

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
Abd Elhafid Boussouf University - Mila



Institute of Literature and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Branch: English

**Towards Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture
for the Development of Learners' Communicative
Competence**

The Case of Third Year EFL Learners at Mila University Centre

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

Presented by:

- 1) Fatima Zahra BERKAS
- 2) Racha ZOUIED

Supervisor:

Dr. Fouad BOULKROUN

Board of Examiners:

Chairman: Dr. Lemya BOUGHOUAS
Supervisor: Dr. Fouad BOULKROUN
Examiner : Messaouda BOUDJRIDA

2021/ 2022

Dedication

*Thank you Allah for helping me to reach this moment. Thank you for giving me power and
patience to finish this work,*

This dissertation is dedicated to:

*The candles of my life; my lovely mother "BOUTEMINE Zoubida", thank you
great deal.*

My beloved Father for his sacrifices and mental support.

My lovely brothers and sisters who helped and supported me in every step of my life.

My supervisor, Dr. Fouad BOULEKROUN, for his patience, support and help.

To all Master II students with whom I shared an enjoyable learning atmosphere.

To all those who are forgotten by my pen and never forgotten by my heart.

To Myself.

Fatima Zahra

Dedication

*“In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All the praise is due to Him alone,
the Sustainer of the entire World”*

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my dear father Abd elhafid who has been nicely my supporter until my research was fully finished. To my gorgeous mother Farida for words of encouragement and prayers to successfully accomplish my research work, Mom and Dad, I hope that I can make you proud the same way that I am proud of you being my parents.

To my lovely sister Rana who makes all the stress fade away with her kind words. To my brothers Khaled and Amine that have never left my side. To my uncle Mohamed and aunt Nassima who have supported me throughout the process. To my grandfather Mahmoud for his precious encouragement. To the memory of my grandmother.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my lovely friends, Nora, Sarah, Abir, Sawssen, Samar, Meriem, and Marwa, Your support means a lot to me!

To my supervisor, Dr. Fouad BOULEKROUN, for his patience, efforts and help.

To myself.

Racha

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, our deep gratitude goes to Allah for providing us the strength to accomplish this work,

We extend our sincere appreciation to our supervisor Dr. Fouad BOULKROUN who contributed a lot in the fulfillment of this dissertation with his advice, help, continual support and encouragement.

We would like also to thank the members of the jury Dr. Lemya BOUGHOUAS and Messaouda BOUDJRIDA who kindly agreed to examine our dissertation and for their time, valued comments and purchase remarks.

In addition, we wish to thank third year students of English at the Department of Foreign Languages, University Centre of Mila and all the teachers for their help and cooperation.

We heartily thank all the people who have generously assisted us in the construction of this humble work. Without their support, this project would not have become a reality in its current form. We would like to thank the individuals who have contributed to this field work and have brought it to fruition.

To our loving parents for their moral encouragement and prayers.

Abstract

Learners' communicative competence remains to date an important aim in foreign language classrooms; in practice, however, there is the paucity of attention to balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of such competence. The present study seeks to investigate teachers' tendency and assumptions towards balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative abilities. To achieve this aim, four research questions are raised: (1) How often do EFL teachers integrate grammar in the language classroom? (2) How often do they integrate culture? (3) Do they equally integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects in their lessons for the development of learners' communicative competence? (4) How do they make such integration in the language classroom? (5) Are EFL learners aware of the importance of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the improvement of their communicative abilities? To answer the research questions, the data are gathered through two questionnaires administered to eighty-two third-year EFL students and seventeen EFL teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages, Mila University Centre. Upon analysis of the data, the results reveal, on the whole, that teachers are of two positions concerning the creation of such a balance; that there is awareness on the part of third year EFL students of the importance of the said practice, at least from the students' perspective. The study ends up with a number of pedagogical recommendations for teachers and students along with a discussion of its limitations.

Key words: Teaching/learning grammar, culture, Learners' communicative competence, Balance.

List of Abbreviations

% Percentage

ALM: The Audio-Lingual Method

Big “C”: Big Culture

CBA: The Competency-Based Approach

CBE: The Competency Based Education

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM: Direct Method

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

GTM: The Grammar Translation Method

Q: Question

Small “c”: Small Culture

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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الملخص

Résumé

General Introduction

1. Statement of the problem

Learning a foreign language (FL) has traditionally focused on the study of the grammar of the language, but in recent decades, the emphasis has shifted to learning a language for communication and, more importantly, for social interaction. The coming of age of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching has brought together all aspects of a language that result in meaningful communication. That is, it is a comprehensive approach to language acquisition that fosters the integration of grammatical as well as cultural features, to mention but a few. It follows then that it is critical to integrate both grammar and culture in the FL classroom in order to build students' communicative competence.

Granting that it is, in principle, necessary to integrate both grammar and culture in the FL classroom, some teachers do not happen, in practice, to implement it in their classes, or they tend to incorporate one element to the exclusion of another. One possible reason is the debate among teachers about what component of the FL should have the main emphasis. For instance, some teachers maintain that grammar is the centre of language and scarcely provide learners with cultural knowledge or neglect culture completely (Stryker & Leaver, 1997). The reverse situation is also true, for others. That is, there is a misconception among some teachers that approaching FL teaching communicatively leaves no room for grammar teaching.

In light of the forgoing, the motive to conduct this research study is the paucity of attention to balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence.

2. Aims of the Study

The desire to contribute to further knowledge and understanding in the area of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture in a FL classroom for the development of learners' communicative competence is the major aim behind the current study. Specifically, this study seeks to determine how frequently grammar and culture are addressed for the development of EFL learners' communicative competence. Furthermore, it is set to reveal whether teachers pursue some balance in their attempt to develop grammatical and cultural knowledge in their learners. Moreover, this study aims to inspect learners' awareness of the importance of such a balance.

3. Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study arises from its being concerned with the subject of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. It is expected that it would raise teachers and learners' consciousness of the importance of equally integrating grammar and culture which would promote native-like communicative competence. Being aware of the importance of such a balance may help teachers to implement it and students to pursue it lest extreme positions would reign, which are detrimental for they do not reflect native-likeness.

4. The Research Questions

In order to reach our aims, a number of research questions are raised:

- How often do EFL teachers integrate grammar in the language classroom?
- How often do they integrate culture in the language classroom?

- Do EFL teachers equally integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects in their lessons for the development of learners' communicative competence?
- How do they make such integration in the language classroom?
- Are third year EFL learners aware of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture for the improvement of their communicative abilities?

5. Means of the Research

In order to reach the research aims and answer the research questions, two questionnaires are used for gathering the data. A questionnaire is administered to third year students of English at Mila University Centre. The sample consists of 82 third year students of English drawn from a population of 211 students. Another questionnaire is administered to 17 teachers of English at the same University Centre.

6. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation consists of two chapters: one theoretical and one practical. The former contains two sections. The first section provides a review of the literature relevant to grammar teaching and learners' communicative competence. It first offers a definition of grammar as a concept, followed by the relationship between grammar and language, then arguments for and against its teaching. It then moves to discuss the area of grammar teaching in a number of points. First, it deals with explicit and implicit grammar teaching. Then, the place of grammar in various language teaching methods and approaches is discussed. After that, it accounts for grammar and communicative competence, before ending up with a discussion of the importance of teaching grammar in the development of learners' communicative competence. The second section deals with culture teaching and learners' communicative competence. It sets out by presenting a

definition of culture, the relationship between language and culture, and the importance of culture in language learning. In addition, it accounts for the place of culture in some methods and approaches. Next, the section sheds light on the concept of culture and communicative competence. It moves, further, to outline two major components of the communicative competence, sociocultural competence and intercultural communicative competence. Finally, it ends up with presenting the importance of teaching culture in the development of learners' communicative competence.

The second chapter is devised to provide a description of the field work of the present research. It addresses the raised research questions, and attempts to achieve the aims of the current investigation. It provides a description of the students' and the teachers' questionnaires, an analysis of the data collected, and a discussion of the main findings. The chapter ends with some pedagogical recommendations for teachers and students along with the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

Grammar and Culture Teaching and Learners' Communicative Competence

Introduction

The present research study is designed to investigate the area of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. This chapter provides the theoretical part which sheds light on the teaching of grammar and culture and learners' communicative abilities. It is divided into two sections.

The first section is devoted to grammar teaching and learners' communicative competence. Grammar has long been a crucial part of language teaching. It is the foundation of language. All languages have their own grammar to enable the users to create meaningful expressions in the respective languages. Thus, learning the grammar of a language is essential if one wants to be able to use it properly. It has been the primary component in many language teaching methods, but a minor or negligible component in others. This section considers four fundamental issues. Firstly, it addresses the various definitions of grammar and the major issues related to whether it should be taught or not. Secondly, it exposes the different ways to teach grammar (explicitly and implicitly). Thirdly, it discusses different methods of, and approaches to, grammar teaching. Finally, it accounts for the concept of communicative competence and the importance of grammar therein.

The second section deals with culture teaching and learners' communicative competence. Much research has been conducted in the field of language teaching and learning investigating the concept of culture and its teaching in foreign language contexts, as well as the development of learners' communicative abilities. This section highlights the importance of teaching cultural

features in foreign language classrooms. It starts by giving some definitions to culture. Then, it reveals the relationship between language and culture. Next, the section illustrates the importance of culture in language learning, and its place in some teaching methods and approaches. Finally, it discusses the concept of culture and communicative competence before touching on the importance of teaching it in the development of learners' communicative abilities.

SECTION ONE: Grammar Teaching and Learners' Communicative Competence

1.1.1. Definition of Grammar

Mastering grammar is an important part of proficiency in a language. Although grammar is a familiar concept, it is sometimes difficult to understand it. It is an ambiguous concept since it implies many aspects that are difficult to hold in one definition. There is a debate among grammarians about setting a basic definition of grammar. According to both instructors and students, grammar is a set of rules that assist us in putting together correct sentences. Thornbury (1999) views grammar as a science that investigates all of the feasible cases in a language by analysing the form of meaningful sentences. This way, grammar is not only the study of what forms (sounds, words, sentences, texts) are possible but also the study of the meaning these forms convey. This is very much in keeping with Ur (1996) who points out that grammar is the way words are put together to make correct sentences, a set of rules that determine how words can be combined to form meaningful units within a language.

From the above, grammar is said to be concerned with the form of words and sentences. It is the study of the classes of words, their function, and relations in a sentence. It is equally the sound, structure, and meaning system of a language. As such, people who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know the rules of making meaning.

1.1.2. Grammar and Language

Grammar is the backbone of any language. For this reason, the learning process cannot be achieved if this element is absent. With the help of grammatical features, learners can construct complete sentences from smaller linguistic units to utilize in everyday interactions. Metaphorically, without grammar, you are relegated to speaking just the most basic sentences, or you write nonsense when attempting to compose more complex sentences but failing.

Nunan (1991) points out that grammar helps learners to perform in the target languages better. He also states that learners who do not have a basic understanding of grammar are unable to communicate effectively. Moreover, according to Beverly (2007) “Grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar” (p. 1). That is to say, people who speak the same language can communicate with one another because they are all familiar with the grammar system and structure of their language. For Azar (2007), the role of grammar is to “help learners discover the nature of language, i.e., that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear and write intelligible”(p. 2). As he states, without grammar, we would have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and body expressions to communicate meaning, and grammar is the weaving that creates the fabric. Usually, people make an association between grammar and language only in terms of correctness and making errors while the nature of grammar is understood by highlighting the two planes of language, content, and expression which are inseparably connected. The unity of content and expression (or the unity of form and meaning) falls under the umbrella of grammar. Learners cannot master a language without grammar. If there is no grammar, language will lack its structure and organisation. Thus grammar is indispensable for language learners.

1.1.3. Should Grammar Be Taught?

The issue of grammar teaching has been a crucial subject among researchers for years. One of the most contentious debates in the field of language pedagogy and second language acquisition concerns whether one should teach grammar in the classroom or not. As Thornbury (1999) states, "in fact, no other issue has so preoccupied theorists and practitioners as the grammar debate, and the history of language teaching is essentially the history of the claims and counterclaims for and against the teaching of grammar" (p.4). Everyone involved in language teaching and learning has an opinion on the matter. These viewpoints are frequently expressed in a strong and uncompromising manner. According to Thornbury, there are, at least, two different responses to the question "should grammar be taught?" According to the first, teaching grammar can have a negative impact and should thus be avoided. The teaching of grammar is recommended in the second. The following are some of Thornbury's summaries of the arguments for both positions.

1.1.3.1. Arguments in Favour Grammar Teaching

There are many arguments for putting grammar in the foreground in second language teaching. Here are six of them.

1.1.3.1.1. The fine-tuning argument

Grammar is taught in such a way that there is no room for ambiguity. It allows the student to convey a more distinct and clear meaning than simply stringing words together. It also clarifies semantics, syntax, and morphology and aids in a better understanding of the discourse.

1.1.3.1.2. The sentence-machine argument

“Item learning” is a part of the learning process. However, there is a limit on how many items one can keep or retrieve. The learner will inevitably need to master some rules that will allow him to construct new utterances. That is to say, he will require grammar that allows him to construct a large number of unique sentences. Grammar functions as a kind of sentence-making machine. It is impossible to utilise language creatively without it.

1.1.3.1.3. The fossilisation argument

Without attention to form the learner usually does not progress beyond the most basic level of communication (linguistic competence “fossilises”). Hence, grammar enables the learner to reach a higher level of language proficiency as the learner is aware of the underlying framework of the language.

1.1.3.1.4. The discrete item argument

Grammar allows the dividing up of the complex language system into smaller units. Thereby, it reduces the enormity of language to a systematic, digestible step by step learning. Thus, grammar enables a clear organisation of language teaching.

1.1.3.1.5. The rule-of-law argument

Grammar allows knowledge to be passed from teacher to learner since it is an organized system that can be taught, learned, and tested. In institutional situations such as school, grammar serves the demand for norms, order, and discipline.

1.1.3.1.6. The learner expectations argument

Students anticipate learning a foreign language through grammar instruction as they believe that is a more systematic and efficient approach. Learners' expectations provide a source of internal motivation to learn.

1.1.3.2. Arguments against Grammar Teaching

Just as arguments have been marshalled in favour of grammar teaching, likewise several cases have been made against it. Here are six of the major ones (Thornbury, 1999).

