Hickling-Hudson (2004) contends that teachers' intercultural education is among the touchstones of an effective intercultural instruction. However, in the review of the literature teachers' intercultural education is constrained to certain cultures that affiliate with the Western countries. Still, one may underscore the fact that intercultural education is obstructed by the lack of practice that, according to the scholar “ *is the exception rather than the rule*”. This lack of intercultural education is confirmed as far as teachers' of English in Algeria are concerned. In addition to the shortcoming affiliated with teachers' intercultural education, prioritizing some cultural perspectives over others also hinders the process of holistic intercultural education. Hickling-Hudson develops these claims as she comments:

Across the globe, most teacher education courses, like most school curricula, are still founded on a model of cultural hegemony characterized by a narrowly Western ideology shaping the content, structures and processes of learning (Hickling-Hudson, *ibid.*).

Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) believes that teachers are more likely to account for learners' socio-cultural backgrounds as they get an effective training in relation to intercultural instruction. Teachers as they are taught culturally responsive pedagogy, develop a cognizance in relation to the nature of teaching processes. In

a way, they come to realize that teaching is context bound, and therefore, the implementation of a particular approach does not necessarily mean a successful attempt. This universality of teaching methods is substituted for context-bound instructive practices. In connection with this, *“This awareness of cross-cultural variation in norms of teaching and learning would then form the first step in developing an appropriate methodology (ibid.).*

In relation to teachers’ intercultural education, the dichotomy “multicultural vs. intercultural has to be elucidated. According to Hickling-Hudson (2004), multicultural education does not mitigate the cultural hegemony carried via the curricula of English. On the contrary, it is believed that such a perspective is prone to widen the gap within the involved cultures. Teachers of English need to go through an intercultural education, known as “critical multiculturalism (Nieto,1999; Sleeter and Grant, 2002, cited in Hickling-Hudson (2004). Under this spirit, an intercultural education that targets developing teachers’ intercultural practices needs to bottom on Bennett’s (2003: 175) map of intercultural pedagogy that jumbles *“curriculum reform, equity pedagogy, multicultural competence and societal equity”*. The main objective of effective intercultural education for both teachers and learners needs to eradicate *“the harmful effects of the tribalist ethnocentrism, social stratification, and ‘ability’ streaming and tracking, racism and gender oppression perpetuated by so many educational institutions” (ibid.).*

Teachers, for them to develop befitting methodologies for intercultural education, need to be versed in the realm of intercultural communicative competence. This field, according to Dogancay-Aktuna (2005), *“offers language teachers and their educators important insights about how and why cultures of learning might vary is the field of intercultural communication”*. The concept of intercultural competence generates multifarious definitions²⁶¹; however, what needs emphasis is the understanding that Dogancay-Aktuna (ibid.) brings forward. She states that the cultural encounters may also occur when teachers along the materials and the approaches they design come from another culture, and which are delivered to some learners who epitomize a divergent culture (s). According to her *“: once a methodology is transported from its context of origin, and presented to different*

²⁶¹ For more definitions about ICC, see chapter one.

learner groups, it becomes an example of an intercultural encounter” (ibid.). More importantly, integrating information from ICC into the methodology courses in foreign language programmes will also fill an important void in such teaching programmes.

According to Kalsbeek (2008), teachers’ intercultural education needs to focus on developing teachers’ intercultural competence, outlined as *“as adequately and integrated implementing (general) knowledge and skills in a professional context”*. In other words, teachers’ intercultural education is deemed effective, in case it develops teachers’ general competence along professional one. The former encompasses “openness, knowledge, and flexibility. While professional competence includes “perspective, context and dialogue. These criteria are detailed in the tables below:

General Competences : Openness	
I can develop an interest and gain an insight in other cultures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have a positive attitude toward the target culture and an open mind towards other cultures. - I am aware of my role as an intermediary between two cultures. -I’m able to put the norms, values and traditions of my own culture into perspective. -I can recognize stereotypical judgments on other cultures and put them into perspective. -I’m able to see people from other cultures as individuals, not only as representatives of their culture. -I can make students aware of their own cultural baggage. -I can stimulate students to have an open mind when regarding other cultures, and in particular when regarding the target culture (values and beliefs). -I can teach students to be critical towards stereotypes.

Table 4.10: General Competences: Openness

General Competence : Knowledge	
I have knowledge of the various ideas on culture and intercultural communication and can transmit these to my students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I know that culture can be defined in different ways. -I have knowledge of the different ideas on the relationship between language and culture. -I have knowledge of different models of intercultural communication. -I know the different interpretations of ‘multi-cultural’, ‘cross-cultural’ and ‘trans-cultural’. -I’m able to integrate my knowledge of culture and intercultural communication into my practice as a teacher. -I can give students an insight into the various ideas on culture and intercultural communication. -I pay attention in my teaching practice to the ways in which ‘multi-cultural’, ‘cross-cultural’, ‘trans-cultural’ and ‘intercultural’ play a role in the target culture.

Table 4.11: General Competences: Knowledge

General Competence: Flexibility	
I am able to adopt appropriate behavior in various situations and guide my students to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I am curious about new cultures. -I easily venture into different (sub-) cultures. -I am aware of the complexity of my own identity and that of the students. -I can handle situations which are unexpected and unusual for me. -I am aware of a growing diversity in the university’s student population. -I can teach groups of students to be sensitive towards and respectful of cultural differences. -I can guide students on their international mobility. -I can make students aware of their multiple identities.

Table 4.12.: General Competence: Flexibility

Professional Competence : Perspective	
I am able to think and act from different perspectives and to apply the term ‘perspective’ in my teaching practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I can recognize the perspective from which a text is spoken or written. -I am able to take the others perspective during intercultural communication. -I am aware of the ethnocentric view of many classroom practices. -I can make students aware of the cultural notions that are hidden in their actions and thoughts. -I can teach students to analyze and recognize the various perspectives from which texts are produced in a foreign language.

Table 4.13. : Professional Competence: Perspective

Professional Competence: Context	
I have sufficient knowledge of the target culture to add context to learning tasks and to instruct students searching for context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I have a general knowledge of the geography, history, society and government of the target culture. -I stay updated on political, artistic, literary, fashion and architectonic developments in the target culture. -I know relevant sources (teaching materials, books, websites, television programs, etc.) in order to find information on the target culture. -I am able to critically review and interpret sources from the target culture. -I can connect language learning with acquiring intercultural competences in my teaching practice. -I can teach my students to relate between text and context in the foreign language. -I can teach my students to be critical of sources from the target culture.

Table 4.14.: Professional Competence: Context

Professional Competence: Dialogue	
I know the basics and problems of Intercultural communication and can implement this knowledge in the teaching practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I can communicate in the target language in specific situations with regard to the socio-cultural context (formal/informal, appropriate, politeness, avoiding sensitive subjects). -I can analyze and solve problems that stem from intercultural miscommunication. -I can show students and let them experience, the similarities and differences between their own culture and the target culture. -I can problematize the difficulties of intercultural communication ('culture bumps') for students. -I can stimulate the dialogue on cultural aspects between students and thus stimulate the creation of a 'third culture'.

Table4.15: Professional Competence: Dialogue

It is important to note that teachers' educators have a leading role as far as developing teachers' intercultural skills and abilities are concerned. Villega and Lucas (2002) explain this duty as they commented "*teacher educators must articulate a vision of teaching and learning in a diverse society and use that vision to systematically guide the infusion of multicultural issues throughout the pre-service curriculum.*" Teachers' intercultural education should account for the strands mentioned below:

4.4.1. Socio-cultural Consciousness:

The first touchstone that teachers' intercultural education needs to target relates to developing teachers' socio-cultural consciousness. Banks (1996) outlines this consciousness as a penetration of individuals' thinking processes, behaviours, and being, and an awareness of the reciprocity that jumbles these processes with socio-cultural factors qua ethnicity, social class, and language (cited in Villega and Lucas ,2002) Most importantly, the lack of such a cognizance would undoubtedly constitute a barrier as far as learners' cultures and the teachers are concerned (Villega and Lucas ,ibid.) Under this spirit, it is significant to note that teachers' development of a socio-cultural consciousness

hinges on teachers' thorough exploration of their own identities (Banks, 1991; Bennett, 1995; Zeichner and Hoeft, 1996, cited in *ibid.*). Inconvertibly, there are many strategies that enable the instructors dive deeper into their own identities and personal histories. Some ways to do so are exemplified in the use of autobiographies, reflection, and critical self-analysis. Villega and Lucas outline this claim in the statement below :

They need to explore the various social and cultural groups to which they belong, including those identified with race, ethnicity, social class, language, and gender. They also need to inspect the nature and extent of their attachments to those groups and how membership in them has shaped their personal and family histories. (Villega and Lucas, *ibid.*).

4.4.2. An Affirming Attitude towards Students From Culturally Diverse Background:

The second feature of an interculturally competent teacher is their ability to adopt affirming attitudes towards learners from different cultures, namely minority cultures²⁶². The teachers who espouse such prospects “*acknowledge the existence and validity of a plurality of ways of thinking, talking, behaving, and learning*” (Villega and Lucas, *ibid.*). Under this connection, teachers are prone to be aware of the fact that cultural positioning is a matter of power that excels deficiencies within marginalized cultures (Delpit, 1995). Moreover, within this vista, learners from different cultures are seen as “*as learners who already know a great deal and who have experiences, concepts, and languages that can be built on and expanded to help them learn even more. They see their role as adding to rather than replacing what students bring to learning*” (Villega and Lucas, *ibid.*). It is important to mention that the affiliation between teachers' attitudes and consciousness is evident. That is, teachers who are prone to develop affirming attitudes towards learners from different cultures are believed to have generated a given socio-cultural cognizance.

²⁶² In Algeria, most of the learners come from the Algerian cities ; however, others come from other countries like Mali, Niger, for more information see chapter two.

4.4.3. Diversity in Teachers' Education:

The advent of globalization had brought new challenges to teachers of English. Now, educators are asked to develop learners' intercultural competence by means of explicating to them the necessity of cultural diversity. Another salient feature of intercultural teachers is their awareness of the fact that cultural differences in the classroom do not, by any means, harm the learning process. On the contrary, these cultural selections enrich and support the process of culturally responsive teaching. Gay (2013) explicates his view about cultural difference as he commented: *"To facilitate this understanding I argue that culture and difference are neither inherently good nor bad, neither automatically privileging nor disparaging. They simply are, and should be understood accordingly"*. The significance of this awareness is expounded by Mceety's (1999:3-4) comment: *"all students in schools understand and acknowledge the value of cultural diversity and possess the knowledge, skills, and understanding to contribute to and benefit from such diversity"*. The implementation of cultural diversity along teachers' lectures obligates another process of integrating learners' divergent cultural experiences along the instructive process, and in this ways, affords for all learners equal learning chances. Hickling-Hudson (2004) accentuates the fact that the way of coping with cultural diversity should be considered as an elemental aspect of teachers' intercultural education. He comments:

Preparing teachers for cultural diversity is only one of the many goals of teacher education, but it is an extremely important one in the context of the harrowing ethnic conflicts and the changing ethnoscares of our globalizing era. Exploring the continuum of ethnic discourses which may inform teacher education, ranging from ethnocentrism to critical interculturalism, is necessary in order to evaluate the stage of development (Hickling-Hudson, *ibid.*).

Clearly, a learner is prone to do well in certain tasks that require intercultural competence, given the availability of an effective intercultural instruction. Now, the reciprocity between learners' cultural performances and teachers' cultural awareness has become an ironclad orthodoxy (Banks, 2004). By

the same token, Brown (2004) has subsidized such a claim as he notes that the interplay between teachers' intercultural awareness and learners' intercultural performances are reflected in teachers' use of various instructive methods. Moreover, when teachers develop a certain level of intercultural awareness, they are more likely to perform effectively in divergent cultural milieus (Cruikshank, 1986:85).

For an effective intercultural education, the contents of teaching about other culture should implement multifarious aspects of different cultural categories. In so doing, the learners who belong to cultures different from the main stream cultures, would feel involved in the whole learning process. Gay (2013) contended that intercultural pedagogy should provide "*accurate content about and comprehensive portrayals of ethnically and racially diverse groups and experiences in various subject matter curricula*". In relation to the integration of cultural diversity in the pedagogy, two main traditions are identified. As to the first one, its main premise had been anchored in the belief that historical knowledge and experiences should occupy the main contents of foreign language instruction. This mechanistic and intact prospect had been identified in this research. In a way, teaching about other cultures is constrained to past cultures and histories. Gay opposes such a fashion as he commented:

My preference always leaned more toward cultural and contemporary content, with historical experiences as foundational influences. This emphasis on "teaching to" cultural diversity helps students acquire more accurate knowledge about the lives, cultures, contributions, experiences, and challenges of different ethnic and racial groups in U.S. society, knowledge that is often unrecognized or denigrated in conventional schooling (Gay , *ibid.*).

Teachers' attitudes are of due significance as far as the rapport that affiliates between the teacher and the learners is concerned. In a way, these attitudes are leading factors in relation to forming expectations, learners' treatments, learners' achievements and the whole learning process (Irvine, 1990; Pang and Sablan, 1998, cited in Villega and Lucas,2002). More importantly, these teachers are likely to showcase their positive attitudes towards cultural variations in their

teaching practices. Delpit (1995) mentions the following strategies that teachers with affirming attitudes adopt:

- ✓ Exposing learners to an intellectually rigorous curriculum;
- ✓ teaching learners strategies they can use to manipulate their own learning;
- ✓ setting high performance expectations for learners;
- ✓ encouraging learners to objectively use their cultural resources they bring to school.

4.4.4. Commitment and Skills to Act as Agents of Change:

In addition the afore-mentioned yardsticks of teachers' intercultural education, teachers need to develop the spirit of commitment and certain skills that allow them contribute to a positive change, a change that values cultural diversity. This moral imperative gives the teachers the role of actors who partake in the development of other individuals. These new intercultural responsibilities would hopefully eradicate "*the prevailing perception that differences among students are problems rather than resources*" (Delpit, *ibid.*). Under this spirit, teachers are believed to lubricate the reciprocity that jumbles both schools and social life together. Though this criterion is elemental, its implantation requires from teachers' educators to develop teachers' awareness of their roles as agents of change (Cochran-Smith, 1991: 285). Villegan and Lucas (2002) mention the following duties of teachers' educators:

- ✓ Teachers' educators should help aspiring teachers see that it is possible to reconstruct education to give all learners opportunities to learn equally;
- ✓ they need to prepare prospective teachers to become agents of change by teaching them about the change process by means of making them aware of the obstacles to change;
- ✓ they are asked to enhance moral dimension of education, as they guide novice teachers to develop their own personal visions of education and teaching.

4.4.5. Constructivist Views of Learning

Positively, for a process of learning to be effective, it needs to take learners' experiences and prior knowledge into account. Intercultural instruction, within this vista, goes along a constructivist perspective. This approach of learning hinges on the belief that meaning is not a ready-made construct that is delivered to the learners in their classrooms; on the contrary, this product is negotiated in relation to learners' background knowledge and the novel ideas and information they come across in the educational milieu. According to Glasersfeld, (1995) learners call upon the information stored in their memories so as to construct novel inputs. Villega and Lucas (2002) argue that *"to overlook this resource is to deny children access to the knowledge construction process. The conventional "empty vessel" metaphor of the learner yields to the image of a "builder" who is constantly striving to construct meaning."* Within this intercultural and constructivist vistas, teachers occupy a central role since they:

- ✓ Should help learners build bridges between what they already know and believe about the topic at hand and the new ideas and experiences to which they are exposed;
- ✓ need to monitor the learners' developing and understanding novel ideas;
- ✓ are supposed to continuously adjust their plans of action to meet learners' needs while simultaneously building on their strengths (ibid.) .

4.4.6. Learning about Students:

Claiming the quintessential role occupied by learners' prior knowledge and experiences, it may be assumed that interculturally competent teachers are prone to design their own strategies to develop their knowledge about learners' cultural backgrounds. Villega and Lucas (2002) argue that “ *To engage students in the construction of knowledge, teachers need to know about students' experiences outside school*²⁶³” . By the same token, Moll and Gonzalez (1997:90) contend that teachers who have access to their learners' background knowledge are able to penetrate the meaning of learners' behaviour inside the educational milieu. Additionally, teachers who succeed in bridging the gap between learners' knowledge and the school's are more likely to enhance their learners' motivation. Ladson- Billings, 1994, cited in Villega and Lucas (ibid.). Villega and Lucas underscore the significance of past knowledge in forming attitudes and perceptions about schooling as they commented:

Teachers also need insight into how their students' past learning experiences have shaped their current views of school and school knowledge. For instance, children who have been taught subject matter as discrete bits of information that bear little or no relationship to the world beyond the school walls are likely to see school knowledge as boring, alien to their lives, and devoid of personal meaning. (Villega and Lucas, ibid.)

²⁶³ Here, we suggest that in today's world, cultural learning in outside-classroom settings should be taken as a priority for teachers so as to know about their learners.