1.1.3.2.1. The knowledge-how argument

Language learning can be seen as a single skill or as a collection of skills. As a result, it is experiential learning, or learning by doing rather than simply studying the language, because learners struggle to convert declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge. That is to say, knowing the grammatical rules does not guarantee the ability to apply them. Thus, rather than studying grammar directly, it is preferable to let students experience the language in the classroom.

1.1.3.2.2. The communicative argument

Communication is learned by communicating; language should be used in order to be learned. In this way, through activities that simulate life-like communication, the learner will unconsciously pick up the grammar. As cited in Thornbury (1999), "Studying the rules of grammar is, therefore, simply a waste of time".

1.1.3.2.3. The acquisition argument

Krashen (1970, as cited in Thornbury, 1999) distinguishes between conscious language learning, which is the result of formal instruction, and unconscious language acquisition, which is

a natural process by which people pick up their first and other languages. He argues that success in a second language is due to acquisition i.e. exposing the learner to the input in an environment that triggers his or her innate learning capacities. Hence, learning grammar is of limited use for communication.

1.1.3.2.4. The lexical chunks argument

Learning lexical chunks is part of item learning like learning vocabulary or idioms and it plays an important part in language development. Learning language chunks makes it easier for the learner to react in real-life situations. This learning, which includes frequently used formulaic expressions, can substitute the study of abstract grammatical categories such as the present perfect or conditionals.

1.1.3.2.5. The natural order argument

Learners possess an innate Universal Grammar (Chomsky, n.d, as cited in Thornbury, 1999) which contributes to the process of explaining similarities in the developmental order of first and second/foreign language acquisition. Universal Grammar explains why all learners acquire some grammatical items before others, in a natural order, irrespective of the order in which they are taught. According to Thornbury (1999), in the natural order argument, the grammar of textbooks cannot be a mental grammar.

1.1.3.2.6. The learner expectations argument

There are learners who want to focus on communication and not on grammar. For instance, they may want to put their knowledge of the language into use; they may not like the learning of grammar; or they may have studied grammar for a long period.

1.1.4. Ways to Teach Grammar

Teaching grammar has long been regarded as a controversial aspect of language instruction. Therefore, there have been some theoretical ways that teachers may adopt and rely on in their teaching process while teaching grammar to English as a foreign language (henceforth, EFL) students. In the present chapter, two grammar teaching ways will be accounted for: explicit and implicit grammar teaching.

1.1.4.1. Explicit Grammar Teaching

Explicit grammar teaching can be defined as focusing on the presentation of language forms, explaining the grammar rules, and practicing them. Learners are aware of the fact that they are learning something, and they try to understand the rules deliberately. Larsen-Freeman (1995) suggests that instruction is essential to enhance the acquisition of grammar and to speed up the process even if the grammar is naturally acquired. This means that learners' attention to language forms can be reached only by instruction.

It should be informative to note that giving the rules upfront (i.e. deductive grammar teaching) or eliciting them after a text (i.e. inductive grammar teaching) does not change the type of instruction i.e. in both cases, it is explicit. According to Scott (1990), both deductive and inductive grammar teaching are explicit in approach because both of them address grammar rules. He clarifies that: "An explicit approach to teaching grammar insists upon the value of deliberate study of grammar rules, either by declarative analysis or inductive analogy, in order to recognize linguistic elements efficiently and accurately" (p. 779). Put another way, explicit grammar teaching takes place either deductively in which grammar rules are presented explicitly to the students by teachers, followed by rule drilling activities, or inductively by providing the students

with examples that contain the rules, and students are directed to pay attention to and discover the rules themselves.

1.1.4.1.1. Deductive Grammar Teaching

Deductive grammar instruction is teacher-centered instruction that represents a more traditional way of teaching in which the language is taught from the general to the particular, so learners understand the grammar rules and structures firstly. Next, they observe the examples that contain the rules, and finally they begin to produce their own examples.

The deductive way is called rule-driven learning. As stated by Thornbury (1999): “A deductive approach starts with the presentation of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied” (p. 29). In addition, this approach has been the bread and butter of language teaching around the world and still enjoys a monopoly in many course-books and self-study grammar books (Fortune, 1992).

Deductive grammar teaching is best seen in the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), where grammar instruction is commonly initiated by an explanation of the grammar structures. After that, practice takes place through translation exercises to and from the target language.

In fact, there have been various studies on the effectiveness of inductive and deductive methods of grammar teaching. The results of these different studies are mixed, however; some language educators (Robinson, 1996; Seliger, 1975) have argued that foreign languages are best learned deductively. In this respect, Eisenstein (1987) suggests that in a deductive approach, learners are in control during practice and have less fear of drawing an incorrect conclusion related to how the target language is functioning. Some language educators (Herron & Tomasello, 1992), on the other hand, emphasise the need for an inductive approach and criticise the deductive approach, believing

that students who are taught in a deductive way will pay less attention to language comprehension and more attention to grammar rules. In addition, there are others studies overlap both of the ideas by claiming that there is no distinction between the two approaches (Abraham, 1985; Rosa and O'Neill, 1999; Shaffer, 1989).

1.1.4.1.2. Inductive Grammar Teaching

Inductive grammar teaching, for Nunan (1999), is identified as a process where learners discover the grammar rules themselves by examining a set of examples. In an inductive approach, it is also possible to use a context for grammar rules. That is to say, learners explore the grammar rules in a text rather than isolated sentences. The teacher at first gives a text without mentioning the rules. The learners do exercises about the text and then they end up discussing the rules.

According to Thornbury (1999), the inductive way is also known as rule-discovery learning. He clarifies that: “an inductive approach starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred” (p. 29). To put it another way, learners study examples without being provided with the rule, and are expected to acquire comprehension of the rule from these examples.

This approach is often compared with the Audio-Lingual method .As Shaffer (1989) puts it, “an inductive approach was equated with the Audio-Lingual Method of the sixties where learning is defined as habit formation. Students learned by rote numerous examples of a structure until the use of that structure became automatic” (p. 395).

Teaching grammar explicitly is a good tool for grammar acquisition, but it has a downside. It does not allow learners to encounter and make use of what they learn. The lack of using language in communicative settings affects negatively learners' communicative competence.

1.1.4.2. Implicit Grammar Teaching

According to Ellis (2009), implicit instruction aims at teaching language rules to students without them being aware of it. Ellis (2015) states: “the underlying fluent use of language is not grammar in the sense of abstract rules or structures, but it is rather a huge collection of memories of previously experienced utterances” (p. 6). Moreover, he argues that when language is used either in speaking, writing, or listening we are more conscious of the communication rather than the rules and that we must have naturally acquired the knowledge of frequencies in language use. Thus, we have learned it implicitly. More specifically, implicit instruction exposes the learner to input, in which language rules are hidden, which leads to the learner learns it without having been explicitly exposed to the rule (Ellis, 2009).

One of the key goals of researchers is to find the most appropriate foreign language teaching/learning approach that will work best for speakers of other languages. Evidently, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to grammatical training. The type of instruction that is appropriate depends on the learning setting. It is crucial to strike a balance, taking into account the needs of the specific class being taught if necessary.

Aside from the debate over which way is best for teaching grammar, the major aim of grammar teaching is to make students aware of how language is constructed and how to produce accurate sentences both verbally and in writing. The common goal of all of the above ways is to teach grammar, but in different ways. Teachers may use all of the above approaches interchangeably depending on the purpose of the lesson, the level, the interest, and the style of students to ensure that instruction is effective and efficient.

1.1.5. Grammar in Some Language Teaching Methods and Approaches

Grammar instruction plays an important role not only in the language teaching process, but also in the development of curricula and textbooks used in all institutions where English is taught. Since grammar cannot be separated from language teaching and it occupies a significant part of it, there is a big emphasis on the importance of grammar teaching in the classroom. Still, it has received relative importance in the myriad language approaches and methods. During the last two centuries, different approaches and methods of grammar teaching have been applied to EFL classes and have displaced one another from time to time. The following is a brief account of the development of language teaching methods and approaches, as well as the position of grammar therein.

1.1.5.1. The Grammar-Translation Method

For centuries, grammar was taught in a very traditional way, with the primary emphasis on the written form of language and grammar being viewed as a set of rules. This way of teaching was called the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), used by language teachers for many years. At one time, it was called the Classical Method since it was first used in the teaching of the classical languages, Latin and Greek. As its name indicates, grammar is used as the starting point of instruction, and translation was regarded as one of the best techniques for learning a language. The aim of this method was primarily to provide students with accuracy in writing, and to allow them to understand grammar, as well as to enjoy and understand literary texts.

In the GTM, instruction is usually explicit, which means that teachers give verbal explanations of grammatical rules and teaching is highly form-focused. Besides, grammar is taught deductively i.e. the rules are presented before practical examples of the rules are given.

Mella (1998) briefly and clearly sums up the use of the GTM in the classroom by way of steps. The teacher comments on a new text sentence by sentence. Unknown vocabulary is written on the blackboard and difficult passages (or the whole text) are translated. The text from a previous lesson is checked for understanding and the students are required to read and translate the selected passages. The teacher corrects and comments on pronunciation if necessary. A grammatical structure is usually explained in the first language and written exercises are provided. Hence, in the GTM classroom, the teacher is the absolute authority. Classroom interaction, as a rule, is directed from the teacher to the students, and there is little chance for student-student interaction.

This method has been criticised for focusing too much on the written form of language and failing to develop the communicative abilities of learners, as they have a passive role in the lesson. Moreover, the language studied is that of literary texts, not of the real world.

1.1.5.2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method (DM), which focuses on spoken language, has been emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century as a reaction to the GTM, which focused exclusively on written language. As put by Larsen-Freeman(2011): “In fact, the DM receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students’ native language” (p. 46). That is to say, the idea behind the DM is that the learners can learn foreign languages in the same way that they do in their native language without recourse to their first language. Furthermore, teachers use actions, images, and pictures in the classroom to make meaning easier and clearer for students to understand and learn.

Under this method, grammar is taught inductively, and students make generalisations from what they have learnt, while the teacher assists them with questions that elicit answers containing the structure to learn.

When behaviourist accounts of language learning became popular in the 1920s and 1930s, the Direct Method morphed into the Audio-Lingual Method, particularly in the United States.

1.1.5.3. The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) began its journey during World War II, flourishing as the Army method. It is also widely known as the Aural-Oral Method and strongly dominated the field of education in the 1950s and 1960s. In this method, speech is given priority in foreign language teaching. Thus, the purpose of ALM is to use the target language communicatively.

This method is also influenced by structural linguistics and behavioural psychology. The former focuses on describing languages as they are spoken, with a strong emphasis on morphology, phonology, and syntax. The latter considers language simply a form of behaviour to be learned through the formation of correct speech habits (Thornbury 1999, p.21).

Unlike the DM, the ALM does not focus on teaching vocabulary. Rather, the teacher drills students in the use of grammar through the memorisation of forms. Grammar is taught explicitly, meaning that grammatical forms are induced from the examples given (Larsen-Freeman, 2011).

Since ALM was criticised as being not credible to help learners develop their ability to communicate appropriately, some linguists and researchers began to develop the concept of communicative competence which was distinct from linguistic competence sought by ALM.

1.1.5.4. The Communicative Approach

In the 1970s, there was a shift to the use of teaching methods that emphasise communication instead of concentrating solely on grammar. The Communicative Approach, or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), was the approach that embodied such a shift. As put by (Richards, 2006): “While grammatical competence was needed to produce grammatically correct sentences, attention shifted to the knowledge and skills needed to use grammar and other aspects of language appropriately for different communicative purposes” (p. 9). That is, CLT aims to develop the communicative competence of learners and as such to prepare them to use language appropriately in real-life situations outside the classroom.

To elaborate further, CLT has two versions, namely the ‘shallow-end approach’ and the ‘deep-end approach’ (Thornbury, 1999). The Shallow-end Approach to CLT is based on the idea that grammatical rules must first be learned and then applied in a communicative situation. In fact, this version does not reject grammar teaching completely and considers it as the main component of a syllabus of CLT courses. As for in the Deep-end Approach, grammar teaching is rejected because this approach is based on the belief that grammar is acquired unconsciously during performance in communicative situations, so it would be useless to teach grammar previously and explicitly (Thornbury, 1999).

1.1.5.5. The Competency-Based Approach

The last two decades have witnessed a major shift towards a Competency-Based Approach to education. It has been used in the teaching of English as a foreign language to prepare students to be competent in performing real-life tasks.

The Competency-Based Approach (CBA) is the most recent teaching approach of all those discussed so far. It focuses on observable and useful knowledge, skills, and abilities. It also comprises of teachers giving lessons based on concepts with the goal of fostering a deeper and broader understanding. In other words, this approach seeks to teach the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for the solution of real-life problems.

The Competency Based Approach to language teaching stems from Competency Based Education (CBE), which is a broad concept that emerged in the United States of America during the 1970's. It symbolises a notable educational movement that concentrates on learning outputs rather than learning inputs (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). CBE is supported with the expectation that students can apply what they learn in schools in the rest of their daily lives and build a sustainable life for themselves and society as a whole.

Finally, CBA is based on developing the competencies of learners in order to assist them in dealing with problems in real situations. It seeks to enable learners to apply what they have learned in other contexts. Therefore, this new approach came to relate school- life and real-life settings and to help learners to become competent in their society.

1.1.6. Grammar and Learners' Communicative Competence

The role of grammar in teaching English as a foreign language is to enable learners to express their thoughts correctly, either in speaking or in writing. Hence, learners cannot construct a well-formed sentence without grammatical knowledge. However, the study of grammar alone is insufficient to use language appropriately. It is, therefore, necessary for learners to acquire grammatical competence, but also the ability to communicate; that is, they should develop communicative competence.

Hymes (1972) proposes that language should be taught in communicative situations in order for learners to achieve communicative competence. Thus, it is believed that the core of language learning and teaching should be the development of communicative competence in a given language. Learners have to know the grammatical forms and structures and their meanings but they also have to know what forms of language are appropriate for a given situation. As such, communicative competence is concerned not only with what is grammatical but also with what is appropriate in a given social situation. It remains true, however, that without having complete grammatical knowledge, learners will find difficulty in expressing their thoughts precisely.