The above-mentioned arguments pour in the stream of effective intercultural education that obligates teachers' development of various realms of knowledge in relation to learners' experiences and histories. Under this spirit, responsive teachers should “*strive to know as much as possible about the children they teach to facilitate their learning*”. (Villega and Lucas, *ibid.*). Despite this fact, teachers may need some skills of interpreting information they gathered, which may stem from courses in history²⁶⁴, literature²⁶⁵ anthropology²⁶⁶, etc. Diving deeper into the contents of such fields of study may enhance teachers' development of certain strategies in dealing with intercultural dilemmas. Villega and Lucas (*ibid.*) outline some guidelines for teachers who aspire intercultural competency in the lines below:

- ✓ Conducting home visits and consulting with people who live in the communities served by the school;
- ✓ learning how they can create opportunities in the classroom for learners to negotiate their goals and future aspirations:
- ✓ discovering what their future learners know and think about different instructional topics and how they use these frameworks to make sense of new ideas.

²⁶⁴ From history courses, prospective teachers need to learn about the enslavement, conquest, and colonization of people of different cultures as well as their ongoing struggle for liberation. (Villega,A. and Lucas,T (2002)

²⁶⁵ Exposure to the literature of different groups can give future teachers access to the rich texture of people's lives—their hopes, aspirations, dreams, disappointments, pains, and joys. From sociolinguistics courses, they can learn that all varieties of language are complex and governed by rules (*ibid.*).

²⁶⁶ Courses in anthropology can reinforce the fact that, although discernable patterns for cultural groups exist, culture is dynamic and varies among individuals within a group and across communities within a larger cultural group (*ibid.*).

4.4.7. Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices:

The knowledge that teachers develop about their learners should be implemented in their instructive practices so as to contribute to a process of intercultural education. According to Villega and Lucas (ibid.), these intercultural pedagogical insights encompass “*involving all students in the construction of knowledge, building on students’ personal and cultural strengths, helping students examine the curriculum from multiple perspectives, and making the culture of the classroom inclusive of all students.*” However, a fruitful intercultural instruction overshadows mere applications of certain techniques and strategies to account for “*tailoring instruction to incorporate assumed traits or customs of particular cultural groups*” (ibid.).

Another salient feature of culturally responsive teaching hinges on the premise of linking classroom learning to learners’ social practices and activities. Within this vista, teaching about other cultures needs to affiliate to all spheres that provide a kind of cultural encounter, including the online platforms. Moreover, an effective cultural learning accounts for learners’ prior knowledge and experiences. Gay (2013) outlines culturally responsive teaching as: “*using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.* It is a means for improving achievement by teaching diverse students *through* their own cultural filters”. The below-cited statement explicates an understanding of culturally responsive teaching:

Culturally responsive teaching is the behavioral expressions of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning. It is contingent on . . . seeing cultural differences as assets; creating caring learning communities where culturally different individuals and heritages are valued; using cultural knowledge of ethnically diverse cultures, families, and communities to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, instructional strategies, and relationships with students; challenging racial and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, and oppression; being change agents for social justice and academic equity; mediating power imbalances in classrooms based on race, culture, ethnicity, and class; and accepting cultural responsiveness as endemic to educational effectiveness in all areas of learning for students from all ethnic groups (Gay, ibid.).

It is worth mentioning that culturally responsive teaching is the outcome of an apparent shift from traditional ways of teaching about other cultures into a novel ways of accounting for diversity. Such a perceptive allows room for all the learners to achieve academically. No doubt, a culturally responsive teaching aspires develop an intercultural competence for both teachers and learners. Culturally responsive teaching comes to be gelled along learners' performances, competence and many other skills. Gay expounds this idea as he pointed:

simultaneously develops, along with academic achievement, social consciousness and critique; cultural affirmation, competence, and exchange; . . . individual self worth and abilities; and an ethic of caring. It uses [different] ways of knowing, understanding, and representing various ethnic and cultural groups in teaching academic subjects, processes, and skills. It cultivates cooperation, collaboration, reciprocity, and mutual responsibility for learning among students, and between students and teachers. It incorporates high-status, cultural knowledge about different ethnic groups in all subjects and skills taught. . . . Thus, [it] validates, facilitates, liberates, and empowers ethnically diverse students by . . . cultivating their cultural integrity, individual abilities, and academic success. (ibid.).

A culturally responsive pedagogy needs to hinge on teachers' awareness that can be developed in teachers' education programmes. The shift in relation to foreign language and culture education had been accompanied by a shift at the level of culture perception. In other words, teaching about other cultures had been altered from mere instruction about cultural facts into the cultural appropriateness of particular methodologies²⁶⁷ (Barkhuizen 1998, Coleman 1996, Holliday 1994, Hu 2002, cited in Dogancay-Aktuna,2005).

Culturally responsive teachers are more likely to use the knowledge and the skills to afford a attractive cultural learning milieu. Undoubtedly, in such settings, learners' ideas are emphasized, since they abet them make sense of the

²⁶⁷ This expansion in focus was probably fuelled by data emerging from classrooms across the world, where the teacher's/school's chosen methodology showed a lack of 'fit' with the students' and teachers' cultural norms, and their expectations of what 'good' language teaching needs to involve (Dogancay-Aktuna (2005).

cultural chaos around them. Villega and Lucas underscore the fact that teachers may subsidize the process of knowledge construction “*by involving them in inquiry projects that have personal meaning to them*”. The same scholars emphasize this perspective as they commented:

This type of instruction—which engages students actively in purposeful, meaningful, collaborative, and intellectually rigorous work—also conveys to children that they are capable thinkers who can create new ideas, even if, like the students in the example, they are not fully fluent in academic English . Students who are treated in this manner tend to push themselves into meet the teacher’s expectations. (Villega and Lucas, 2002).

4.4.8. Discourse Approach to ICC (Scollon and Scollon (1995):

An effective intercultural instruction should, to a given extent, hinge on a discourse approach to language and culture teaching. In relation to the discursive approach, Scollon and Scollon’s (1995) framework that embraces elemental features is worth mentioning. The proposed model also includes four main questions that teachers may use to explore discursive patterns within cultural groups, in our case learners of English (cited in Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005) . The goal of using this framework excels finding and identifying difference between students’ knowledge and teachers’ , “*but to explore what kind of preconditioned ideas teachers themselves have about that particular context, while showing them the dimensions over which cultures are most likely to vary in their discourse systems*” (Dogancay-Aktuna (ibid.). The four questions are displayed below along some further explanation in the footnotes:

1 ‘What are the historical/social/ideological characteristics of the group?’
(ideology)²⁶⁸

2 ‘How does one learn membership and identity?’ (socialization)²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ Teachers need to be aware of the historical/social/ideological characteristics of learners’ backgrounds, including their common beliefs and dominant world views. (Scollon and Scollon, 1995, cited in Dogancay-Aktuna (2005).

3 ‘What are the preferred forms of communication?’²⁷⁰

4 ‘What are the preferred or assumed human relationships?’²⁷¹ (Scollon and Scollon, 1995, cited Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005).

4.4.9. Cognizance of the Contexts of Intercultural Instruction:

The above-mentioned discussion outlines the fact that each context of learning is believed to have its own culture of learning. In a way, both learners’ and teachers’ behaviours in classroom are determined by the culture of learning that dictates standards of effective learning, ways of learning and teaching, etc (Cortazzi and Jin 1996: 169, cited in Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Li (1998) underscores the fact that this culture that foments another kind of socialization is the product of the community to whom both learners and teachers belong. More important that this, a mismatch between the classroom culture and the learners’ undoubtedly leads to cultural misunderstandings and frustration (Li, *ibid.*). Ergo, as pointed at by McKay (2002), teachers are asked to take learners’ prior knowledge into account and apply it when designing their materials and activities. Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) contends that when learners’ socio-cultural backgrounds are eschewed, their experience are also taken for granted.

As such, any foreign language scene is deeded to have interplay of a set of expectations, attitudes and experiences that both teachers and learners bring to the educational milieu. These variations of perceptions also related to some views about “*appropriate teacher and learner roles and the learning-teaching practices they believe to be conducive to language learning* (Dogancay-Aktuna, *ibid.*). These dichotomies are likely to create certain cultural misunderstandings and misconceptions among the involved agents. These barriers can be overcome by means of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Dogancay-Aktuna argues that:

²⁶⁹ Teachers are asked to be cognizant of the formal and informal norms and standards of education that the learners went through (*ibid.*).

²⁷⁰ Teachers need to develop a kind of knowledge about learners’ ways of using language in communication and across cultures (*ibid.*).

²⁷¹ Teachers need to be au-courant of value of kinship and hierarchy in this group across divergent cultures (*ibid.*).

To prevent frustrations and failure due to mismatches between the teachers' and learners' expectations, teachers need to consider to what extent the underlying principles of their chosen methodology will correspond with the set of assumptions that learners bring to the classroom (Dogancay-Aktuna, *ibid.*).

There had been many studies conducted in relation the appropriateness of certain methodologies in particular cultures. Coleman (1996) outlines the fact that the bygone years have witnessed heated debates as what the features of befitting methodologies were. One of the studies that pointed to the context-bound nature of teaching methodologies relates to the work done by Hu (2002: 93). This scholar explored the implementation of CLT²⁷² in various settings, and came to the conclusion that intercultural education is context bound. The study revealed the following conclusions:

- ✓ Chinese teachers and students conceive explicit grammar analysis as crucial to foreign language learning;
- ✓ they believe that the teacher should dominate and monitor the classroom;
- ✓ Chinese students, on the other hand, are not motivated to accept group work, debates, and other interactive activities as meaningful or relevant to their learning;
- ✓ they prefer mastery via memorization because they perceive it as knowledge that will bring them confidence and a feeling of success.

To overcome such barriers, teachers are required to develop cultural an awareness and an understanding of divergent cultures. Guest (2002:155), and Littlewood (2000:33) outline the fact that denying learners' experiences and taking methodologies as universal would increase the process of othering and to the reinforcement of stereotypes and prejudices along language classrooms. By

²⁷² CLT: Communicative language teaching.

the same token, McKay (2002:121) postulates that a contrastive process such as Western versus Eastern assumptions of cultures of learning '*can perpetuate differences, promote the concept of otherness, and lead to simple dichotomies and stereotyping*'. McKay (ibid.) advances the following guidelines for the teachers who aspire culturally responsive teaching:

- ✓ teachers need to adopt non-universalistic approach to the study of classrooms ;
- ✓ use open-ended discussion about cultures of learning can be carried out by learning to ask informed questions, instead of categorizing learners into popular dichotomies;
- ✓ need to be aware of the possible areas of cultural variation;
- ✓ as teachers develop some understandings about assumptions of discourse systems , they may provide particular groups of learners with socio-culturally and educationally sensitive language pedagogy.

Leo (2010) advances the following elemental framework that teachers' intercultural education should take into account. This model underscores the fact that for teachers to be effective agents in their intercultural teaching journey, they need to develop knowledge, values, and certain skills. The points mentioned below explicate the features of culturally responsive teachers' education:

- Deep knowledge, awareness and understanding of the key issues related to intercultural understanding;
- objective sense of teachers' own cultural heritage and identity as a solid foundation for accepting and tolerating others;
- readiness to think holistically and to link intercultural understanding to the multiple dimensions;

- developing critical thinking that enables engaging learners in culturally diversified discussions;
- readiness to identify and live the values of intercultural understanding;
- ability to monitor and facilitate values development and attitudinal change in relation to both teachers and learners;
- developing skills in teaching and learning methodologies that mingle the content, skills and values for intercultural understanding into and across school curricula;
- awareness of available resources related to education for intercultural understanding and the ability to develop one's own teaching resources;
- engage in reflective practice and action research in collaboration with other teachers, to continually improve approaches to education for intercultural understanding and sustainability.

Leo (ibid.) also underscores the fact that there are some activities that, if included in teachers' intercultural education, would lead to an effective intercultural training. Under this spirit, teachers' educators have a tremendous role as far as far developing instructors' intercultural competence is concerned. They need to:

- broaden teachers' own awareness of the socio-cultural, religious and linguistic Demographic aspects of divergent cultures, including the contemporary and historical key issues;
- engage with other teachers in critical dialogue around contemporary socio-cultural issues to develop deep and unbiased understanding of the many cultural perspectives.

4.5. Conclusion:

Translucently, cultural learning is among the knottiest fields that still poses intricate problems for teachers as well as researchers. However, for this process to be tailored an intercultural suit, learners and teachers should be predisposed to embrace intercultural learning along their practices. As the first section of this chapter showcased, learners who develop certain stereotypes and prejudices from online and other settings may mitigate them by means of certain strategies such as knowledge construction, coping strategies, suppression strategies, sharing common goals, cognitive strategies, and intergroup contact, among many other techniques. In connection with this, it is salient to underscore the fact the efficiency of these ways of reducing the effects of stereotypes is approved in case learners embrace positive views and perspectives in relation to how they approach the Other in both online and off-line settings.

In addition to the afore-mentioned strategies that can be sued to foment intercultural education, the targeted competence may be enhanced, given the availability of strong and effective measures and ways of assessment. In relation to this, the second section of this chapter outlined some theoretically grounded models that can be used by teachers in the process of assessment. Likewise, within the micro level, teachers may use various tools of assessment that can be grouped in direct and indirect frameworks. Within the direct category, researchers agree that intercultural education can be assessed by means of portfolios, the means that allows the teachers to know the cultural strengths and weaknesses of their learners. Moreover, the section underscored the fact that assessment of intercultural competence should be formative, and therefore takes considerable time. In connection with this, intercultural competence should be divided into particular sub-competences such as knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour. This stratification allows room for rigorous and more objective assessment. This part also accentuates the feature of objectivity that teachers need to abide by along their assessment processes.

Positively, an effective process of intercultural instruction hinges to a great extent, on teachers' ability to mediate divergent cultures within heterogeneous settings. This intercultural duty requires teachers' development of the qualifications that allow them reconcile cultures. This underlies the fact that an intercultural training is a vital necessity that teachers need to go through so as to enhance learners' development of positive views towards the Other. Ergo, for teachers' intercultural education to be effective, it should strive to implant the following features in instructors, including socio-cultural consciousness, knowledge about diversity, learning about students, holding affirming attitudes about the learners, developing constructivist views about learning, and practicing culturally-responsive pedagogy.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

Foreign language learning, a process that takes place in language classes only, has become a fallacy that would not fairly portray the complexity of the debated process. No doubt, these educational milieus are still the official places where learners regularly receive certain lectures in relation to the targeted linguistic skills, along certain cultural information. Howbeit, as the world has embraced globalization along its bans and boons, the boundaries of instructional processes had been reshaped within some new frameworks and parameters. In this technology-determined world, the learner does not belong to a homogenous community distinguished from other communities by the language, the norms and traditions. The learner of English partakes in worldly gatherings, including online communities. These communities are known for the cultural diversity that they embrace and the pragmatism they hinge on, the pragmatism that stems from common goals and interest. More importantly, these online platforms relates to wider virtual communities that manipulate the whole virtual enterprise. Under this sprit, learners' intercultural journey is deemed successful when classroom learning and online learning form a reciprocal interplay. In addition to this, the process is subsidized when the teachers enlarge their scopes and beliefs about their constrained understandings to the new boundaries of intercultural learning. To put it in a nutshell, interculturality is effective in language classes when online socialization is deprived of its theoretical and mythical connotations, and becomes the subject of solid assessment processes.

Though online platforms have metamorphosed the process of cultural learning, the cultural conflict and misunderstandings are among the characteristics of such milieus. In the bygone years, learners had the tendency to meet the Other and the Self inside foreign language classes. However, by this epoch, one is likely to come across the "online Self "and the online Other. What needs emphasis, here, is the fact that, as the scope of cultural encounters had been broadened by means of the technological boom, teachers' duties as assessors and instructors are being attired other complexities. Truly, if the assessment of the intercultural learning within clearly identified classrooms settings is a knotty

process what would teachers do, when it comes to boundless virtual milieus of learning? An issue of due significance in relation to online learning is learners' awareness of cultural heterogeneity of the Other. That is, unlike the classroom learning where the teacher manipulates the process as an intercultural mediator, the online settings are manipulated ideologically by a given group, where representations of the Self are exploited as an intriguer of negative attitudes.

Learners of English do not come to the online settings as crude repertoires. On the contrary, they bring with them certain representations, developed along home socialization and school socialization. The online settings, therefore, typify a cultural intersection. Learners are prone to represent the Other as the colonizer, the non-believer, and the racist. All these distorted depictions are transmitted to them along their stages of life. Per contra, the Self, for them, alludes to right way of perceiving the cultural phenomena around them. According to them, the Self is pictured in religious and axiological dimensions. In connection with this, learners tend to mingle both religions and people who practice religions under the same label. Learners' negative attitudes towards the Other represent the partial failure of the classroom instructive process. Worst of all, is the fact that online platforms that enjoy certain freedom become a cascade where rivers of negative attitudes about the Other, which stem from learners' prior socializations, meet the biased online representations of the Self.

Online representations of the Self and the Other epitomize the ideological nature of the online settings learners of English visit on a regular basis. Undeniably, these milieus become one of the places where the Self opposes the Other. The Self that represents the learners and their cultures is pictured in a negative way, including features of decay, chaos, and violence. The online representations of Abrahamic religions is an illustration of how online platforms constrain some religions to piety and religiosity, while they attire some other religions a political suits that does not fit the ethical qualities of all religions. Indeed, both Judaism and Christianity are being portrayed as religions of peace. Per contra, Islam is pictured as the religion that embraces aggressions and civil wars. Beyond shadow of a doubt, such representations of what learners identify themselves with, directly fuel negative attitudes towards the Other, as being a

homogenous construct, the enemy of the Self. The hatred for the Other, ignited by learners' cultural unawareness, would lead them to produce certain counterstereotypes that would definitely approach the other religions negatively. Under this regard, it is self-evident that the chauvinistic nature of the online representations of the Abrahamic religions widens the gap between the Self and the Other. Ergo, new responsibilities and duties await teachers of English in their language classes.

The story reaches the climax when online representations unevenly question the ethical and moral features of the Self. The learners are tightly affiliated with their Arabic origins and identities. In the same vein, the Arabs are, in most cases, identified as the symbol of good values and ethics. Howbeit, as they connect to online platforms, learners are shocked, as they see that they are reading the same story, but this time, it is a Westernized story that opposes the beliefs they are strongly attached to. Virtual milieus tend to typify all that is Arab in the emblem of aggression, violence, and terrorism. The same negative images affiliate to the Arab women who are portrayed as extremists instrumentalised to achieve bad intentions. The African people, too, receive their share from the negative online representations that describe them as chaotic and uncivilized people and lack civilization. A natural response by the learners would be loaded by negative attitudes towards what they believe the touchstone of the Arab world.

The negative side of the online representations of the Self is contrasted by positive portrayal of the Other. Learners have the tendency to describe the West as the source of chaos in the world. It is the world that had been the source of suffering for the African countries along the decades of colonialism. Moreover, the West is the reason why the Arabs are left behind as far as the story of progress and development is called upon. Howbeit, as learners visit some online platforms, a cultural conflict of ideas, representations, and stereotypes is ignited. They come across the Other who symbolizes modernity, democracy, civilization, charity, and so many other issues that embellish the profile of the Western culture. Learners, when left at the crossroads, develop some negative attitudes towards all that is

Western, leaving room for stereotypes and prejudices to construct their lens, the lens that consider the Other as “hell”.

Clearly, the relationship between the online socialization and classroom socialization is established on reciprocal grounds. That is, as learners bring the cultural knowledge they developed in classrooms to the online settings; however, when it comes to language classrooms, they operate the same process, but in the opposite way. This time the online cultural encounters pour in the official milieus of cultural learning, foreign language classrooms. As it had been argued before, online representations about the Self and the Other are lucidly biased towards the Other. The interplay of both cultural processes of socializations is reified in learners’ classroom learning. The negative attitudes that learners develop constitute the means whereby they approach the Other in lectures of literature, civilization, oral productions, and the rest of the subjects where Western cultures are carried to the learners. Under this spirit, learners produce preconceptions about other religions, criticizing their authenticity and credibility, and at the same time emphasizing the superiority of the Self by means of praising their own religions. Ergo, the vicious circle of negative attitudes fueled by online socialization and classroom socialization should be the concern of any pedagogy that targets the development of learners’ intercultural competence, the skills that this conflict-loaded world requires.

Despite the fact that the reciprocity that jumbles both language learning and culture learning, and despite the tremendous duties that foreign language classes, have especially in today’s world, the context of teaching about other cultures within the University of Mostagenem, Algeria, is not fulfilling its intercultural duty. This is the case since, when it comes to the LMD system, the syllabi of English in particular; cultural learning is left with the trivia. Right from the first year, the intention of syllabus designer is clearly established on linguistic grounds, as the focus is put on the subject of written expression that centers mainly on improving learners’ linguistic skills. Howbeit, the subjects that enhance learners’ intercultural skills are left by the margin. The marginalization of the process of cultural learning continues, as the contents of the subjects that enrich learners’ cultural repertoires are constrained to past cultures. The same

story is recounted when it comes to second year subjects, where the subjects that foment a solid linguistic repertoire are allocated more time. The third year syllabus comes to confirm the dominance of linguistic competence within the LMD system, a linguistic competence that overrules an intercultural world.

Undoubtedly, learners' negative attitudes towards the Other may be mitigated, given the availability of means of cultural mediation. The roles of teachers as intercultural mediators are self-evident. The presence of teachers in relation to the intercultural encounters would definitely lubricate the debated process. Under this spirit, online learning and classroom learning are distinguished on grounds of such elemental mediation. That is, while free manipulation is exercised along virtual platforms, teachers' mediation orients the process towards ethical, moral, and cultural reciprocity. Undoubtedly, teachers may use multifarious means to harmonize the Self and the Other inside foreign language classes. When the issue of cultural mediation is called up, literature comes to be the pioneer. Literature turns to be a window on divergent cultures. Nevertheless, the pedagogical scene in relation to teaching about literature in Algerian universities does not reflect this literary intercultural mission. The subjects of literatures within LMD system are imprisoned in picturing past cultures that date back to the bygone centuries. Howbeit, for an effective intercultural education, the interplay between past cultures and modern ones should be carried along literary work.

The significance of assessment in relation to the process of intercultural learning is vital and obligatory. Despite this fact, teachers of English are imprisoned in their monolithic beliefs, the beliefs that emphasize the locus of learners' linguistic competence and neglect the intercultural abilities and deficiencies. The assessment of learners' cultural shortcomings is significant, since it determines the cultural strengths the weaknesses of learners' performances. Teachers tend to bypass learners' cultural deficiencies due to many reasons. In addition to their linguistic beliefs, instructors avoid such kind of assessment for the lack of practical guidelines that determine the debated process. Other reasons may emanate from the enormous number of learners which obstructs the whole process. However, the most important reason that

hinders assessment relates to the subject to be assessed. Clearly culture as a concept escapes empirical studies, especially when teachers come across intricate constructs such as behaviours and attitudes. The immediate sequel of such difficulties is interpreted in the neglect of learners' cultural shortcomings, and hence the marginalization of learners' development of an intercultural competence.

Undoubtedly, the study revealed some intercultural cracks within the LMD system, the cracks that are mainly intercultural. Therefore, a need for a culturally responsive pedagogy is unquestionable. This intercultural framework, to be effective, should depict a harmony between the syllabus designers, the teachers, and the learners. As to the learners' approaching the Self and the Other in all milieus of cultural learning, a critical perspectives should be adopted. That is, learners need to dive deeper into the concept of the Other, a construct that displays cultural diversities that cannot be grouped under one label. Under the same vein, they need to be cognizant of the interplay of media discourse and ideologies in online platforms. Their awareness of such manipulations of ideas, would allow them limit them to groups' intention, and get rid of the process of stereotyping and generalizing.

Indeed, a culturally responsive pedagogy requires learners' reduction of their stereotypes and prejudices by means of certain strategies teacher may implement along their instructive practices. To begin with, as teachers make their learners aware of the common goals and objectives that unite them, learners are more likely to focus more on achieving their pragmatic intentions and forget about their races, belongings and cultural diversities. In addition to this, as both online socialization and classroom socialization abet learners to develop stereotypical knowledge about the Self and the Other, teachers may invest some strategies in constructing learners' cultural knowledge. However, this time the knowledge should be hinged on critical skills, mutual respect, and embracement of cultural differences. Along this line of ideas, learners' intergroup contact would erase preconceptions and prejudices. Despite the fact that suppressing learners' stereotypes and prejudices is too demanding and utopian, to a given extent, it remains an option teachers may refer to to decrease learners'

hatred and despise for the Other. No doubt, the process of stereotyping is a cognitive process that operates at the level of one's thinking apparatus. Therefore, applying cognitive strategies that would question the cognitive credibility of these stereotypes would aid the learners approach the Other critically and more objectively. Nevertheless, coping with the stereotypes would be among the effective strategies that, if applied to foreign language classes, would lead to empathy, tolerance and open-mindedness.

Positively, an effective intercultural instruction obligates the intervention of solid and empirical grounds of intercultural assessment. This process, if applied to foreign language classes, would allow the teachers dive deeper into learners' intercultural journeys. By the same token, it aids the instructors determine the strengths and the weaknesses of their learners, paving the way of remedial works, if necessary. However, for an effective assessment, teachers need to be aware of the competence they are dealing with, a competence that mainly jumbles attitudes and behaviour, two constructs that need various tools of assessment for their evaluation. In addition, a cognizance of the nature of intercultural assessment would enlighten instructors' minds about the extended (formative) features of such kind of assessment. The teachers may refer to some models that allow them observe learners' development of an intercultural competence along distinguished stages.

Indeed, an intercultural assessment needs some macro-perspectives, including certain models. Howbeit, the micro level of such kind of assessment is vital and necessary. Teachers need to be aware of the fact that an effective assessment of learners' intercultural competence obligates the interplay of both direct and indirect tools of assessment. In relation to the former, teachers may use portfolios, a means that may inform about learners' approaches to the Other from divergent cultural perspectives. By the same token, learners may contribute to the assessment of the targeted process by means of conducting a self-assessment. The latter is inclined to develop learners' awareness of the nature of the intercultural journey they live. The direct tools are insufficient in objectively highlighting the trajectory of the process. Therefore, the

implementation of indirect tools is obligatory. This category can be used to cross-check the findings teachers gather from the direct assessment.

Learners need to develop an intercultural communicative competence that jumbles knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour; therefore, this requires from teachers assessing every aspect of intercultural competence, including the afore-cited criteria. Indeed, learners' development of a cultural knowledge in relation to past cultures is necessary for some cultural situations. Howbeit, teachers should teach and assess their learners' cultural repertoire on the basis of the information that allows the learners communicate successfully in a technology - determined world. The assessment, to be affective, should account for learners' cultural practices and the skills that can be employed in managing intercultural encounters. At this level, too, teachers are supposed to assess learners' application of the knowledge they acquired along real intercultural encounters. Within this intercultural vista, it should be noted that a successful intercultural instruction is the one that transforms the learners into intercultural beings, able to form venues for third cultures and cultures of mediation, citizens who are ready to suspend their disbeliefs about the Other. Here, too, teachers' tasks as assessors are underscored. By the same token, transforming learners into intercultural beings would obligate learners to embrace meta-cognitive strategies that allow them question their thoughts and beliefs as well as the information they get from divergent sources of cultural learning. Thus, an intercultural assessment of intercultural communicative competence requires teachers' assessment of the interrelated components of ICC.

The effective assessment of learners' intercultural competence obligates the implementation of various models and tools of assessment. Howbeit, all these stages hinge on the ability of the assessor to do the task properly. As it had been noted before, the assessment of the targeted process is too demanding and too knotty. Ergo, it obligates, in addition to the tools and the models, teachers' intercultural education. The process of instructing teachers about interculturality should touch many features and aspects. To begin with, within these courses, the teachers need to be introduced to the significance of cultural diversity within language classrooms, and that cultural heterogeneity enriches the educational

milieus. Under the same vein, teachers may be informed that cultural perspectives are not to be judged on the same standards of linguistic dimensions of learning. That is, unlike the linguistic repertoire that is rule-governed process; cultural learning embraces divergent perspectives and views. Therefore, teachers' intercultural education needs to seek developing teachers' affirming attitudes towards diversity, and attitudes that are inclusive and not excluding.

Under the same spirit, teachers' intercultural education needs to emphasize the socio-cultural aspects of intercultural learning. To begin with, along the courses teachers receive, they should be acquainted with the complex ways which bring both social norms and cultural ones along learners' cultural learning. Teachers are supposed to develop a socio-cultural consciousness in relation to the diversified components of intercultural learning. Undoubtedly, this cognizance is cultivated along embracing constructivist views of learning. Here, teachers are prone to perceive their learners as carriers of knowledge and not as empty vessels that are ready to be filled with particular perspectives. Their task should be bridging the gap between learners' knowledge and classroom learning. In the same line of thought, teachers' intercultural education should implant in them the will to learn about learners' cultural diversity and styles of learning. This would allow them provide an atmosphere that abets the development of an intercultural competence. However, teachers' instruction is momentous when it comes to the macro objectives of education, changing the world. The courses introduced to the teachers need to reinforce teachers' roles as agents of change, agents who mediate divergent and conflicting perspectives. This sacred mission, undoubtedly, calls upon teachers' awareness of the pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching, a teaching that reconciles both theoretical and empirical aspects of effective instruction, a process that assesses and remedies, a venue where diversity is sheltered not exiled.

Inconvertibly, the process of intercultural learning comes to be a huge cascade where divergent sources of knowledge construction pour in. Under this spirit, teaching English within the Algerian universities should bridge between the past and the present, the old and the new, when approaching the Self and the Other pedagogically. The pedagogy that would enlighten the intercultural process should balance between official educational milieus and modern online settings of information retrieval. The success of learners' intercultural journey

that is torn between the online and the offline dimensions of learning would be established on grounds of teachers' awareness of the interplay that brings both virtual socialization and classroom socialization into harmonious grounds. This harmony is founded on frameworks of tolerance, understanding, and most importantly, co-existence of both the Self and the Other. Under the same line of thought, intercultural journeys are effective as they are assessed by means of effective and purposeful forms of assessment. To put in the nutshell, the orthodoxy of the sacred nature of the linguistic competence should be splintered once for good, and substituted for the co-existence of both competences. Anyway, this is the only exit that would permit mutual understandings in a technology-determined, where the Self and the Other are eternal enemies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books:

- 1- Abdallah-Pretceille, M. and Porcher, L. (1996). *Education et communication interculturelle*. Paris : P.U.F.
- 2- Agar, M., (1994). *Language shock: understanding the culture of conversation*. New York: William Morrow and Co.
- 3- Alien, J. P. B. and Buren, V.P. (1971). *Chomsky: selected readings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 4- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday /Anchor.
- 5- Aronin, L. and Hufeisen, B. (2009). *The Exploration of multilingualism*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- 6- Armour-Thomas, E., and Gopaul-Nicol, S. (1998). *Assessing Intelligence. Applying a Bio-Cultural Model*. USA: Sage Publications.
- 7- Ashmore, R. D., and Del Boca, F. K. (1981). Conceptual approaches to stereotypes and stereotyping. In D. L. Hamilton (Ed.), *Cognitive processes in stereotyping and intergroup behavior* (pp. 1–35). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbau.
- 8- Baird, L.L. (2003). New lessons from research on student outcomes. In S.R. Komives, D.B.Woodard, Jr., and Associates (Eds.), *Students services: A handbook for the profession* (4th ed., p. 595-617). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 9- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- 10- _____ (1984). *Esthétique de la création verbale*. Paris: Gallimard.
- 11- Banks, J. A. (2004). Multicultural Education-Historical Development, Dimensions, and Practices. In J. A. Banks and C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural Education – Historical Development, Dimensions, and Practices* (pp. 3-24). San Fransisco, California: JoseyBass.
- 12- _____ (2006). *Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching*, 5th ed., Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- 13- Barnett, G. A., and Kincaid, D.L. (1983). Cultural convergence and mathematical theory. In W.B. Gudykunst (Ed.), *intercultural communication theory: Current perspective*. London: Sage.

- 14- Barnet, G. A., and Lee, M. (2003). Issues in intercultural communication research. In W.B. Gudykunst (Ed.), *Cross-cultural and intercultural communication*. California: SAGE.
- 15- Barthes, R. (1977). *The third meaning: Image-music-text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. New York: The Noonday Press, 52–68.
- 16- Baumann, G. (1999). *The multicultural riddle – rethinking national, ethnic, and religious identities*. New York and London, Routledge.
- 17- Baym, N., (1995a). *The emergence of community in computer-mediated communication*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- 18- Bell, D. (2001). *An introduction to cyberculture*, London: Routledge.
- 19- Bennett, M. J. (1998). Intercultural communication: A current perspective. In Milton J. Bennett (Ed.), *Basic concepts of intercultural communication: Selected readings*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- 20- _____ (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. In: Wurzel, J.S. (ed.) *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education*. 2nd ed. Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation. pp. 62-77.
- 21- Bennett, J., Bennett, M., and Allen, W. (2003). Developing intercultural competence in the language classroom. In D. Lange and R. Paige (Eds.), *culture as the core: Perspectives in culture in second language learning* (pp. 237-270). Greenwich, CN: Information Age.
- 22- Bensa, A. (2008). Remarques sur les politiques de l'intersubjectivité. In : Fassin D. and Bensa, A. (eds.). *Les politiques de l'enquête. Epreuves ethnographiques*. Paris : La Découverte, 323-328.
- 23- Berger, P. and Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Penguin Books.
- 24- Berlo, D. (1960). *The process of communication: An introduction to theory and practice*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- 25- Bernard, J. (1973). *The Sociology of community*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company.
- 26- Bernaus, M., Andrade, A., Kervan, M., Murkwoska, A. and Saez, T. (2007). *Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education*. Strasburg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- 27- Berscheid, E., and Walster, E. (1974). Physical Attractiveness. In Berkowitz, L. (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. New York, NY: Academic Press, 158-216.