1.1.6.1. Communicative Competence

With the later trends in language teaching approaches and methodology and the rise of CLT in 1970s, communicative competence has become the main aim for second and foreign language learning. The term ‘communicative competence’ was first used by Dell Hymes in 1966 in his lecture delivered in a conference on ‘Developing the Language of the Disadvantaged Children’, then it was published as a paper entitled ‘On Communicative Competence’ in 1972 .

Hymes introduced the notion of “communicative competence” to challenge Chomsky’s notion of linguistic or grammatical competence. For Hymes, the ability to speak competently not only entails knowing the grammatical rules of a language, but also knowing what to say, to whom, in what circumstances, and how to say it (Scarcella, Andersen, and Krashen, 1990). In other words, Hymes (1972) emphasises that communicative competence does not only represent the grammatical component but also the sociolinguistic competence. He states that: “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (p. 278). To put it another way, being able to compose grammatically correct sentences does not necessarily ensure the acquisition of communicative competence. He adds that communicative competence should include the ability

to use grammatical structures in different situations to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings. Clearly then, communicative competence is the ability to use the language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communicative goals.

Since Hymes' contribution, a number of researchers have written about communicative competence, but a variety of definitions and models of the concept have been offered by different scholars. One model presented by the two Canadian applied linguists, Canale and Swain in 1980. Canale and Swain (1980) define communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication. Knowledge here refers to the knowledge that someone has about various aspects of language and language use, while skill refers to how one can use the knowledge in actual communication. This view is in keeping with Hymes' contribution that communicative competence includes various competences. Their model of communicative competence has become the most common among researchers in this field and it has highlighted the importance of grammar for effective communication.

According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence involves four areas of knowledge and skill. These include grammatical competence, which is concerned with mastery of the linguistic code including vocabulary knowledge as well as knowledge of morphological, syntactic, semantic, phonetic and grammatical rules. This competence enables the speaker to use the knowledge and the skills needed for understanding and expressing the literal meaning of utterances. Besides, there is sociolinguistic competence, which includes the knowledge of rules and conventions that underlie the appropriate language comprehension and use in different sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts. Moreover, there is discourse competence, which involves mastery of rules that determine ways in which forms and meanings are combined to achieve a meaningful unity of spoken or written texts in different genres that respect cohesion and

coherence. The last area is strategic competence, which refers to the mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that might be called into action either to enhance the effectiveness of communication or to compensate for breakdowns therein due to limiting factors in actual communication or to insufficient competence in one or more of the components of communicative competence. This model is shown in the following figure:

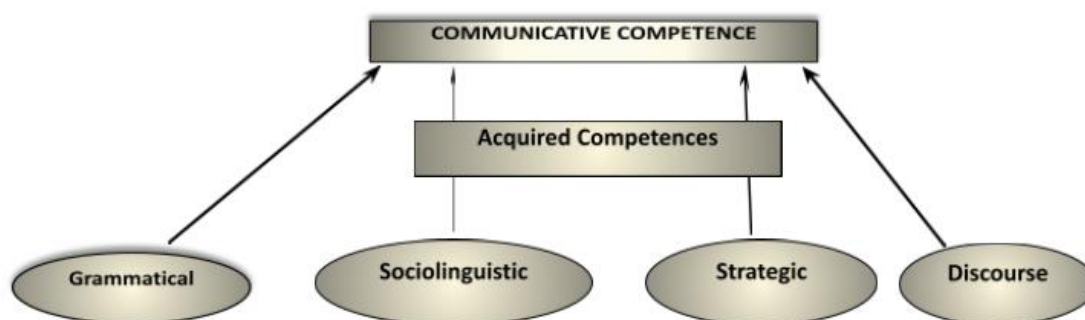


Figure 1.1.1. Canale and Swain's Model of Communicative Competence
(Adapted from Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 4)

1.1.6.2. Grammatical Competence Revisited

It can be assumed that grammatical competence in the context of learning a foreign language is a set of theoretical knowledge (rules) and language skills that are required for students to construct correct sentences, understand them, monitor grammatical errors, make judgments about correct and incorrect linguistic forms, and complete language testing tasks. However, in real-life situations, and in communicative classrooms, this is in no way sufficient.

Revisiting grammatical competence, it is but a numerical minority among the other concomitant competences, but at the same time it remains an integral part of a wider communicative competence, which constitutes a balanced entity including grammatical

competence as well as pragmatic competence, strategic competence, and sociocultural competence. As such, having proper grammatical competence coupled with other competences will assist learners in developing the ability to produce language both appropriately and accurately.

1.1.6.3. The Importance of Teaching Grammar in the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence

At any stage and in any circumstances, grammar teaching ought to be an important part of foreign language teaching. Grammar also plays a role in communication and it has many functions. Littlewood, (1993) identifies the major functions that grammar fulfills in communication which are:

- Grammar enables speakers to talk about things that are not present in the actual situation where communication takes place. In other words. It enables communication to be decontextualised and to serve our human need to look beyond the here-and-now.
- Grammar enables speakers to convey messages that are more subtle and abstract than would otherwise be possible. It thus enables language to reflect the complexity of our human thought processes.

Teachers should focus on the grammatical notions that are more effective and vital for meaningful communication, rather than teaching all grammatical instruction to all students. They should also be more attentive to provide meaningful exercises to help each individual student.

SECTION TWO: Culture Teaching and Learners' Communicative Competence

1.2.1. Definition of Culture

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language is widely recognised as requiring knowledge and understanding of the target culture. Culture as a way of life and the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others has been a subject of study to various disciplines such as education, sociology, anthropology, and ethnography. It is a highly complex and broad concept to define. Hence, there is no satisfactory definition that can be used in different contexts. In other words, culture is a complex issue, and researchers and scholars have attempted to define it to this day. Different researchers have defined it in different ways.

The anthropologist Edward Tylor (1871) describes culture as a “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a man as member of society” (p. 1). Tylor's definition indicates that culture is a broad concept that shapes human attitudes, social beliefs, values, and norms that are shared among members of a society. It includes patterns of behaviour as well as patterns of thought. In the same vein, Brown (2000) defines culture as “a way of life including the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time” (p.177). Another definition of culture is given by Kramsch (1998) who defines it as “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history and common imaginings” (p. 10). This refers to a group of people who share a set of basic values, norms and beliefs. Every discourse community has its own set of written or unwritten rules that it follows in order to achieve a common purpose.

Lee(2009) and Peterson(2004) categorise culture into two general types: big “C” culture and little “c” culture. Lee refers to big “C” culture as “the culture which represents a set of facts and statistics relating to the arts, history, geography, business, education, festivals and customs of a target speech society” (p. 78). For Peterson (2004), culture relating to grand themes is classified under big “C” culture including themes such as geography, architecture, classical music, literature, political issues, society’s norms, legal foundation, core values, history, and cognitive processes. On the other hand, little “c” culture refers to the daily aspects of life, social norms and customs. For Lee (2009) this type of culture is “the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture” (p. 78) including attitudes or beliefs and assumptions. Peterson (2004) defines little “c” culture as the culture which focuses on common or minor themes. It includes themes such as opinions, preferences or tastes, gestures, body posture, use of space, clothing styles, food, hobbies, popular music, popular issues, and certain knowledge like trivia, facts, etc.

1.2.2. Language and Culture

The relationship between language and culture has been a focus of attention for many years. Researchers, scholars, and others have attempted to understand how cultural factors may influence aspects of human behaviours such as language. Hence, many of them hold that language and culture are two inseparable entities. According to Bassnett (2002), “no language can exist without the context of culture, and no culture can exist without having the structure of language at its centre.”(p. 22). This supports the point that both need each other because the social lives of humans are primarily accomplished through the use of language, and when language is used in contexts of communication, it is linked to culture in a variety of ways.

Wei (2005) argues that language has a dual character: it is a means of communication as well as a carrier of culture. Language without culture is inconceivable, and vice versa. In this sense, language is regarded as a tool of communication that is used by everyone in their daily life to influence the thoughts and actions of others, to request and obtain information, and to share feelings and ideas. Besides, it is the primary medium for spreading one's culture. This implies that it is responsible for the transmission of cultural content. In the light of this relationship, it appears that the two are firmly linked. From the foregoing, it follows that language and culture are interwoven. Brown (1994) argues that "one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture" (p. 165). Furthermore, Byram (1989) claims that language is a medium for speakers to express their knowledge and perceptions of the world, and that the process of language learning involves not only the alphabet, vocabulary, and grammar but also learning the content of language, such as behavioural conventions and cultural norms. In other words, culture is transmitted via language. Without language, culture would be seen as meaningless, and as such it should not be separated from it. In the same line of thought, Kramsch (1998) identifies three links between language and culture in that language 'expresses', 'embodies', and 'symbolises' cultural reality. At this stage, some clarification is certainly in order.

First, language expresses cultural reality in that speakers of language express facts, ideas, events and beliefs about the real world through the use of language. They utter words that reflect their attitudes, beliefs, and points of view. Second, language embodies cultural reality, meaning that members of a social group do not only express experience, but also give meaning to their experience through language. They use verbal or non-verbal aspects of communication. The verbal aspects are the use of words to convey a message, including face-to-face conversations, interviews, reading newspapers or books, writing letters or e-mails etc. However, the non-verbal aspects are

the use of body language to convey a message, involving gestures and facial expressions. Third, language symbolises cultural reality in the sense that language is used by people to identify themselves. They view their language as a symbol of their social identity.

There is a very controversial hypothesis, namely the hypothesis of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. This hypothesis is known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which is commonly called language relativity. According to Chaer(1995), in this hypothesis, it is stated that language not only determines the pattern of culture, but also determine the way of thinking of the human mind. Therefore, it also influence its actions. Sapir emphasised the close relationship between language and culture and claim that language and culture cannot be separated from one another, so that one cannot understand the language without knowing its culture and the vice versa. Whorf, Sapir's student, expanded the idea. He did not only say there was an influence, but the relationship between language and culture was determinative. In other words, according to whorf, speakers of different languages will view the world differently as long as the language they use is structurally different (as cited in Wardhaugh, 1986).

To bring the discussion to a close, culture and language are two faces of the same coin. They are deeply intertwined, and each one of them affects the other. When it comes to learning foreign language, this requires learning vocabulary and grammatical rules in addition to the culture and norms of the target community.

1.2.3. The Importance of Culture in Language Learning

Culture is an important and integral aspect of human society. It plays a crucial role in language learning and contributes to the development of learners' communicative competence. Researchers like Byram (1997) Kramsch (1998), and Seelye (1993) argue that cultural elements

should be strongly incorporated into EFL classrooms. This may emphasise the need for integrating culture in the teaching of a foreign language. In other words, foreign language learners do not only need to develop their linguistic competence, but also to acquire socio-cultural competence for an eventual communicative competence. Tavares and Cavalcanti(1996) claim that culture should be taught in order “to increase students’ awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the target culture and their own, helping them to make comparisons among cultures” (p. 19). Since learning the linguistic elements is insufficient to engage learners in effective communication, mastering the cultural elements is extremely beneficial because learners who obtain cultural knowledge can develop more positive attitudes toward different cultures and become more tolerant of them. Therefore, they do not only learn about other cultures, but they also develop a better understanding of their own culture .That is to say, cultural insights are crucial, and EFL learners would be unable to communicate effectively without them.

To push further, the teaching of the target culture has an important role in language learning because EFL learners who are not exposed to the target culture have difficulty in communicating with natives. However, learners who master the target language culture will successfully communicate with the native speakers. In other words, having cultural knowledge would aid EFL students in acquiring proper cultural awareness and in learning to speak and write in culturally appropriate ways.

1.2.4. Culture in some Language Teaching Methods

The recognition of the cultural dimension as a key component in language learning and teaching has been one of the most significant changes in language learning and teaching over the last few decades. A wide range of methods fall under culture teaching. Scholars developed and

adopted these methods for the sake of bringing culture to the classroom. In what follows, several methods of teaching culture are discussed, each with a brief description.

1.2.4.1. The Grammar -Translation Method

In the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), the main factor to learn a foreign language is to get access to its literature. This is confirmed by Merrouche (2006) who claims that at the time of the GTM, namely in the nineteenth century, a FL was not studied for communicative purposes. Rather, FL teaching was devoted to reading and studying literature. As Allen (1985) states: “.....prior to 1960' s the lines between language and culture were carefully drawn, the primary reason for second language study in the earlier part of this century was access to the great literary masterpieces of civilization ” (as cited in Lessard Clouston, 1997, p. 1).

Some educators such as Long-Fu (2001), however, believe that a close examination of the technical characteristics of the method reveals that it was constantly involved in the comparison of the foreign and target languages through translation, hence forced into implicitly recognising that language is closely interwoven with every aspect of culture, and in fact, language is also culture.

1.2.4.2. The Direct Method

In the Direct Method, the use of culturally oriented pictures makes students aware of some of the everyday situations they might encounter in the foreign culture (Rivers, 1968; Omaggio, 1986). However, as Long-Fu (2001) states, the lack of a well-defined socio-linguistic and socio-cultural theoretical basis made the teaching of cultural content incidental and subordinated to the teaching of language in this method. In this case, teachers do not concern themselves with what is needed by the students in real-life situations.

1.2.4.3. The Audio-Lingual method

The Audio-Lingual Method(AML), for a reminder, speech is given priority in foreign language teaching. Thus, the main purpose of the ALM is to use the target language communicatively. Since the rise of this method, there was a shift to a more pragmatic concept of foreign language teaching. We notice a shift from topics concentrating on “big C” to aspects of everyday life (“little c”) which are presented in typical situations and contexts and often deal with the encounters of tourists with the ‘natives’ of the target country.

Within the audio-lingual method of foreign language teaching and learning, culture is often taught within the framework of situations and setting of the dialogues in the foreign country and is subordinated to the memorisation of useful phrases and the reproduction of typical social roles. This may include topics such as shopping in the supermarket, asking the way, in the restaurant, etc. (Neuner, 1997, p. 20).

1.2.5. Approaches to Teaching Culture

In the history of the teaching of culture, different approaches can be noticed. They are of different positions. According to Risager (1998), approaches to teaching culture can be divided into four types: the foreign cultural, the intercultural, the multicultural, and the transcultural approach.