- 28- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.
- 29- Boys, C. (1995). National vocational qualifications: The outcomes-plus model of assessment. In A. Edwards and P. Knight, (Eds.), *Assessing competence in higher education*. London: Kogan Page.
- 30- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 31- Bishop, R. S. (2003). Reframing the debate about cultural authenticity. In D. L. Fox and K. G. Short (Eds.), *Stories matter: the complexity of cultural authenticity in children's literature*. (pp. 25-37). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- 32- Blakely, E. J. and Synder, M. G. (1997). *Fortress America: Gated communities in the United States*, Washington DC: Brookings Institute.
- 33- Boone, E. J. (1985). *Developing programs in adult education*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- 34- Brooks, P., (2004). *Cultural intelligence: A guide to working with people from other cultures*. New Jersey. Intercultural Press.
- 35- Byram, M. and Morgan, C., (1994). *Teaching-and-learning language-and-culture*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- 36- Byram, M., (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- 37- Canale, M., (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In: Richards, J.C. and Schmidt, R., eds. *Language and communication*. London: Longman, 2-28.
- 38- Dodd, C. H., (1998). *Dynamics of intercultural communication (5th Ed)*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- 39- Casad, B. J., (2009). The role of stereotype threat in women's representation in science, technology, engineering, and math. In K. Weber (Ed.), *International Technology Education Association Equity Guide* (2nd ed., pp.10-13). Reston, VA: ITEA.
- 40- Clark, H. H., and Brennan, S. E. (1991). Grounding in communication. In L. B. Resnick, J. M. Levine, and S. B. Teasley (Eds.), *Perspectives on Socially Shared Cognition* (pp. 127–149). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- 41- Cochran-Smith, M. (1997). Knowledge, skills, and experiences for teaching culturally diverse learners: A perspective for practicing teachers. In J. J. Irvine (Ed.), *Critical knowledge for diverse teachers and learners* (pp. 27-87). Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

- 42- Cohen, A. P., (1985). *The symbolic construction of community*. London: Tavistock.
- 43- Collier, M., and Thomas, M. (1988): Cultural identity - an interpretive perspective. In Kim and Gudykunst (eds.), *theories in intercultural communication: International and intercultural communication annual, volume XII*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- 44- Connell, J. H. (1971). On the role of natural enemies in preventing competitive exclusion in some marine animals and in rain forest trees . In P. J. Den Boer and G. R. Gradwell, eds. *Dynamics of populations centre for agricultural publication and documentation*, Tageningen: Netherlands.
- 45- Cook-Gumperz, J., (1986). Literacy and schooling: an unchanging equation. In: Cook-Gumperz, J., (ed.). *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 16-44.
- 46- Cooley, C. H. (1993). *Sociological theory and social research*. New York: Henry Holt.
- 47- Cortazzi, M., and Jin, L. (1996). "Cultures of Learning: Language Classrooms in China". In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Society and the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 48- Cortés, C.E. (2000). *The children are watching: How the media teach about diversity*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- 49- Cuq, J., and Gruca, G. (2003). *Cours de didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde*, Grenoble, Presses Universitaires de Grenoble.
- 50- Dabène, L. (1994). *Repères sociolinguistiques pour l'enseignement des langues*, Paris, Hachette, Coll.F.
- 51- Deardorff, D. K. (ed.) (2009). *Conceptualizing intercultural competence*. California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- 52- De Carlo, M., (1998 : 92) *L'interculturel*, Paris : Clé International.
- 53- De Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- 54- De Tocqueville, A. (1994). *Democracy in America*, London: Fontana Press.
- 55- Delpit, L. D. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press.
- 56- Dovidio J.F, Brigham J.C, Johnson B.T, and Gaertner, S.L. (1996). *Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination: Another Look*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- 57- Dovidio, J. F., and Kafati, G. (2003). *Majority and Minority Group Support for Assimilation and Multiculturalism in Relation to Racial Climate*. Colgate University: Hamilton, NY.
- 58- Durkheim, D. (1897). *Le Suicide : Étude de Sociologie*. Retrieved from http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/Durkheim_emile/suicide/suicide_Livre_1.pdf.
- 59- _____ (1947). *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Glencoe: The Free Press.
- 60- Duranti, A. (1997). *Linguistic anthropology*. Cambridge: University Press.
- 61- Eagly, A. H., Chaiken, S., and Wood, W. (1981). An attribution analysis of persuasion. In J. H. Harvey, W. J. Ickes, and R. F. Kidd (Ed.), *New Direction in Attribution Research* (Vol. 3, pp. 37-62). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- 62- Edmund, G. (1983). *Split Vision*. Washington: American –Arab Affairs Council.
- 63- Ehrlich, H. J. (1973). *The Social Psychology of Prejudice*. New York: Wiley.
- 64- Erickson, J., and O'Connor, S. (2000). Service-learning's effect on prejudice: Does it reduce or promote it? In C. O'Grady (Ed.), *Transforming education, transforming the world: The integration of service-learning and multicultural education into higher education*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- 65- Esses, V.M, Haddock, G., Zanna M.P. (1993). *Values, Stereotypes, and Emotions as Determinants of Intergroup Attitudes*. New York: Mackie &Hamilton.
- 66- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- 67- Fantini, A. (2009). Assessing Intercultural Competence. In Deardorff, K. (ed.), *the Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. California: SAGE Publications.
- 68- Finkelstein, B., Pickert, S., Mahoney, T., and Douglas, B. (1998). *Discovering culture in education: An approach to cultural education program evaluation*. Washington D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation.
- 69- Fiske, S.T. (1982). Schema-Triggered Affect: Applications to Social Perception, In Clark, M.S and Fiske, S.T. (Ed), *Affect and Cognition: The 17th Annual Carnegie Symposium on Cognition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- 70- Fiske, S. T. (1998). Stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. In. D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, and G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 357–411). Cambridge, MA: McGrawHill.
- 71- Frazer, E. (1999). *The Problem of communitarian politics: Unity and conflict*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 72- Gadamer, H.G. (1975). *Truth and Method*, (2ned). London: Sheed and Ward.

- 73- Hull, G., and Lankshear, C. (1996). *The new work order*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- 74- Gema, M.M. Begoña, V. and Lopez, M. Á. (1998). *Islam and the Arab World*. Guía Almería : Didáctica.
- 75- Glasersfeld, E. (1995). A constructivist approach to teaching. In Steffe, L. P. and Gale, J. (Eds.), *Constructivism in education*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 3-15.
- 76- Giddens A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford University Press: Stanford, CT.
- 77- Giroux, H. (2001). *Public Spaces, Private Lives: Beyond the Culture of Cynicism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- 78- Grace, G. (1987). *The linguistic construction of reality*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- 79- Graham, S and Hudley, C. (2005). Race and Ethnicity in the Study of Motivation and Competence. In Dweck, C .S. and Elliot, A. J. (Ed.), *Handbook of Competence and Motivation*. New York: Guilford Press.
- 80- Gross, B. (1982). *Processing communication: Information processing in intrapersonal communication*. Wadsworth, Belmont: CA, USA.
- 81- Grosman, M. (1998). *Language policy and language education in emerging nations*. New York: Ablex Publishing Company.
- 82- Gudykunst, W. B., and Kim, Y.Y. (1997). *Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication*. Boston: MCGRAW-Hill.
- 83- _____ (2003). Foreword. (2003). In W.B. Gudykunst (Ed.), *Crosscultural and intercultural communication*. Thousand Oaks.
- 84- Habermas, J. (1970) .Toward a theory of communicative competence. In H.P. Dreitzel, Ed., *Recent sociology* No.2. London: Collier-Macmillan.
- 85- Hagel, H., and Armstrong, A. (1997). *Net gain: Expanding markets through virtual communities*. Boston, MA : Harvard Business School Press.
- 86- Hall, E. T. (1959) [1981]. *The Silent Language*. New York: Anchor Books.
- 87- _____ (1994). *West of the thirties: Discoveries among the Navajo and Hopi*. New York: Doubleday/Anchor Books.
- 88- Hall, M., Ainsworth, K. Teeling , S. (2012). *Training and Assessment in intercultural competence: A critical review of contemporary practice in business education*. Retrieved on July 24th, 2014, from <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/contact-us>.

- 89- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold.
- 90- Halliday, F. (1995). *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation. Religion and Politics in the Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers.
- 91- Hannerz, U. (1992). *Cultural complexity: Studies in the social organization of meaning*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- 92- Hansen, K.P. (2000). *Culture and science*. Paderborn: UTB.
- 93- Hickling-Hudson, Anne (2004) 'Educating teachers for cultural diversity and social justice'. In G. Hernes (ed.) with M. Martin, *Planning For Diversity: Education in Multi-Ethnic and Multicultural Societies*. Paris: International Institute for Education Planning (UNESCO), pp. 270-307.
- 94- Hippler, J. and A. Lueg (Eds.) (1995). *The Next Threat. Western Perceptions of Islam*. London: Pluto Press.
- 95- Hofstede, G. H. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviours, institutions and organizations across nations (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- 96- Holliday, A., Hyde, M., and Kullman, J. (n.d.) *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book*. London: Taylor and Francis Group.
- 97- Holliday, A., Hyde, M. and Kullman, J. (2004). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book*. London: Routledge.
- 98- Hollins, E. R. (1996). *Culture in school learning: Revealing the deep meaning*. London: Routledge.
- 99- Holquist, M. (1990). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world*. London: Routledge.
- 100- Homer, S. (2005). *Jaques Lacan*. Abingdon : Routledge.
- 101- Huebener, T. (1959). *How to Teach Foreign Languages Effectively*. New York: New York University Press.
- 102- Hymes, D.H., (1972). On communicative competence. In: Pride, J.B. and Holmes, J., eds. *Sociolinguistics: selected readings*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 269-293.
- 103- _____ (Ed.) (1995b). *Cybersociety: Computer-Mediated Communication and Community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 104- Jones, J.M. (1997). *Prejudice and Racism*. McGraw-Hill.
- 105- Jones, B., (2000). Developing cultural awareness. In: Field, K., (ed.), *Issues in modern foreign languages teaching*. New York: Routledge.

- 106- Kaidy, M. (1993). *Israel's Influence Network: Middle East Affairs*. London: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- 107- Kasper, G. (1997). Linguistic etiquette. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *The handbook of sociolinguistics*. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishers.
- 108- Klopff, D.W., and Park, M. (1982). *Cross-cultural communication: An introduction to the fundamentals*. Seoul: Hanshin Publishing Co.
- 109- Knapp,K., Enninger, W . and Patthoff. A. K. (1987). Instead of an introduction: Conceptual issues in analyzing intercultural communication. In Knapp,K., Enninger, W . and Patthoff. A. K. (Ed.), *Analyzing Intercultural Communication*. Berlin: Walter and Gruyter and Co.
- 110- Kollock, P. and Smith, M. (1996). *Managing the virtual commons: Cooperation and conflict in computer communities*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- 111- Koningsveld, P.S. and Shadid, W.(2002). The Negative Image of Islam and Muslims in the West: Causes and Solutions. In: Shadid, W. and P.S. van Koningsveld (Eds.) (2002), *Religious Freedom and the Neutrality of the State: The Position of Islam in the European Union*. Leuven: Peeters, pp.174-196.
- 112- Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 113- _____(2000). Social discursive constructions of self in L2 learning. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 133-153). New York: Oxford University Press.
- 114- _____(2001). *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 115- Lave J., and Wenger, E. (1990). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 116- Landar, H. (1965). *Language and Culture*. USA: Oxford University Press.
Larry, P.G. and Stewart, K.J. (2003). *Image Ethics in the Digital Age*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- 117- Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 118- Lazarus, R.S., and Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York, NY: Springer.
- 119- Leclercq, J. M. (2003). *Facets of interculturality in education*. Strasburg: Council of Europe Publishing.

- 120- Le Goff, J.P. (1999). *La barbarie douce. La modernisation aveugle des entreprises et de l'école*. Paris: La Découverte .
- 121- Leo, J. (2010). *Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Tools*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok.
- 122- Leontiev, A. N. (1978). *Activity, Consciousness and Personality*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- 123- Lessard-Clouston, M. (1997). Towards an Understanding of Culture in L2/FL Education. In Ronko, K.G. *Studies in English*, 25, 131-150 Japan: Kwansei Gakuin University Press.
- 124- Lichter, S. and Robert (1981). Media Support for Israel: A Survey of Leading Journalists .In Adams William (Eds.), *Television Coverage of the Middle East, Norwoodk* : Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- 125- Lincoln, Y.S., and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- 126- Luke, T. (1993). Community and ecology. In S. Walker (Ed.), *Changing community: The Graywolf Annual Ten* . St. Paul, MN: Graywolf Press.
- 127- Lussier, D., et al. (2007). *Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence: A guide for language teachers and teacher educators*. Austria: Council of Europe.
- 128- Lusting,M. W., and Keoster, J. (1999). *Intercultural competence: Intercultural communication across cultures (3rd ed.)* . New York: Longman.
- 129- Lutz, C. and Collins,J. (1993). *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 130- Maley, A. (2001) Literature in the language classroom. In R. Carter and D. Nunan (Eds.), *the Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 131- Manovich, L. (2003). *New media from borges to HTLM: The new media reader*. Massachusetts: Cambridge.
- 132- Martinadale, C. (1995). Newspaper Stereotypes of African American: In Lester. P.M., *Images that Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media*. California: California State University.
- 133- Mazzella,S. (2009). *La mondialisation étudiante. Le Maghreb entre Nord et Sud* .Paris : Karthala .

- 134- McCaffery, J., and Tuafuti, P., Maihi, S., Elia, L., Ioapo, N., and Aukuso, S. (2003). Samoan children's bilingual language and literacy development. In R. Barnard and T. Glynn (Eds.). *Bilingual children's language and literacy development* (pp. 80-107). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- 135- McKay, S. (2002). *Teaching English as an International Language: Rethinking Goals and Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 136- McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- 137- McLaughlin, B. (1985). *Second-language acquisition in childhood: School-age children, Volume 2*. New York: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- 138- Melde, W. (1987). *For the integration of cultural studies and communication in the foreign language classroom..* Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- 139- Meyrowitz, J. (1985). *No sense of place: The impact of electronic media on social Behaviour*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 140- Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination*. New York: Grove Press.
- 141- Milton J. Bennett (2001). Developing Intercultural Competence for Global Managers. In Reineke, Rolf-Dieter (Editor) (June, 2001), *Interkulturelles Managment*. Wiesbaden: Gabler Verlag.
- 142- Mitroff, I.I., and Linstone, H.A. (1993). *The unbounded mind: Breaking the chains of traditional business thinking press*. New York: Oxford University.
- 143- Moll, L. C., and Gonzalez, N. (1997). Teachers as social scientists: Learning about culture from household research. In P. M. Hall (Ed.), *Race, ethnicity, and multiculturalism: Policy and practice* (pp. 89-114). New York: Garland.
- 144- Morgan, C. and Cain, A. (2000). *Foreign language and culture learning from a dialogic perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- 145- Morillas, J. M. (2001), Development in culture teaching theory. In Gracia Sanchaz, M.E., *Present and future trends in TEFL*, Almeria: Servicio de la Publicaciones de la Universidad de Almeria.
- 146- Muñoz, G.M. (1999). *Islam, modernism and the West. Cultural and Political Relations at the End of the Millennium*. I.B. New York: Tauris Publishers.
- 147- Nash, M. (1984). *Presence and Prominence Aspects of Women's History*. Barcelona, Serbal .

- 148- Nedale, D. and Durkin, K. (1998). Stereotypes and Attitudes: Implicit and Explicit Processes. In Kirsner, K. (Ed.), *Implicit and Explicit Mental Processes*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- 149- Newby, D. (2000). Notions and functions. In Byram, M. (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of language teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge.
- 150- Nostrand, H. L. (1967). A Second Culture: New Imperative for American Education. In Michel, J. *Foreign Language Teaching. An Anthology*. London: Collier-MacMillan.
- 151- Novinger, T. (2013). *Intercultural communication: A practical guide*. Austin : University of Texas Press.
- 152- Oatey, H. S. and Kotthoff (2007). Introduction. In Oatey, H. S. and Kotthoff (Ed.), *Handbook of intercultural communication*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and Co.
- 153- Obee. J. (n.d.). *Social Networking: The Ultimate Teen Guide*. London: Scarecrow Press
- 154- Ogay, T. (2000). *De la compétence à la dynamique interculturelle*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- 155- Oksala, J. (2005) *Foucault on Freedom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- 156- Oldenburg, R. (1991). *The great good place*. New York: Paragon House.
- 157- Oskamp, L. Schulz, P., W. (2005). *Attitudes and Opinions. (3rd Ed.)*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- 158- Oliveras, A. (2000). *Towards intercultural competence in learning a foreign language*. Madrid: Edinumen.
- 159- Pavie, X. (2009). *L'Apprentissage de Soi : Exercices Spirituels de Socrate et Foucault*. Paris : Groupe Eyrolles.
- 160- Pedersen, P. (ed.) (1998). *Multiculturalism as a fourth force*. New York: Brunner Mazel.
- 161- Pettigrew, T.F. (2004). Intergroup contact: Theory, research, and new perspectives. In J.A. Banks and C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on intercultural communication* (2nd ed.,pp 770-781). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- 162- Banks and C.A.M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 770-781). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- 163- Pinto,D. (2000). *Intercultural communication: A three-step method for dealing with differences*. Leuven: David Pinto and Garant Publisher.
- 164- Pottinger, P. S. (1979). Competence Assessment: Comments on Current Practices.” In P. S. Pottinger and J. Goldsmith (eds.), *Defining and Measuring Competence*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 165- Povey, J. (1972). Literature in TESL programs: The language and the culture. In H. Allen and R. Campbell (ed.) *Teaching English as a second language*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- 166- Priest, S. (2001). *Jean Paul Sartre: Basic Writings*. London : Routledge.
- 167- Pulverness, A. (2003). Materials for cultural awareness. In Tomlinson, B. (ed) *Developing Materials for Language Teaching*. London: Continuum, 426-438.
- 168- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone. The collapse and revival of American community*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- 169- Rckheit, G. and Strohner, H. (eds) (2008). *Handbook of communication competence*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- 170- Reid, E. M. (1998). *Hierarchy and Power: Social Control in Cyberspace*. London: Routledge.
- 171- Reagan, C. (1996). *Paul Ricœur: His Life and His Work*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- 172- Rheingold, H. (1993). *The virtual community: Homesteading on the electronic frontier*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.
- 173- Ridley, M. (1997) .*The origins of virtue*. London: Penguin.
- 174- Risager, K. (2006). *Language and culture: Global flows and local complexity*. Derby: Cromwell Press Ltd.
- 175- Robins, J. (1979). What the good language learner can teach us”. In Pride, J. B. (eds), *Sociolinguistic aspects of language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 15-39.