1.2.5.1. The Foreign Cultural Approach

The foreign cultural approach is based on the concept of a single culture, associated with a specific population, with a specific language. This approach focuses on the culture of the country or countries where the language is spoken and deals neither with the learners' own country, nor

with the relation between the target culture and the learners' own. The target culture is taught with the aim of developing a native speaker's cultural competence.

The foreign cultural approach was dominant until 1980. It was losing ground because of its limitations as it ignores the relationship between cultures. Therefore, it was replaced by another approach that has been in a position to bridge the gap.

1.2.5.2. The Intercultural Approach

The intercultural approach replaced the foreign cultural approach. It is where people of different cultures could have interactions with each other. This approach is based on the concept of comparison. It brings the learners' culture in relation to the target culture. The goal here is to develop intercultural communicative competence. It aims to prepare learners for interaction with people of other cultures, to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values, and behaviours, and to help them to see that such interactions are an enriching experience (Byram et al., 2002). The intercultural perspective has been dominant from 1980 until now, as it enables learners to reflect on their own culture as well as an understanding of the target one.

1.2.5.3. The Multicultural Approach

The multicultural approach is based on the idea that several cultures coexist within the same state boundaries. It puts a specific focus on the cultural and linguistic diversity of the target language. The aim is to develop a communicative competence that enables learners to use the target language a multicultural use², speaking with people who belong to the society where the target language is spoken (e.g. France), but who also belong to another culture, (e.g. Moroccan

culture), and who may speak another language as their first language, (e.g. Moroccan Arabic) (Risager, 1998).

1.2.5.4. The Transcultural Approach

The transcultural approach is a recent approach that appeared as a result of internationalisation. It holds the foreign language as an international language. Its main aim is to teach learners to use it for international communication. Hence, it could be argued that it is not necessary at all to link the foreign language to any specific culture. Byram (1997) contends that although it is possible to introduce topics that are of a universal significance in all cultures, such an approach leaves learners without topics that are characteristic of a particular country, ones that "characterize its uniqueness for the language learner"(p.55). In addition to the above-discussed approaches, another approach is worth mentioning which is discussed next.

1.2.5.5. The Communicative Approach

In the 1970s, advancements in the discipline of sociolinguistics, which focused on language in society, resulted in a greater emphasis on communication within the cultural context of situation where a foreign language could be employed. According to Neuner (1997), cultural topics within the communicative syllabus concentrate on speech acts of everyday communication and the use of authentic texts according to everyday life experiences of ordinary people (how they work, how they live, spend their leisure time, travel, etc.). That is to say, the pragmatic and semantic functions represented through language in everyday ways of speaking and acting began to be recognised as the cultural component of language training. The instructional goal has become to enable learners to communicate within the cultural context of the target language, that is, to develop 'communicative competence' in the target language.

1.2.6. Culture and Learners' Communicative Competence

Culture is considered as a fifth language skill, in addition to listening, speaking, reading and writing, due to globalisation and the international role of the English language. (Tomalin, 2008). In addition, communication is a key goal when culture is included. Culture and communication are considered to be strongly linked because the latter enables the spread of the former.

For reminder purposes, Hymes (1972) introduced the concept of communicative competence (see chapter 1). In defining communicative competence, he argues about the significance of the social context, and the “appropriateness” or the sociocultural worth of utterances in any given context. In Canale and Swain’s model of communicative competence (see chapter 1), sociolinguistic competence constitutes an important component. On the other hand, Ek (1986) in his new model adds two more components to the list which are the socio-cultural competence, or the ability to function in several cultures, and the social competence, which means familiarity with differences in social customs, in addition to building confidence, empathy, and motivation to communicate with others.

Furthermore, understanding culture may help learners know, and encourage sympathy towards, the people of the target culture so that they have positive attitudes towards the target language. As such teachers should be aware of the place of cultural studies in EFL classroom and attempt to enhance students' cultural awareness and improve their communicative competence (Gao, 2006).

1.2.6.1. Sociocultural Competence

Learning the culture of a language is a process that involves acquiring sociocultural knowledge and developing cultural awareness, which gradually leads learners to a higher level of cultural outcome known as sociocultural competence. Sociocultural competence entails knowledge of values, beliefs, behaviour patterns, customs, traditions, language, and cultural achievements peculiar to society. This is not to say that grammar should be ignored, given that it is difficult to construct meaningful sentences or communicate appropriately without grammatical competence which is part of communicative competence. Sociocultural competence was once neglected in foreign language teaching; however, recently it has attracted more and more attention.

Soler and Jordà (2008) claim that: “sociocultural competence refers to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication” (p. 46). It is then the ability to act appropriately in specific situations, choose the appropriate form of social norms, and understand the meanings of words in specific contexts.

1.2.6.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

It is worth noting that, in an increasingly globalised world, foreign language teachers are being requested to incorporate intercultural competence into their lectures. Intercultural communication research is conducted in a variety of sectors, including education, communication studies, cultural anthropology, and behavioural psychology, to name a few. The term's complexity is increased by this broad perspective, making it difficult to describe. As a result, this section attempts to explain what intercultural competence is and what its goals are.

Intercultural communicative competence is defined as the "ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and [the] ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002, p. 10). It is important to note at this stage that the model to be discussed is that of Byram (1997), a model which he describes as being abstract of any particular culture or language. On Byram's account, an interculturally competent learner is someone who possesses all the components that make up his model, which he refers to as the five *savoirs*.

❖ **Knowledge (Savoirs)**

Knowledge is a mix of abstract understanding of social processes and concrete understanding of how these processes are manifested in interactions with people, places, and things. It can be divided into two key components: social groupings and their goods and activities in one's own country and those of others.

The first type of knowledge is acquired while a person is going about his daily activities, meeting with people and interacting with them; this is further explained by Byram when he says, "Through primary socialisation largely in the family and secondary socialisation usually in formal education, the individual acquires knowledge..." (p. 35). However, the second type of knowledge required of an intercultural speaker, understanding of interaction processes, is distinct from the first. It is an interlocutor's understanding of his own culture as well as the culture of the people with whom he is communicating. Byram clarifies that the significance of behaviour or document cannot be taken for granted. Similarly, the skills of discovery and interaction are the means of augmenting and refining knowledge about the other and knowing how to respond to specific features of interaction with a particular individual. (p.37)

❖ **Intercultural Attitudes (Savoir Etre)**

Byram explains this item as attitudes towards people who are perceived as different in respect of the cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviours they exhibit, which are implicit in their interaction with interlocutors from their own social group or others. In other words, in order to have an effective exchange of ideas and thoughts in an intercultural setting, an individual must be willing to accept and react to unusual behaviors and thoughts by expressing interest in learning more about the topic and avoiding any sign of discomfort so as not to offend the other part or introduce any awkward moments into the conversation. The relationship of the attitudes factor with others is one of interdependence. He adds that without relativising one's own and valuing others' experiences, interpreting and relating them is likely to be value-laden. Although entirely value-free interpretation and relating are unlikely, nonetheless the raising of awareness about one's own values allows a conscious control of biased interpretation. (p.34)

The objective of the current component, then, is to demonstrate to intercultural speakers the importance of the attitude they choose to adopt while engaging in international communication.