- 176- Rodriguez, A. (2002), *Diversity as liberation (II): Introducing a new understanding of diversity*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton.
- 177- Rosenhaue, S.(2007).*Cross-cultural business communication :Intercultural competence as a universal interculture* . Berlin: GRIN Verlag.
- 178- Rutherford, J. (1990). *The third space: Interview with Homi Bhabha on Identity, community, culture, and difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- 179- Politzer, R. (1959). *Developing Cultural Understanding Through Foreign Language Study*, pp. 99-105. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- 180- Porter, D. (1996). *Internet culture*. London: Routledge.
- 181- Ruwaili, M and Bazighi, S. (2002). دليل الناقد العربي . الدار البيضاء: المركز الثقافي العربي -
- 182- Said, E. W., and Barsamian, D. (2003). *Culture and Resistance: Conversations with Edward W. Said*. Cambridge: South End Press.
- 183- Hoosain, R. (2007). *Culture, Motivation, and Learning: A Multicultural Perspective*. USA: Information Age Publishing Inc.
- 184- Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E. and Jain, N. (1981). *Understanding intercultural communication*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 185- _____ (2004). *Communication between cultures* (5TH Ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth/ Thomson Learning.
- 186- Sapir, E. (1949). The status of linguistics as a science', *language*. In David Mandelbaum (ed.), *Selected writings of Edward Sapir in language, culture, and personality*. London: Cambridge.
- 187- Saville-Troike, M. (1989). *The ethnography of communication: An introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- 188- Scarino, A. and Liddicoat, J. (2009). *Teaching and Learning Languages: A guide*. Carlton South : Australia.
- 189- Schönhuth, M. (2005). *Glossary of culture and development: A Vademecum by the culture jungle*. Trier: Trier materials and Anthropology.
- 190- _____(1984). *Teaching culture: Strategies for inter-cultural communication*. Revised edition. Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.
- 191- Sembdner, S. (2011). *Success factors of virtual teams in the conflict of cross-cultural team structures*. Humburg : Diplomica Verlag.

- 192- Sercu, L. (2010). Assessing intercultural competence: More questions than answers, In A. Paran and L. Sercu (Eds.), *Testing the untestable in language education*, Multilingual Matters.
- 193- Seward, B.A. M. (1997). *Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- 194- Shaheen, J. (1984). *The TV Arab*. Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
- 195- Simpson G.E. and Yinger J.M. (1965). *Racial and Cultural Minorities*. New York: Harper and Row.
- 196- Simensen, A. M. (2001). English. In Sjoberg,S. (ed), *Introduction central subjects in didactics* . Oslo: Gyldendal academic, 176-214.
- 197- Slimbach, R. (1996). Connecting Head, Heart, and Hands: Developing Intercultural Service Competence. In R. Sigmon (ed.), *Journey to Service-Learning: Experiences from Independent Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities*. Washington, D.C.: Council of Independent Colleges.
- 198- Smith, M. K. (1994). *Local education: Community, conversation, action*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- 199- Smith, E. and Medin, D. (1981). *Categories and Concepts*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- 200- Singletary, S., and Ruggs, M. (2009). *Literature Overview: Stereotype Threat: Causes, Effects, and Remedies Overview*. Copyright. Rice University, Houston, TX Paul G. Davies.
- 101- Steele, R. (1989). Teaching language and culture: Old problems and new approaches. In J.E. Alatis (Ed.), *Georgetown University roundtable on languages and linguistics*, (pp. 153-162). Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- 202- Steiner, S.F. (2001). *Promoting a global community through multicultural children's literature*. Greenwood Village, CO: Teacher Ideas Press.
- 203- Stephen, A. and Williams (2009). *Terrorism and the Politics of Response*. Abingdon : Routledge .
- 204- Stone, A. R. (Sandy). (1991). Will the real body please stand up: Boundary stories about virtual cultures. In M. Benedikt (Ed.), *Cyberspace: First steps* (p. 81-118). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- 205- Suleiman, S. (2003). وسائل الاعلام وصناعة الصور الذهنية . بيروت: مكتبة الفلاح.
- 206- Thanasoulas, D. (2001). *The Importance Of Teaching Culture In The Foreign Language Classroom*. Retrieved on July, 3rd, 2014 from <https://media.startalk.umd>.

edu/workshops/2009 /SeattlePS/sites /default/ files/files/The%20Importance % 20O f% 20 Teaching%20 Culture% 20In %20 The%20 Foreign% 20Language %20Classroom. pdf.

- 207- Thomas, W. (2008). *Foreign market entry and culture*. Berlin. GRIN Verlag.
- 208- Tomalin, B., and Stempleski, S. (1993). *Cultural Awareness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 209- Trompenaars and Woolliams (2009) Trompenaars, F. and Woolliams, P. (2009) Toward a general framework of competence for today's global village. In: Deardorff, D.K. (ed.) *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 438-455.
- 210- Upcraft, M. L., and Schuh, J. H. (1996). *Assessment in Student Affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 211- Valdes, J. M. (ed.). (1986). *Culture Bound: Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 212- Van de Vijver, F.J.R. and Leung, K. (2009) Methodological issues in researching intercultural competence. In: Deardorff, D.K. (ed.) *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 404-418.
- 213- Van Vliet, W., and Burgers, J. (1987). Communities in transition: From the industrial to the postindustrial era. In I. Altman and A. Wandersman (Eds.), *Neighborhood and community environments*. New York: Plenum Press.
- 214- Wagner, H.H. (2013). *Rethinking the Linear Regression Model for Spatial Ecological Data*. London: Routledge.
- 215- Walzer, M. (1997). *On tolerance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- 216- Wardhaugh, R. (2002). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (Fourth Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- 217- Watziawick, P. Beavin, J.H. and Jackson, D. (1972). *Une logique de la communication*. Seuil, Paris.
- 218- Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- 219- Wilinkson, K. P. (1991). *The community in rural America*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.
- 220- Williams, R. (1976) *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society*, London: Fontana.

- 221- Willmott, P. (1986). *Social networks, informal care and public policy*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- 222- Yegenoglu, M. (2003). *Veiled Fantasies: Cultural and Sexual Difference in the Discourse of Orientalism. Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- 223- Zimmerman, J. (2002). *Whose America? Culture wars in public schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Papers:

- 1- Alter, A. L. (2010). "Rising to the threat: Reducing stereotype threat by reframing the threat as a challenge". *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46, 166–177.
- 2- Arends-Toth, J., and Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2003). "Multiculturalism and acculturation: Views of Dutch and Turkish-Dutch". *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 249-266.
- 3- Aries, W.D.A. (2003). "Dialogue and intercultural competence: 'Encounter' versus 'social engineering'". *Ethics*, 14 (1), 153- 154.
- 4- Aronson, J. and Inzlicht, M. (2004). "The Ups and downs of attributional ambiguity: Stereotype vulnerability and the academic self-knowledge of African-American students". *Psychological Science*, 15, 829-836.
- 5- Arthos, J. (2000). "Who are we and who am I? : Gadamer's communal ontology as palimpsest". *Communication Studies*, 51, 15-34.
- 6- Arthur, B. (1968). "Reading literature and learning a second language". *Language learning*, XVIII: 199-210.
- 7- Atkinson, D. (1999). "TESOL and culture". *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 625-654.
- 8- Aydin, E. and Atmaka, H. (2013). "La Poésie dans L'enseignement de FLE aux Enfants. *Turkish Studies*" - *International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, Volume 8/10 Fall 2013, p. 97-103, ANKARA-TURKEY.
- 9- Bailey, O. G., and Harindranath, R. (2006). "Ethnic minorities, cultural difference and the cultural politics of communication". *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, 2, 299-31.

- 10- Baltes, B. B., and Parker, C. P. (2000b). "Reducing the effects of performance expectations on behavioral ratings". *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 82, 237–267.
- 11- Banaji, M., Hardin, C., and Rothman, A. (1993). "Implicit stereotyping in person judgment". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 272-281.
- 12- Banks, J. (1994). "Transforming the mainstream curriculum". *Educational Leadership*, 51(8), 4-8.
- 13- Baker, W., (2008). "A critical examination of ELT in Thailand: The role of cultural awareness". *RELC journal*, 39 (1), 131-146.
- 14- Bazgan, M. and Norel, M. (2013). "Explicit and Implicit Assessment of Intercultural Competence". *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 76, 95 – 99.
- 15- Belay, G. (1993). "Toward a paradigm shift for intercultural and international communication: New research directions". *Communication Yearbook*, 16, 437-457.
- 16- Benghabrit, N., and Rabahi-Senouci, Z. (2009). « Le système L.M.D (Licence-Master-Doctorat) en Algérie : de l'illusion de la nécessité au choix de l'opportunité ». *JHEA/RESA* Vol. 7, Nos. 1 and 2, pp. 189–207.
- 17- Berry, J. W. (1991). "Understanding and managing multiculturalism". *Psychology and Developing Societies*. 3. 17-49.
- 18- Besse, H. (1989) Besse H. (1989). « De la relative rationalité des discours sur l'enseignement/apprentissage des langues ». *Langue française*. 82, 28-43.
- 19- Billig, M. (1985). "Prejudice, categorization, and particularization: From a perceptual to a rhetorical approach". *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 15, 79-103.
- 20- Blanchard, A. L. (2008). "Testing a model of sense of virtual community". *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 24, 2107–2123.
- 21- Blascovich, J., Mendes, W. B., Hunter, S. B., and Salomon, K. (1999). "Social facilitation as challenge and threat". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 68–77.
- 22- Bolten, J. (2003). "Limits of holism: Conceptual and educational organizational and considerations on the subject of 'intercultural competence'. *Ethics*. 14 (1), 156-158.
- 23- Bowers, R., (1986). "English in the world: Aims and achievements in English language teaching". *TESOL quarterly*, 20, 393-409.

- 24- Bradac, J. J., Bowers, J. W., and Courtwright, J. A. (1979). "Three language variables in communication research: Intensity, immediacy, and diversity". *Human Communication Research*, 5, 257-269.
- 25- Bridges, E. (2011). "Racial Identity Development and Psychological Coping Strategies of Undergraduate and Graduate African American Males". *Journal of African American Males in Education*, Vol. 2 Issue 2. Clayton State University.
- 26- Brigham, J. C. (1971). "Ethnic stereotypes". *Psychological Bulletin*, 41, 15-38.
- 27- Brooks, N. (1968). "Teaching culture in the foreign language classroom". *Foreign Language Annals*, 1, 204-217.
- 28- Brown, J. S., Collins, A., and Duguid, P. (1989). "Situated cognition and the culture of learning". *Educational Researcher*, 18, 32-42.
- 29- Brown, E. L. (2004). "The relationship of self-concepts to changes in cultural diversity awareness: Implications for urban teacher educators". *The Urban Review*, 36(2), 119-145.
- 30- Burton, R. (2012). "Boundaries of Culture and EFL Teaching Sophia Junior College". *Faculty Journal*, Vol. 32, 91-100.
- 31- Buttjes, D. (1990). "Teaching Foreign Language and Culture: Social Impact and Political Significance". *Language Learning Journal*, (2): 55-577.
- 32- Camicia, S. (2007). "Prejudice Reduction through Multicultural Education: Connecting Multiple Literatures". *Social Studies Research and Practice*, Volume 2, Number 2, ISSN: 1933-5415.
- 33- Canale, M. and Swain, M., (1980). "Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing". *Applied linguistics*, 1 (1), 1-47.
- 34- Cara, C., Bauer, and Boris B. (2002). "Reducing the Effects of Gender Stereotypes on Performance Evaluations". *Sex Roles*, Vol. 47, Nos. 9/10.
- 35- Cara, C., Bauer, and Boris B. (2002). "Reducing the Effects of Gender Stereotypes on Performance Evaluations". *Sex Roles*, Vol. 47, Nos. 9/10.
- 36- Carnoy, M. (2005). "Education for All and the quality of education: a reanalysis". Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report : *The quality imperative*, UNESCO.
- 37- Casmir, F.L. (1999). "Foundations for the study of intercultural communication based a third-culture model". *Intercultural Relations*. Vol. 23, No. 1, Jan. pp. 91-116.

- 38- Casmir, F.L. (1999). "Foundations for the study of intercultural communication based a third-culture model". *Intercultural Relations*. Vol. 23, No. 1, Jan. pp. 91-116.
- 39- "ايتيقيا اللقاء بالآخر: ليفيناس نموذجا". *فعليات الملتقى الدولي الثاني حول حوارات في الدين و اللغة* Chabbi N. (2013) مستغانم جامعة: مستغانم.
- 40- Chen, G.M., and Starosta, W. J. (1998). "A review of the concept of intercultural sensitivity". *Human Communication*, 1, 1-16.
- 41- Cicurel F. (2003) . « La didactique des langues face aux cultures linguistiques et éducatives » , le *Français dans le Monde*, N°623.
- 42- Crandall, C. S., D'Anello, S., Sakalli, N., Lazarus, E., Wieczorkowska, G., and Feather, N. T. (2001). "An attribution-value model of prejudice: Anti-fat attitudes in six nations". *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 30 – 37.
- 43- Cruikshank, D. (1986). "Profile of an Effective Teacher. *Educational Horizon*", 64(2), 80-86.
- 44- Dervin, B. (1991). "Comparative theory reconceptualized: From entities and states to processes and dynamics", *Communication Theory*, 1, 59-69.
- 45- Dixon, T. L. (2006). "Psychological reactions to crime news portrayals of black criminals: Understanding the moderating roles of prior news viewing and stereotype endorsement", *Communication Monographs* 73(2): 162–87.
- 46- Dogancay-Aktuna (2005). "Intercultural communication in English language teacher education". *ELT Journal* .Volume 59/2, Oxford University Press.
- 47- Dooly, M.(2006). "Integrating Intercultural Competence and Citizenship Education into Teacher Training: a Pilot Project Citizenship Teaching and Learning". *Education*, Vol 2.
- 48- Eagly, A. H., and Mladinic, A. (1989). "Gender stereotypes and attitudes toward women and men". *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 15, 543–558.
- 49- Embi, A. and Hwang, D. (2007). "Approaches employed by teachers to teach literature". *Journal Pendidikan dan Pandidikan*, Jil. 22, 1–23.
- 50- Eric M. Bridges (2011). "Racial Identity Development and Psychological Coping Strategies of Undergraduate and Graduate African American Males". *Journal of African American Males in Education*, Vol. 2 Issue 2.

- 51- Faye, C. Bromley, S. And Saxe. L. (1980). "Recent unobtrusive studies of black and white discrimination and prejudice: A literature review". *Psychological Bulletin*, 87(3): 546-63.
- 52- Featherstone, Mike (1990).Global culture. "An introduction in theory". *Culture and Society*, vol. 7, p. 1-14.
- 53- Feldtkeller, A. (2003). "Deconstruction of its own requirements: A successful learning intercultural competence". *Ethics*, 14 (1), 163- 16.
- 54- Fisher, J. D. (1992). "Changing AIDS-risk behaviour". *Psychological Bulletin*, 111, 455–47.
- 55- Gardner, G. H. (1962)."Cross-cultural communication". *Journal of Social Psychology*, 58, 241-256.
- 56- Gay, G. (2013). "Teaching To and Through Cultural Diversity". *Wiley Periodicals*, 43:1, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto Curriculum Inquiry.
- 57- Genc, B., and Bada , E. (2005). "Culture in language learning and teaching". *The Reading Matrix* , Vol. 5, No. 1.
- 58- Gensollen M. (2004). « Biens informationnels et communautés médiatées ». *Revue d'Économie Politique*, N° 4, 13-20.
- 59- Gilliam, F. D. and Iyengar,S. (2000). "Prime Suspects: The influence of local television news on the viewing public". *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(3): 560–73.
- 60- Goi, C. L. (2009). "Cyberculture: Impacts on Netizen" . *Asian Culture and History*. Vol 1, No, 2, 12-23.
- 61- Guest, M. 2002. "A critical 'checkbook' for culture teaching and learning". *ELT Journal* ,56/2: 154–61.
- 62- Haake, M., and Gulz, A. (2008). "Visual stereotypes and virtual pedagogical agents". *Educational Technology & Society*, 11 (4), 1– 15.
- 63- Hamilton, D. L., and Sherman, S. J. (1996). "Perceiving persons and groups". *Psychological Review*, 103, 336 – 355.
- 64- Haythornthwaite, C., Kazmer, M. M., Robins, J., and Shoemaker, S. (2000). Community development among distance learners: Temporal and technological dimensions. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 6 (1). Retrieved October 2, 2000, from the World Wide Web: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol6/issue1/haythornthwaite.html>.
- 65-- Herzog, W. (2003). In the mist of the Not counted: Little plausibility for a new competence. *Ethics*, 14 (1), 178,180.

- 66- Hickling-Hudson, A. (2004). "Educating teachers for cultural diversity and social justice". *International Institute for Education Planning* (UNESCO), pp. 270-307.
- 67- Ho, J. and D. Crokall. (1995). "Breaking with Chinese cultural traditions: learner autonomy in English language teaching". *System*, 23/2: 235–43.
- 68- Hu, G. (2002). "Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: The case of communicative language teaching in China". *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 15/2: 93–105.
- 69- Idri, N. (2005). "The LMD System Experience as a Struggle between the Educational Development and Reform: An Analytical Study of the Endeavour of the Academic Year 2004/2005 in Bejaia University with Suggested Solutions". *Rencontres Internationales sur le Dispositif LMD –Problèmes et Perspectives 4-5 Dec, 2005*, Université de Bejaia.
- 70- Jacobson, W. Sleicher, D. and Maureen, B. (1999). "Portfolio assessment of intercultural competence". *Int. J. Intercultural Rel.* Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 467-492.
- 71- Jones, Q. (1997). "Virtual communities, virtual settlements, and cyber-archaeology: A theoretical outline", *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 3, [on-line]. Available at [http:// www.ascusc. org/jcmc/vol3/issue 3/jones.html](http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc/vol3/issue3/jones.html).
- 72- Jost, J. T., and Banaji, M. (1994). "The role of stereotyping in system justification and the production of false consciousness". *Br. J. Soc. Psychol*, 22, 1–27.
- 73- Khansir , A. A. (2012). "Teaching Poetry in the ELT Classroom", *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol.3 No: 1, pp-241-245.
- 74- Kassop, M. (2003). "Ten ways online education matches, or surpasses, face-to-face learning". *The Technology Source: Commentary*, May/June.
- 75- King, J.E. (1991). "Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers". *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60(2), 133-146.
- 76- Kozinets, R.V. (2002), "The Field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXXIX, pp.61-72.
- 77- Kramsch, C. (1995). "The cultural component of language teaching". *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 8(2), 83-92.
- 78- _____ (2013). Culture in foreign language teaching. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research* 1(1), (Jan., 2013) 57-78.
- 79- Kray, J., and Lindenberger, U. (2000). "Adult age differences in task switching". *Psychology and Aging*, 15, 126-147.

- 80- Laopongharn, W., and Sercombe, P. (2009). "What relevance does intercultural communication have to language education in Thailand?" *Annual Reviews of Education*.
- 81- Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine": Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea'. *TESOL Quarterly* , 32/4: 677–703.
- 82- Li, X. (2005). "Second Language and Culture Teaching in an ESL Classroom - Application of Literature Circles in an ESL Classroom". *Intercultural Communication Studies* 14/2, 124-134.
- 83- Littlewood, W. (2000). 'Do Asian students really want to listen and obey?' *ELT Journal* ,54/1: 31–5.
- 84- Loenhoff, J. (2003). "Intercultural competence between the person and the system". *Ethics* 14 (1), 192- 194.
- 85- Lund, E (2008). "Intercultural competence– an aim for the teaching of English in Norway?" *Education Communication and Language Sciences*, 6, 59-83.
- 86- MacGillivray, L. and McQuillan, J. (1995). "Second Language and Literacy Teachers Considering Literature Circles: A Play". *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 39, 1: 36-44.
- 87- McKay (1982). "Literature in the ESL Classroom". *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Dec., 1982), pp. 529-536.
- 88- Martens, A., Johns, M., Greenberg, J., and Schimel (2006). "Combating stereotype threat: The effect of self-affirmation on women's intellectual performance". *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 42, 236–243
- 89- Martin, J., and Nakayama, T. K. (1999). "Thinking dialectically about culture and communication", *Communication Theory*, 9, 1-25. Martin, J., and Nakayama, T. K. (1999). "Thinking dialectically about culture and communication", *Communication Theory*, 9, 1-25.
- 90- Mecheril, P. (2003). "Alleged normality: simplification as a mode of thematization of interculturality" . *Ethics* 14 (1), 198-201.
- 91- Memmi, D. (2006). "The Nature of virtual communities". *AI and Society*, vol 20 (3), 2006.
- 92- Miller, J. H., (1988). "The Evolution of automata in Repeated Prisoners' Dilemma". *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization* 29/1, 87-112.
- 93- Mirić, N. (2007). "Intercultural communication and culturing: New Vistas and New Possibilities". *Linguistics and Literature* Vol. 5, No 1, 2007, pp. 79 – 84.

- 94- Montredon, J., (1995). « Pédagogie en contexte , recherches et applications ». *La didactique au quotidien*.
- 95- Navarro, L. (2010). Islamophobia and sexism: Muslim women in the Western mass media. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self- Knowledge*, VIII, 2, FALL 2010, 95-114.
- 96- Nilsson, B. (2003). "Internationalisation at Home from a Swedish Perspective: The Case of Malmö". *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 7(1), 27–40.
- 97- Ottoson, K. J. (2013). "Classroom development of intercultural competence". N. Sonda and A. Krause (Eds.), *JALT2012 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.
- 98- Pennycook, A. (1994). "Incommensurable discourses". *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 115-138.
- 90- Popham, W. J. (1993). "Educational testing in America: What's right, what's wrong? A criterionreferenced perspective". *Educational Measurement*, 12(1), 11-14.
- 101- Pratikanis, A.R. (1988). "The Heuristic attitude and selective fact identification". *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 27- 26-47.
- 101- Purba , H. (2011). "The Importance of Including Culture in EFL Teaching". *Journal of English Lnaguage Teaching*. Volume 1.45-56.
- 102- Putnam, R. D. (1996). "Bowling alone: America's declining social capital". *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 65-78.
- 103- Rathje, S. (2007). "Intercultural competence: The status and future of a controversial concept". *Language and Intercultural Communication*. Vol. 7, No. 4, 254-266.
- 104- Rheingold, H. (1987). "Virtual communities". *Whole Earth Review*, 78-81.
- 105- Ridoauni. (2011). "The representation of Arabs and Muslims in Western media". *RUTA*. N° 03.
- 106- Ruben, B.D. (1989). "The study of cross-cultural competences: traditions and contemporary issues". *International journal of intercultural relations* 13, 229-240.
- 107- Ryan, T. and Xenos, S., (2011). "Who uses Facebook? An investigation into the relationship between the Big Five, shyness, narcissism, loneliness, and Facebook usage". *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 5, 1658-1664.
- 108 Samaak, M. (1995)" الاعلام الديني في الشرق الاوسط. مجلة الدراسات الاعلامية

- 109- Scheepers, D. (2009). "Turning social identity threat into challenge: Status stability and cardiovascular reactivity during inter-group competition". *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 228–233.
- 110- Schmader, T., Johns, M., and Forbes, C. (2008). "An integrated process model of stereotype threat effects on performance". *Psychological Review*, 115, 336–356.
- 111- Skopinskaja, L. (2009). « Assessing Intercultural communicative competence: test construction issues » . *Synergies Pays Riverains de la Baltique* n°6 - pp. 135-144.
- 112- Smith, L. (1976). "English as an international auxiliary language". *RELC Journal* 7/2: 38–43.
- 113- Stangor, C., Sechrist, G. B., and Jost, J. T. (2001a). "Changing racial beliefs by providing consensus information". *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin*, 27, 484-494.
- 114- Stark, J. S., Shaw, K.M., and Lowther, M.A. (1989). "Student Goals for College and Courses: A Missing Link in Assessing and Improving Academic Achievement". *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report* No. 6. Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education
- 115- Steele, C. M., and Aronson, J. (1995). "Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797–81.
- 116- Stevens, S.S. (1950). "Introduction: A definition of communication". *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, XXII , 689
- 117- Straub, H. (1999). "Designing a Cross-Cultural Course". *English Forum*, vol. 37: 3.
- 118- Talbure, C. (2011). "Do different learning styles require differentiated teaching strategies?", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 11, pp. 155-159.
- 119- Thomas, H.E. (1993). "Multi-Ethnic paradoxes -a critical analysis of multiculturalism", *Gravel*, No. 41, Aarhus.
- 120- Thomas, A. (2003a). " Intercultural competence: Principles, problems and concepts". *Ethics*, 14 (1), 137- 221.
- 121- Vick, S. B., Seery, M. D., Blascovich, J., and Weisbuch, M. (2008). "The effect of gender stereotype activation on challenge and threat motivational states". *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 624–630.
- 122- Villega, A. and Lucas,T (2002). "Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum". *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 53, No. 1.

- 135- Wannaruk, A.,(2008). "Pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals". *RELC journal*, 39 (3), 318-337. Available from: <http://rel.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/39/3/318> [Accessed 7 January 2009].
- 124- Weinreich, F. (1997). "Establishing a point of view toward virtual communities". *CMC Magazine*. March.
- 125- White, L. A. (1959). "The concept of culture". *American Anthropologist*, 61, 227-230
- 126- Widdowson, H. G. (2003). "So the meaning escapes: On literature and the representation of linguistic realities", *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 60, (1), 89–97.
- 127- Wierlacher, A. (2003). "The viable between consideration and knowledge", *Ethics* 14 (1), 215217.
- 128- Wilinkson, K. (1970). "The community as a social field". *Social Forces* –48 (3):311-322.
- 129- Xiao, H. and Petraki, E., (2007). "An investigation of Chinese students' difficulties in intercultural communication and its role in ELT". *Journal of intercultural communication*, 13, 1-16. Available from: <http://immi.se/intercultural/> [Accessed 19 November 2008].
- 130- Xiaole ,G. Meng, M. and Manli, L. (2012). "A Survey on Teachers' Perception and Practice of ICC Assessment of University English Learners in China". *Intercultural Communication Studies* XXI: 1.
- 131- Xiaoshi, L . (2005). "Second Language and Culture Teaching in an ESL Classroom –Application of Literature Circles in an ESL Classroom". *Intercultural Communication Studies* ,XIV: 2 .
- 132- Zaki, A. "حفريات معرفية في معنى الآخر". *فعاليات الملتقى الدولي الثاني حول حوارات في الدين واللغة* (2013) جامعة مستغانم .

Online Papers:

- 1- Abou Elrouss , I . (n.d.). "الثقافة العربية الإسلامية لدى دارسي اللغة العربية من الناطقين بلغات أخرى". Retrieved on July, 12th, 2014, from <http://vb.arabsgate.com/showthread.php?t=476006>.
- 2- Albazei, S. (2014) "ما بعد الاستعمار وتدرّيس الآداب الأجنبية". Retrieved on July, 18th, 2014, from <http://www.alriyadh.com/932433>.
- 3- Ambrogi, L., Shoemake, P., and Watson, S. (1996). "Stories promoting multiculturalism". Retrieved September 22, 2009, from: <http://chalk.richmond.eduleducationl/projects/webunits/diversity/multiculturalism.html>.
- 4- Amchouch, M. (n.d.). "ضرورة ترسيخ قيم الانتماء والهوية وضرورة الاتصال بثقافة الآخر". Retrieved from: <http://amshoosh.wordpress.com/>.
- 5- Archambault, A. and Corbeil, J . (n.d.). « L'enseignement du Français Langue Seconde Aux Adultes ». Retrieved July, 14th, 2014, from <http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca/bibliotheque-virtuelle/publication>.
- 6- Ardevol, E. (2005). "Cyberculture: Anthropological perspectives of the Internet". Retrieved from <http://eardevol.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/cyberculture.pdf>.
- 7- Arellano, J. (2011). "The Use of Multicultural Literature in Elementary Classrooms: Teaching Acceptance and Understanding of Different Races, Ethnicities, and Cultures". Retrieve on July, 15th, 2014 from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/summary?doi=10.1.1.390.1666>.
- 8- Arteaga, J., and Ing, D. (1999). "The nature and purpose of virtual communities". Retrieved on June 18th, 2013 from : http://www.Systemicbusiness.org/pubs/1999_ISSS_43rd_99094_Arteaga_Ing_Nature_Purpose_Virtual_communities.pdf.
- 9- Arumpac, A. B. (2006). "A research paper on cyberculture and Virtual Politics". Retrieved on March, 6th from: http://www.cct.go.kr/data/acf2006/aycc/aycc_0805_Aelan%20Biruar%20Arumpac.pdf.
- 10- Baker, S. (2007). "Media studies: Key concepts, representation". Retrieved on November 23rd, 2013 from: <http://www.adamranson.plus.com/Representation.pdf>.
- 11- Bayoumi, L. (n.d.). "المدارس الأجنبية في بلادنا ... غزو أن له أن ينتهي". Retrieved July, 12th, 2014, from : <http://www.almoslim.net/node/83514>.
- 12- Bennani , E. (n.d.). " اللغات الأجنبية و مكانتها في البرنامج التعليمي ". Retrieved July, 12th, 2014, from: <http://habous.gov.ma/daouat-alhaq/item/>.

- 13- Bottino, O. (n.d.). "Literature and Language Teaching". Retrieved on July, 16th, 2014 from <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/6082.pdf>.
- 14- Boumediene-Thiery, A. (2007), "Femmes musulmanes dans les médias", Available in: <http://alimaboumediene.org/spip.php?article318> (30-4-2009).
- 15- Brikci, S. (2012). "ESP Course Design in the Light of Globalization Process: The Case of First Year LMD Students of the Economic Sciences Faculty at Abou-Bekr Belkaid University". Retrieved from <http://dspace.univ-tlemcen.dz/handle/112/2368>.
- 16- Chantzou, C. (n.d.). « Deux soeurs siamoises : la langue et la littérature ». Université d' Athènes . Retrieved from [http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature %20FLE_2009.pdf](http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature%20FLE_2009.pdf).
- 17- Chen, G. M. (1990). "ICC: Some perspectives of research". Paper presented in the annual meeting of the eastern communication association. Retrieved June 22nd, 2013, from <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/kos02346.htm>.
- 18- Chen, G.-M. (1997). "A review of the concept of intercultural sensitivity". Proceedings of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association Congress. Honolulu, January. [Online] Available at www.eric.com (Accessed: June 18, 2012).
- 19- Clark, N. (2006). "Education in Algeria. Retrieved from http://www.wes.org/ewenr/PF/06apr/pfpractical_algeria.htm.
- 20- Coraca, C. (n.d.). « Les fonctions du poème en classe de langue-culture du secondaire ». Retrieved from [http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature %20 FLE_ 2009.pdf](http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature%20FLE_2009.pdf).
- 21- Critical Art Ensemble (n.d.). "Utopian promises –Net realities". Retrieved from <http://www.well.com/~hhr/texts/utopiancrit.html>.
- 22- Darla K. Deardorff (n.d.). "Assessing Intercultural Competence". Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ir.381/abstract>.
- 23- Deardorff, D. K. (n.d.). "Assessing Intercultural Competence". Retrieved July, 25th, 2014, from <http://www.uwosh.edu/usp/usp-teaching-resources/resource-documents/deardorf2011-assessing-intercultural-competence.pdf>.
- 24- Dervin, F. (n.d.). "Assessing intercultural competence in Language Learning and Teaching: a critical review of current efforts". Retrieved on July, 22nd, 2014, from [http://users.utu.fi/freder/Assessing% 20intercultural %20competence %20in %20Language%20Learning%20and%20Teaching.pdf](http://users.utu.fi/freder/Assessing%20intercultural%20competence%20in%20Language%20Learning%20and%20Teaching.pdf).
- 25- Mahlawi, A. (n.d.). "وظائف الأدب: تعليم الأدب العربي وتقويم تعلمه". Retrieved on July, 18th, 2014, from [https://www.google.dz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s & source =web&cd=9&ved=0CF4QFjAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Ffaculty.mu.edu.sa%2Fdown load.php%3Ffid%3D53515&ei=sjTJU6nyBeel0QXQvIDoBA&usg=AFQjCNE_Z](https://www.google.dz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&ved=0CF4QFjAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Ffaculty.mu.edu.sa%2Fdownload.php%3Ffid%3D53515&ei=sjTJU6nyBeel0QXQvIDoBA&usg=AFQjCNE_Z)

- 26- Elmes, D. (n.d.). "The Relationship between language and culture". Retrieved on May 6th, 2013 from: <http://www2.lib.nifs-k.ac.jp/HPBU/annals/an46/46-11.pdf>.
- 27- Fantini,A. (n.d.) . "A central concern: Developing intercultural competence". Retrieved from <http://www.brandeis.edu/globalbrandeis/documents/centralconcern.pdf>.
- 28- _____(2005). "About Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Construct" . Retreived on July 25th, 2014, from <http://federationeil.org/documents/AppendixE.pdf>.
- 29- Farias, Y. (n.d.). « Communication, littérature, et informatique appliqué a l'enseignement des langues étrangères ». Retrieved July, 18th, 2014, from <http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/04/35/69/PDF/b77p153.pdf>.
- 30- Galani, M. (n.d.). « Privilégier le texte littéraire en classe de FLE ». Retrieved from http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature%20FLE_2009.pdf.
- 31- Golubev,S.(n.d). "The history of cyberculture". [Online] Available: [http:// www.sgolubev.com/cyberculture/outro.htm](http://www.sgolubev.com/cyberculture/outro.htm).
- 32- Hall,S.(1997). "*Representations and the media*". Retrieved from [http:// www.mediaed.org/assets/products/409/transcript_409.pdf](http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/409/transcript_409.pdf).
- 33- Hammer, M. (2014). "Intercultural Development Inventory why should you consider using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)". Retrieved from http://iaccp.org/sites/default/files/stellenbosch_pdf/Matveev.pdf.
- 34- Herring, S. C., and Nix, C. G. (1997, March). "Is serious chat" an oxymoron?" Retrieved from <http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/409/herring401.pdf>.
- 35- Holmes, S. (2005). "Intercultural communication and dialogue competence: An attempt at synthesis through useful "fictions". Retrieved on 16th, February, 2014 from http://www.idm-diversity.org/files/Working_paper2-Holmes.pdf.
- 36- Hulst, V.D.(2004). "Language and culture". Retrieved 28th February, 2014 from <http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~li101is1/WIN04/UnitsII-III.pdf>.
- 37- Jenson, I. (n.d.). "The practice of intercultural communication: Reflections for professionals in cultural meetings". Retrieved on February, 13th, 2014 from <http://rudar.ruc.dk/bitstream/1800/229/1/jensen-practice.pdf>.
- 38- Kalsbeek,A. (2008). "Intercultural competences for Foreign Language Teachers". University of Amsterdam (Alice van Kalsbeek) and the University College of London.

- 39- Kamiya, M. (n.d.). "The role of communicative competence in L2 learning". Retrieved on March 16th, 2014 from <http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki26/kamiya.pdf>.
- 40- Kipling, R. (nd.). "We and They". Retrieved from on 1 December, 2013 from <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/829/Rudyard%20Kipling.pdf>.
- 41- Itma, M. (2009). « Quelles difficultés d'apprentissage chez les étudiants de français à l'université An-Najah de Naplouse? » Retrieved July, 13th, 2014, from http://eprints.aidenligne-francais-universite.auf.org/33/1/pdf_ITMA_Maha_these.pdf.
- 42- Kostogriz, A. (2002). "Teaching literacy in multicultural classrooms: Towards a pedagogy of Third space". Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane. Retrieved online at <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/kos02346.htm> (accessed 15 Feb. 2009).
- 43- Kramsch, C (n.d.). "Third culture and language education". Retrieved on September 14th of, 2014 from <http://lrc.cornell.edu/events/past/2008-2009/papers08/third.pdf>.
- 44- Leaning, M. and Averweg, U. (2007). "*The virtual community: A review of some key ideas*". Retrieved from <http://csited.org/2007/32LeanCSITEd.pdf>.
- 45- Licklider, J. C. R. (1965). Man-computer partnership: International science and technology. Retrieved from <http://www.observer.co.uk/>.
- 46- Macek, J. (2004). "Media and reality". In P. Binková and J. Volek. Masaryk University Press. [Online] Available: http://macek.czechian.net/defining_cyberculture.htm.
- 47- Mceetya, A. (1999). "National goals for schooling in the twenty-first century. Canberra, Australia: Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs". Retrieved March 25, 2005, from <http://www.detya.gov.au/schools/adelaide/default.htm>.
- 48- McLuhan, M. (1974.). "Understanding media: The extension of man". Retrieved on December, 5th, 2013, from <http://beforebefore.net/80f/s11/media/mcluhan.pdf>.
- 49- McKay, S. L. (2003). "The Cultural Basis of Teaching English as an International Language". Online Documents at URL <http://www.tesol.org/pubs/articles/2003/tm13-4-01.html>.
- 50- Mendoza, J., & Reese, D. (2000). "Examining multicultural picture books for the early childhood classroom: Possibilities and pitfalls". Retrieved September 22, 2009, from: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v3n2/mendoza.html>.
- 51- Mursi, W. (2011) "وظيفته الأدب في تدريس اتجاهات الحياة الحديثة". Retrieved, July, 18th, 2014, from <http://kenanaonline.com/users/wageehelmorssi/posts/268314>.

- 52- Neuliep (2005). "*The necessity of intercultural communication*". Retrieved on February, 14th, 2014, from on 12th February, 2014 from [http:// www.sagepub.com/upm-data/11824_.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/11824_.pdf).
- 53- Paige,M., Jorstad, H ., Siaya, L., Klein,F., and Colby, J . (n.d.). "Culture Learning in Language Education: A Review of the Literature". Retrieved on July, 11th , 2014, from <http://www.carla.umn.edu/culture/resources/litreview.pdf>.7.
- 54- Polyak, I. KÉR, D. F and Tardos, K (n.d.). "Measuring and developing intercultural competence of university faculty". Retrieved from http://kgk.sze.hu/images/dokumentumok/kautzkiadvany2013/kultura/polyak_kery_tardos.pdf.
- 55- Said, E. (2001, 16 September). "Islam and the west are inadequate banners". Retrieved on March, 16th. 2014 from <http://www.observer.co.uk/comment/story/0,6903,552764,00.html>.
- 56- Saoussany, A . (n.d.). « Autonomie dans l'apprentissage des langues et entrées en littérature ». Retrieved July, 18th, 2014, from <http://www.llcd.auf.org/IMG/pdf/SAOUSSANY.pdf>.
- 57- Seoud, A. (n.d.). « L'enseignement de la littérature en classe de FLE ». Retrieved from http://www.frl.uoa.gr/fileadmin/frl.uoa.gr/uploads/sinedria/Actes_Litterature%20FLE_2009.pdf.
- 58- Sheikh, W. (n.d.). "تعليم اللغات الأجنبية في الدول:المغربية :إشكالية الثقافة" retrieved from http://zawaya.magharebia.com/old_zawaya/ar/zawaya/opinion/301.html
- 59- Silver, D. (2008). "Introducing cyberculture: The cyberpunk project". [Online] Available: http://project.cyberpunk.ru/idb/introducing_cyberculture.html.
- 60- Skopinskaja, L. (n.d.). "Assessing Intercultural communicative competence: Test construction issues". Retrieved from <http://gerflint.fr/Base/Baltique6/liljana.pdf>
- 61- Sulliva , K . (n.d.). "Perception of images in advertising and impact on consumers' lives". Retrieved on December 31st, 2013 from http://ethicapublishing.com/ATEOI_ch2.pdf.
- 62- Valchou, R., (n.d.). « Textes littéraires :Un défi pour l'enseignement (inter) culturel ».Retrieved from http://ife.ens-lyon.fr/vst/DS-Veille/dossier_interculturel.pdf.
- 63- Wernicke, M. (n.d.). "The FSL classroom as third space". Retrieved on February, 28th, 2014 from <http://mwernicke.ca/Olbi08.pdf>.

- 64- Wersten, K. (n.d.). "Running head: Examining and Reducing Stereotype Threat Within an Elementary Context". Retrieved from http://www.yorku.ca/steeleje/research/PDF/Regneretal_IRSP_in_press.pdf.
- 65- White, N. (2001). "Facilitating and hosting a virtual community". Available online at: <http://www.fullcirc.com/community/community/facilitation.htm>.
- 66- Wiseman, R.L. (2001). "*Intercultural communication competence*". Retrieved December 11, 2001 from <http://commfaculty.cullerton.edu/rwiseman/ICCCpaper.htm>.

Newspapers

- 1- Bennet, J. (2003, May 30). "The Mideast turmoil: killer of three". The New York Times, p. 1. Retrieved July, 28th, 2013, from <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/todayspaper/>.
- 2- Deerin, C. (2004, March 21). "When fear hits home. Scotland on Sunday", p. 16. Retrieved July, 29th, 2013, <http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/fr/viewer.aspx>.
- 3- Ferguson, C. (1994, April 9). "Posting on Communit". *The Observer*.
- 4- Harris, S. (2001, October 5). "Muslim missions just a walkover". The Advertiser, p. 2. Retrieved July, 29th, 2013, from <http://adelaideadvertiser.Newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>.
- 5- Hwidi, F. (1994) "جريدة الاهرام" جائزة اهانة الاسلام
- 6- Landsberg, M. (2002, October 6). "Lifting the veil on women's enslavement". Toronto Star, p. A02. Retrieved July, 29th, 2013, <http://www.thestar.com/news.html>.
- 7- McClellan, J. (1994, February 13). "Netsurfers". *The Observer*.
- 8- Ryan, J. (2004, August 26). "The Error of too much tolerance". *San Francisco Chronicle*, p. B. Retrieved July, 20th, 2013 from <http://www.sfchronicle.com/>.
- 9- Schwartz, E. (1994, April 8). "Posting on Communit". *The Observer*.
- 10- Shaheen, J. G. (1990, August 19) "Our cultural demon: The 'ugly' arab," Washington Post, pp. C1, C2. Retrieved July, 20th, 2013 from <http://thewashingtonpost.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>.

Dictionaries:

- 1- Abaya (n.d.). In thefreedictionary.com .Retrieved from *http://www. The free dictionary .com/abaya.*
- 2- Acronym. (2014). In Merriam Webster. Retrieved January, 15th, 2014, from *http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?MerriamWebster.*
- 3- Alterity .(2014). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved January, 5th, 2014, from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Alterity.*
- 4- Anti-muslimism (n.d.). In thefreedictionary. com. Retrieved from *http://www. thefreedictionary.com/Anti-Muslim+sentiment).*
- 5- Beauty and the Beast (n.d.). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/beauty+and+the+beast.*
- 6- Blog (n.d.). In thefreedictionary.com. Retrieved from *http://www.thefreedictionary.com/blog.*
- 7- Chat room . (n.d.). In The freedictionary .com. Retrieved (*http://www. The free dictionary .com/Chat+rooms).*
- 8- Chatroulette (n.d.). In urbandictionary.com. Retrieved from *http:// www. Urban dictionary. com/define.php?term=chatroulette).*
- 9- Cocurricular (n.d.). In thefreedictionary. com. *http://www. The free dictionary. com/cocurricular).*
- 10- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (n.d.) In *thefreedictionary.* Retrieved from *http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/cognitive-behavioral + therapy.*
- 11- Coherence (n.d.). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/coherence?s=t.*
- 12- Computerization. (2014). Dictionary.com. Retrieved April, 22nd, 2014, from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/COMPUTERIZATION.*
- 13- Countertype. (2014). In Your Dictionary.com. Retrieved February 12th, 2014 from *http://www.yourdictionary.com/countertype.*
- 14- Cyberspace. (2014). In Oxford Dictionaries.com. Retrieved January, 12th, 2014, from *http://www. oxforddictionaries.com/us /definition /american_english /cy berspace.*

- 15- Digital Divide (n.d.). In dictionary .reference.com. Retrieved from *http:// dictionary .reference.com /browse /digital+ divide*.
- 16- Encyclopedic knowledge (n.d.). In thefreedictionary. com. Retrieved from *http://www. thefreedictionary. com/encyclopedic*.
- 17- Essentialism.(2013).In Merriam-Webster.com. Retrieved June 10th, 2013, from *http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hackerhttp://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/essentialism*.
- 18- Falwell, Jerry Lamon (n.d.). In thefreedictionary. com.”.(Retrieved from *http:// encyclopedia2. thefreedictionary. com/Falwell,+Jerry+Lamon*).
- 19- Flickr” (n.d.). In collinsdictionary.com . Retrieved from *http://www. Collins dictionary. com/submission/6415/Flickr*).
- 20- Google (n.d.). In dictionary.reference.com. Retrieved from (*http:// dictionary. reference. com/browse /google?s=t*).
- 21- Hermeneutics. (2014). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved January, 3rd, 2014, from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/hermeneutics*.
- 22- Information communication technology (n.d.). In dictionary.reference.com. (Retrieved from *http://dictionary.reference. com/browse/information+and+ communication+technology*).
- 23- Patent. (2014). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved March, 23rd, 2014, from *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/patent?s=t&path=/*.
- 24- Priming (n.d.) . In merriam-webster.com/ *http://psychcentral. Com / encyclopedia /2009 /priming/*).
- 25- Rational attitudes. (2014). In Free Dictionary.com. Retrieved March, 11th, 2014, from *http:// free Dictionary. com/browse/patent?s=t&path=/* .
- 26- Representations. (2014). In Oxford English Dictionary.com. Retrieved March, 12th, 2014, from *http:// Oxford English Dictionary. com/ browse/ patent ?s=t&path=/*.
- 27- Secularism (n.d.). In thefreedictionary (Retrieved from *http://www. The freedictionary .com/secularism*).

- 28- Simulation (n.d.). In dictionary.reference.com .Retrieved from *http: // dictionary . reference.com /browse/simulation*).
- 29- Skype (n.d.). In dictionary.reference.com. Retrieved from *http://dictionary. reference. com /browse/skype?s=t*).
- 30- Speech Act:.”(n.d.). In thefreedictionary.com. Retrieved from *http:// www. The freedictionary. com/ Speech+act+theory*).
- 31- Stereotype. (2014). In Oxford English Dictionary.com. Retrieved March, 12th, 2014, from *http:// Oxford English Dictionary com/browse/patent?s=t&path=.*
- 31- Stigma (n.d.). In Merriam-webster.com. Retrieved from *http://www.merriam-webster.com / dictionary /stigma*).
- 32- Sui Generis. (2013). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved June 6th, 2013, from - *http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/sui+generis?s=t&path=.*
- 33- Threat appraisal (n.d.). In psychology dictionary. Retrieved from *http :// psychologydictionary.org /threat-appraisal/*).
- 34- Turn taking (n.d.). Yourdictionary.com. Retrieved from *http:// www . yourdictionary. com/turn-taking*).
- 35- Understanding. (2014). Dictionary.com. Retrieved April, 15th, 2014, from *http: // dictionary. reference. com /browse/Understanding*.
- 36- Wiki (n.d.).In merriam-webster.com. Retrieved from “*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wikinoun wi 'ki \ 'wi-kē, 'wē-*).

Encyclopedias

- 1- Aladdin.(n.d.).In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from *http:// www. britannica .com /EBchecked/topic/12032/Aladdin*.
- 2- Algerian Civil War (n.d.). In looklex.com. Retrieved from *http://looklex.com /e.o/algerian_civil_war.htm*.
- 3- Ali Baba (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from *http:// www. britannica.com /EBchecked/topic/1763174/Ali-Baba-and-the-Forty-Thieves*.
- 4- Anti-Semitism (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from *http://www. britannica. com /EBchecked/topic/27646/anti-Semitism*.
- 5- Behaviorism. In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved from *http:// plato.stanford.edu/entries/behaviorism/*.
- 6- CBS Corporation (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from *http:// www. britannica. com /EBchecked/topic /100876/CBS-Corporation*.
- 7- Cognitive Appraisal Theory (n.d.). In psychcentral.com. Retrieved from (*http://psychcentral .com/ encyclopedia/2008/cognitive-appraisal-theory/*).
- 8- Collective representations (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from *http :// www.encyclopedia.com/topic/collective_representations.aspx*).
- 9- Communicative language teaching (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica . Retrieved from *http://www .britannica.com /EBchecked /topic/1703215/ communicative-language-teaching*.
- 10- Cultural conditioning (n.d.). In Newgrounds. Com. Retrieved from *http: // www .newgrounds. com /bbs/topic /1271292*).
- 11- Cultural Relativism(n.d.). In Sociologyguide .com. Retrieved from *http://www. Sociologyguide .com /basic -concepts/Cultural-Relativism.php*.
- 12- Cybernetics (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from *http:// www. britannica. com /EB checked/topic/147802/ cybernetics*.
- 13- Emic and Etic (n.d.). In The International Encyclopedia of Communication. Retrieved from *http://www. Communication encyclopedia.com /public/ tocono de?id =g9781 405131 99 5_yr2013 _ chunk_g978140513199510_ss18-1*.

- 15- Emotional intelligence (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1335389/emotional-intelligence>.
- 16- Facebook (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/57226/facebook>.
- 17- Fundamentalism (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1191955/fundamentalism>.
- 18- Goldenson (n.d.). In hawaiiilibrary. Retrieved from <http://www.HawaiiLibrary.net/article/whebn0002046775/leonard%20goldenson>.
- 19- Grammar Translation Method (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1703203/grammar-translation>).
- 20- Habitus (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.Com. Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Habitus.aspx>).
- 21- Humanistic psychology (n.d). Encyclopedia Britanica. Rerieved from (<http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/276011/humanistic-psychology>)
- 22- Independence day. (n.d.) In Encyclopedia of science fiction. Retrieved from http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/independence_day).
- 23- John F. Kennedy (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica .Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/314791/John-F-Kennedy>).
- 24- Langue and parole (n.d.). In Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology, from http://www.Blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405124331_yr2012_chunk_g978140512433118_ss1-13.
- 25- Lebanon war 1982 (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/334152/Lebanon/279120/Civil-war>).
- 26- Linguistic Relativity (n.d.). In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/index.html>.
- 27- LinkedIn (n.d. In Encycloedia.com. Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/60336/linkedin>.
- 28- Literature Circles (n.d.). In edutopia.org. Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/>).
- 29- Mars Attacks (n.d.) In Encyclopedia of science fiction. Retrieved from. Retrieved from *Encyclopedia of science fiction* (http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/mars_attacks).

- 30- MSN (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com/en cyclopedia /term /47358/msn>).
- 31- Muhammad Boudiaf (n.d.). In etc.edu.cn. Retrieved from http :// www. etc.edu. cn/ eet/articles/vygotsky_zpd/index.htm.
- 32- National Broadcasting Company (n.d.). In encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from (http://www. encyclopedia. com/topic/National_ Broadcasting_Company_ Inc .aspx).
- 33- Newspeak (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http ://www. britannica. com/ EB checked/topic/ 413153 /newspeak>.
- 34- Old-Time Gospel Hour (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from "<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1347764/Old-Time-Gospel-Hour>).
- 35- Occidentalism (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from <http://www. encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3424300552.html>.
- 36- Orientalism (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http:// www. encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3424300552.html>.
- 37- Patent.(n.d.). *Techopedia.com*. Retrieved from TechnoPedia, from <http://www. techopedia. com /definition /22199/software-patent>).
- 38- Personality theory (n.d.). In thefreedictionary.com. Retrieved from <http: //encyclopedia 2.thefreedictionary.com/personality+theory>).
- 39- Positivism (n.d.) . In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <HTTP ://WWW. BRITANNICA .COM/EBCHECKED/ TOPIC /471865 /POSITI VISM>).
- 40- Psycho-dynamics (n.d.). In PsychCentral: Encyclopedia of Psychology. Retrieved from <http ://psychCentral. com/ encyclopedia /2009/ psychodynamic - model/>).
- 41- Psychological Stress responses. (n.d.). Encyclopedia Britannica. (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica. com/EBchecked/topic /568921/stress>).
- 42- Reception theory. Oxfordreference.com. Retrieved from <http:// www. oxfordreference . com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100407730>).
- 43- Resurrection. (n.d.). In The Original Catholoic Encyclopedia. Retrieved from , <http://oce.catholic.com/index.php?title=Resurrection>).
- 44- Right-wing terrorism. (n.d.). In faqs.org/espionage. Retrieved from <http: //www. faqs.org /espionage/Te-Uk/Terrorism-Domestic-United-States .html>).

- 45- Sabbath Schools (n.d.). In jewishencyclopedia. Retrieved from [http:// www .jewishencyclopedia. com/articles/12965-sabbath-schools](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12965-sabbath-schools)).
- 46- Salman Rushdie (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from [http://www .encyclopedia. com/topic /Salman_Rushdie.aspx](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Salman_Rushdie.aspx)).
- 47- Samuel Taylor Coleridge (n.d.) Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/125261/Samuel-Taylor-Coleridge>).
- 48- San Francisco Chronicle (n.d.). Encyclopedia Britannica. (Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/688248/San-Francisco-Chronicle>).
- 49- Service Learning.(Retrieved from [http://www. Georgiaencyclopedia .org/articles/education/service-learning](http://www.Georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/education/service-learning)).
- 50- Star of David (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http:// www. Britannica .com/EBchecked/ topic/152589/ Star-of-David](http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/152589/Star-of-David)).
- 51- Stereotype Threat (n.d.). In Encyclopedia. Com. Retrieved from [http:// www. encyclopedia. com/doc/1G2-3045302610.html](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3045302610.html).
- 52- Speech act theory (n.d). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http://www.britannica .com/EBchecked/topic/1308483/speech-act-theory](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1308483/speech-act-theory)).
- 53- The Boston Globe (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http://www. britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/74903/The-Boston-Globe](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/74903/The-Boston-Globe).
- 54- The New York Times (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http://www.britannica .com/EBchecked/topic/412546/The-New-York-Times](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/412546/The-New-York-Times).
- 55- The Purloined Letter (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http:// www. britannica.com /EBchecked /topic/1699954/The-Purloined-Letter](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1699954/The-Purloined-Letter)).
- 56- The Washington Post (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http://www. Britannica .com /EBchecked /topic/636526/The-Washington-Post](http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/636526/The-Washington-Post)).
- 57- The700 (n.d.) In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from [http://www .britannica. com /EBchecked/topic/676491/The-700-Club](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/676491/The-700-Club)).
- 58- *Tolerance for ambiguity* (n.d.). In ftpress.com. Retrieved from [http://www .ftpress.com/ articles/article. aspx?p=1315268&seqNum=2](http://www.ftpress.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1315268&seqNum=2)).
- 59- Twitter (n.d.). In Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from <http://www.pcmag.com>

/encyclopedia /term/57880 /twitter.

- 60- Veda (n.d.). In Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved, from *http://www.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/624383/Veda*).
- 61- Video-chat (n.d.). In Encyclopedia. Com. Retrieved from *http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/53830/video-chat*).
- 62- Webpage (n.d.). In encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from *http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/52045/static-web-page*).
- 63- Web 2.0 (n.d.) In Encycloepdia.com. Retrieved from *http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/56219/web-2-0*).
- 64- Youtube. Encyclopedia.com. Retrieved from *http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/57119/youtube*.
- 65- Zone of Proximal Development (n.d.). In edutopia.org. Retrieved from *http://www.edutopia.org/blog/literature-circles-how-to-and-reasons-why-elena-aguilar*.

Dissertations and Theses:

- 1- Andre, C. (2005). Comment faire entrer la poésie à l'école maternelle?, IUFM de Bourgogne, Mémoire. Retrieved from *http://www.Turkishstudies.net/Makaleler/586693254_Ayd%C4%B1n%20Esra-atmaca%20hasan%20fr.pdf*.
- 2- Cabello, A. (2012).Examining language learners' roles and perceptions in the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence: An analysis of Intercultural Spanish language learning materials from an Activity Theory perspective .A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY Retrieved from....*http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/view_content.cgi?article=3690&context=etd*.
- 3- Christopher, M. and Seberich, M. (2006). Intercultural Competence-the Key Competence in the 21st Century? Thesis by Bertselsmann Stiftung Based on the Models of Intercultural Competence by Dr. Darla K. Deardorff. Retrieved from *http://www.idm-diversity.org/files/Working_paper2-.Deardorff.pdf*.
- 4- Deardorff, D. K. (2004). *The identification and assessment of intercultural - competence as a student outcome of internationalization at institutions of higher education in the United States*. Unpublished dissertation, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.

- 5- Forbes, C. E. (2009). *Lessons Learned from "A Clockwork Orange": How Retraining Implicit Attitudes And Stereotypes Affect Motivation And Performance Under Stereotype Threat* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 3352594).

- 6- Hetzel, C.J. (2008). *The Effects of Social Influence on Personal Attitudes and Behaviour Toward Lesbians and Gay Men.* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No.3297979).

- 7- Pirolli ,R.E . (2010-2011). Représentations de la littérature et de son enseignement : Une analyse croisée des méthodes, enseignants et apprenants dans un contexte universitaire lusophone .Mémoire de recherche pour Master - 00674769, version 1 - 28 Feb 2012 accessed July, 18th, 2014, from http://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/docs/00/67/47/69/PDF/EVALDT_PIROLLI_Rosalie_M2R.pdf.

- 8- Reid, E. M. (1991). Electropolis: Communication and Community on Internet Relay Chat. Senior Honours thesis, University of Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved December 31, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.aluluei.com/>.

- 9- _____ (1994). Cultural Formations in Text-Based Virtual Realities. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved June 15, 2001, from the World Wide Web: <http://home.earthlink.net/~aluluei/cult-form.htm>.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Questionnaire

This questionnaire explores learners' representations and stereotypes about the self (their own culture) and the Other (Western cultures). Parallel to this, it delves into learners' attitudes about this online reality distortion of both the self and the Other.

1- Do you use social media?

Yes

No

2- Do you access images and videos via Google

Yes

No

3- Have you ever tried to look for some images and videos about your own culture using Google?

Yes

No

4- Have you ever tried to look for some images and videos about Western cultures using Google?

Yes

No

5- How can you describe the Americans?

- Terrorists
- Peace-seekers
- Israel's Allies
- Non-believers? (كفار)
- Intellectuals (مثقفين)
- Colonizers?
- Racists
- Other descriptions

6- How do you describe the Europeans?

- Terrorists
- Peace-seekers
- Israel's Allies
- Non-believers? (كفار)
- Intellectuals (مثقفين)
- Colonizers
- Racists
- Other descriptions

7- How do you describe the Arabs?

- Terrorists
- Peace-seekers
- Palestine's Allies
- believers? (مؤمنون)
- Intellectuals (متقنين)
- Colonizers?
- Racists?

Other descriptions

8- How do you depict the Jews?

- Betrayers (خائنون)
- Non-believers
- Enemies
- Friends
- Terrorists
- Racists

Other descriptions

9- How do you describe the Christians?

- Non-believers
- Enemies
- Friends
- Terrorists
- Racists

Other descriptions.....

10- How do you describe the Muslims?

- Believers
- Enemies
- Friends
- Terrorists
- Racists

Other descriptions.....

11- Who has posted these images about Muslims online ? Why?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

12- Who, according to you, has posted these images online ? Why?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

13- Here the Jews are represented as intellectuals. Who posted it online? Why? Is it true?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

14- Do you think this image reflects Africans? Who post it online? Why?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix Two (Students' Cultural Shortcomings)

a) First Year LMD Students'

I have helped the God who is brought on earth.
People know that themselves were ignorant and
not organized, they lived like animals.
changed their religion and make new civilisations
change traditions and their beliefs.

(Christianity in the middle ages it is appeared
during early of the human history. the early
middle ages there are the polytheism. A.D. 2.2
the religious in the world Christianity because
people believe Jesus and did not believe Mohamed.
he did not exist particular.

(The Christianity is the second monotheist religion, it came in a dark period, and it changed the peoples for a beautiful one.

But after, the men of religion come a dictator persons, they take the earth in their hands, they change the the Bible. They change the reality in the book of god.

As we know that Christianity played a particular role during the Middle Ages how is that?
The second monotheist religion was destroyed all over the society, they were empire with no idea to live they had one god.

Christianity was one of a famous monotheist religion & it helped the Middle Ages to get more known. However, was there Christianity and the particular role Mohammed had more than this monotheist religion.

When the Roman Empire fell in 476 A.D. (The Christianity made its appearance, step by step it developed as other religions such as hinduism or judaism. (The Christianity played a primordial role during the Middle Ages, however, it participated to built church or temples of worship and it found some solution about some problems.

Although, (The Christianity was different but its role key always in contrast the other religions. It also had part to spread the Sciences and inventions.

The Christians had a holy book (sacred book) the Bible and the ten commandments and they call their God. They had an idea which is false about his religion and they believed that ISSA ALAHI EL SALAM died with their particular methods. but they are false, they respect their beliefs, they don't accept what ALLAH done. They hadn't the six religions and the Christianity came after the middle ages which it hadn't passed religion.

The Christianity is a religion, Jesus ~~was~~ is a messenger and in the Christianity there are commandments speak about the monotheist, shouldn't kill, shouldn't steal, should respect your father and your mother and neighbours, shouldn't imagine the God. In the Christianity people have a holy place where they worship known as Church.

As we know that Christianity played a prominent role during the middle ages but in that the second most important religion was established all over the society. They had an empire and had Allah to believe in.

During The middle and the Christianity played a particular role and was the second monotheist religion, was the first used in Syria around 14-15. They believed in Muslim Allah and Allah.

~~The Christians~~
The Christians had a holy book 'Bible' and Ten commandments and they believe in Allah.

They went to a place that they prayed but not like we in Islam. They have an idea that Allah was in that place and Allah was not in another place. So Allah has one place and no more than one.

Christianity is the second monotheist religion
it is very spread in the middle ages in the
European country. The Christians believed in
one Allah and their holy book was called
the bible

the people were succeeded by the
in pagin without believing in Allah

In the world, there are two majority religion
which are Islam then Christianity. Christianity
is a religion. they started in Syria.

b) Second Year LMD Students' Cultural Shortcomings:

Through the novel by Jane Austen one can feel the sufferings of women during the Victorian era. Women used to look for marriage so badly. At the end one may suggest that women in the Islamic countries is, even though, not given all her rights, is better than the European women. The latter has no values.

c) Third Year LMD Students' Cultural Shortcomings:

Despite the fact that D.H. Lawrence's the Virgin and the Gypsy is considered as a masterpiece, he gives a bad picture about Love. Love according to him is all about sex. Love, I believe is pure and represents reasonable, pure, and organized human feelings.

The novel 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen presents an ideal picture of what a woman might look like during the Victorian period. They used to look for husbands as one looks for water in the desert. Marriage was a kind of business to ensure a better life for the whole family. However, I think that marriage does not always bring happiness; sometimes, it is better for a woman to stay single.

Jane Austen describes an era where women were obliged to marry, to have children, to have a good image in the society. Despite the fact that she opposes this situation, I think that a woman should stay at home with her husband and children; therefore, marriage is good for her.

I do agree with Jane Austen as she reveals about the social abuse women had to endure during the Victorian age. During that period, mothers used to marry their daughters to rich persons so as to get a better life. I am sorry about these kinds of marriages, which I really hate.

Abstract:

This research work is an empirical attempt to investigate the common route that links both classroom learning along online learning. Under this line of thought, the study reconnoiters learners' construction of virtual communities within online platforms. Most importantly, it inspects the very robotic nature of virtual platforms in their portrayal of the Self and the Other. This first part of the work reveals that online platforms depict cultures chauvinistically. The second section digs deeper into the actual practices of teaching about other cultures in EFL classrooms, and hence, explores the pedagogical milieu in relation to mitigating learners' stereotypes, prejudices and negative attitudes. Under the same panorama, the study rigorously investigates teachers' practices of assessment. As to the final section, it offers insights as to culturally-responsive pedagogy, established on solid assessment tools and grounded on the need for teachers' intercultural education.

ملخص

يعد هذا البحث العلمي محاولة تهدف إلى الوقوف على مدى إمكانية إيجاد خلفية مشتركة كهزمة وصل تربط بين التعلم في المدارس و التعلم من خلال شبكة الانترنت . في هذا الخضم , هذه الدراسة تشمل ممارسة الطلبة لعمليات البحث عبر شبكة الانترنت والتي تتضمن إنشاء المتعلمين لمجتمعات افتراضية من خلال مواقع الكترونية عديدة. و الأدهى من ذلك , تصبو هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في الطبيعة الآلية للمواقع الالكترونية من خلال تصويرها للذات و الغير. الجزء الأول من الدراسة يكشف أن المواقع الالكترونية تصور الثقافات بطريقة ذاتية انحيازية. أما بالنسبة للجزء الثاني, يتعمق في الممارسات الراهنة للتدريس عن الثقافات الأخرى في أقسام اللغة الانجليزية , وبذلك تخوض في المحيط البيداغوجي من ناحية تنقيص حدة الصور النمطية , الأحكام المسبقة و المواقف السلبية لدى الطلبة. في هذا السياق تقوم الدراسة بمعاينة ممارسات الأساتذة لعمليات التقييم. فيما يخص القسم الأخير, فهو يقدم رؤية موضوعية للتدريس حول الثقافات الأخرى ممنهجة حول أسس صلبة لتقييم التعلم المنشود, منبثقة من ضرورة التربص الميداني للأساتذة في مجال تدريس الثقافات الأخرى

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche est une tentative empirique pour étudier l'itinéraire commun qui relie les deux milieux d'apprentissage celles de la classe et en ligne. En vertu de cette ligne de pensée, l'étude recherche la construction des communautés virtuelles par les apprenants au sein des plates-formes en ligne. Plus important encore, il inspecte la nature robotique des plates-formes virtuelles dans leurs représentations du Soi et de l'Autre. Cette première partie de l'étude révèle que les plates-formes en ligne représentent des cultures d'une manière biaisée. La deuxième partie creuse plus profondément dans les pratiques actuelles de l'enseignement d'autres cultures dans les salles de classe EFL et, par conséquent, explore le milieu pédagogique par rapport à atténuer les stéréotypes des apprenants, les préjugés et les attitudes négatives. Dans le même contexte, l'étude examine rigoureusement les pratiques d'évaluation des enseignants. Quant à la dernière partie, il offre un aperçu à la pédagogie culturellement sensible, établie sur les outils d'évaluation solides et fondée sur la nécessité d'une éducation interculturelle des enseignants.