❖ **Skills of Interpreting and Relating (Savoir Comprendre)**

In this element, Byram explains how having sufficient information and a positive attitude for international communication is not always enough to maintain an optimal connection in an intercultural environment. He demonstrates that “declarative knowledge though necessary is not sufficient, and needs to be complemented by procedural knowledge of how to act in specific circumstances” (Byram, 1997, p. 36). Hence, it is about the ability to interpret and explain a document or event from another culture, as well as relate it to papers from one's own culture.

❖ **Skills of Discovery and Interaction (Savoir Apprendre/Faire)**

The ability to recognise significant phenomena in a foreign environment and to elicit their meanings and connotations, and their relationship to other phenomena, Byram calls this the skill of discovery. He adds that the skill of interaction is above all the ability to manage these constraints in particular circumstances with specific interlocutors.

Thus, an intercultural speaker must possess all of the aforementioned characteristics prior to reaching this stage; that is, understanding of socialisation concepts, the ability to choose the appropriate attitude, and sufficient knowledge are all required prior to reaching this level. Even if you did not plan for it to come out that way, not knowing what attitude to express in an intercultural contact could portray you as a rude person who does not respect others.

❖ **Critical Cultural Awareness (Savoir s'engager)**

This factor is the last component of Byram's model. It is more about the ability to critically analyse perspectives, activities, and things in one's own and other cultures and countries using explicit criteria. According to Byram, it demands the EFL student to serve as a mediator who is conscious of their own perspective and how their thinking is influenced by their own culture and thus does not view others as a reflection of themselves, but rather as an external source of information.

To conclude, an intercultural speaker should be aware of his own culture as well as the culture of the other, respect it, and strive to understand the many behaviours he may encounter. As a result, there are likely to be fewer conflicts. Byram summarizes the aspects that he believes are important for establishing intercultural communicative competence in the diagram below.

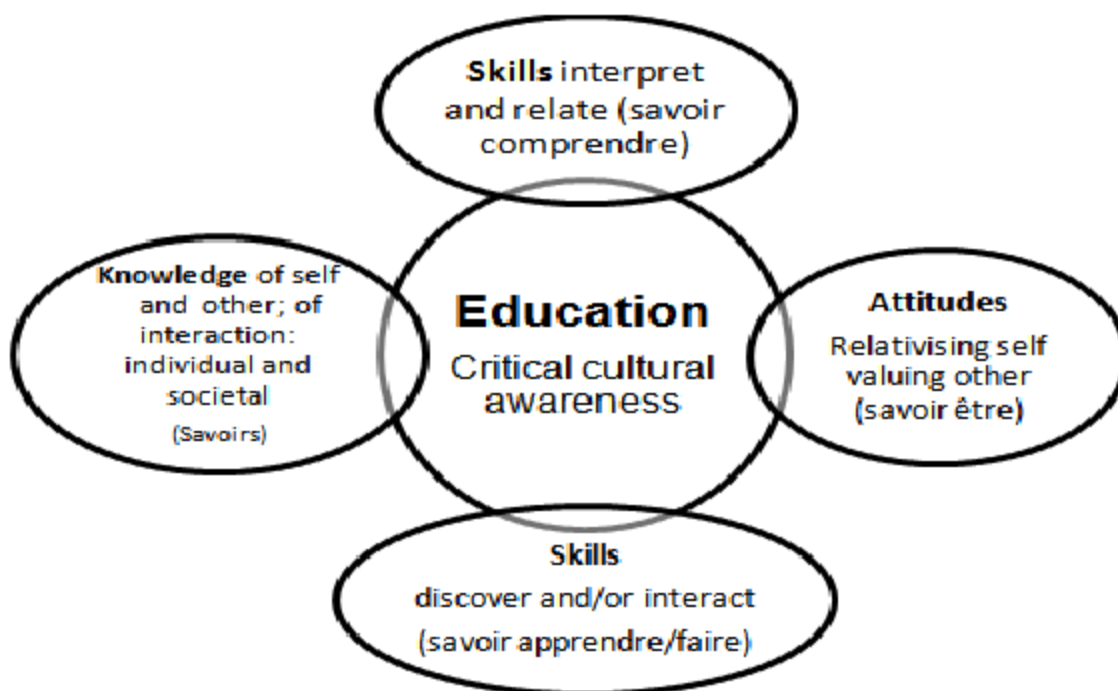


Figure 1.2.1. Factors in intercultural communication, adapted from Byram (1997:34)

1.2.6.3. The importance of Teaching Culture in the development of Learners' Communicative Competence

Foreign language pedagogy must seek maximum integration of FL and FL culture instruction since language and culture are intrinsically intertwined and form an inseparable whole. Integrating culture pedagogy with language pedagogy is necessary because the goal is to produce learners who can not only speak like native speakers but also help them build their cultural proficiency.

Risagar (2007, p. 1) said that “ apart from developing the students communicative (dialogic) competence in the target language, language teaching ought also as far as possible to enable students to develop into multilingually and multiculturally aware world citizens”. This

shows that mastering a foreign language takes more than merely understanding, speaking, and reading it. The mastery of a foreign language demands the knowledge of the culture of the people who speak it.

The goal of Teaching English as a foreign language has shifted from growing learners' English language knowledge and skills to developing communicative skills, i.e., developing their intercultural competence. In general, students' intellectual curiosity is awakened and fulfilled when they find that there is another way to convey thoughts, attitudes, wants, and needs while reading authentic discourse. According to Samovar et al. (1981), 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" (p. 3).

Inappropriate language use, misunderstanding, and breakdowns in communication occur not only between EFL learners and English native speakers but also between EFL learners themselves, due to a lack of cultural knowledge. This is due to the fact that English is not only studied as a foreign language but also as a second language. In addition, it is an international language. In this trend, Peck (1984) states: "Knowledge of the codes of behavior of other people is important if today's foreign language student is to communicate fully in the target language. Without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete. For FL students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken. Language learning should be more than the manipulation of syntax and lexicon" (p. 1). As a result, creating a cultural frame in English language instruction is critical in order for EFL learners to obtain sufficient knowledge of how to communicate with

people from other cultures. This means that a systematic teaching of the target culture is more than necessary in EFL classrooms since the underlying principle of nowadays' English learning is to develop intercultural communicative skills among its learners.

Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, the subjects of grammar and culture will continue to be topics of interest for researchers who are interested in meeting the needs of language learners. Grammar instruction is considered one of the most difficult issues in language teaching. Once grammar is believed to be integrated into language classes for its importance, language teachers find themselves facing the problem, among many other problems, of how best to teach grammar so that they meet the learners' needs. Moreover, learners will be able to use grammar conventions effectively if they learn them using the required strategies. It is true that learning a foreign language involves understanding the grammatical aspects. However, it involves being aware of its cultural features as well. Knowing about the target language cultural features; knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, customs, and lifestyles that plays an important role in making a good language user. Furthermore, culture is deeply embedded in all features of human life including language.

To sum up, grammar teaching is important in the process of English acquisition. Understanding the relationship between culture and foreign language teaching is necessary as well. Therefore, during the teaching of grammar and culture, the development of learners' communicative competence should be taken into consideration.

CHAPTER TWO: Investigating EFL Teachers' Balancing of Grammar and Culture. The Case of Mila University Centre

Introduction

The present research is designed to investigate the extent to which teachers balance the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. While the first chapter provided the theoretical part, this chapter is mainly designed in order to put the investigation into practice.

This chapter presents and analyses the collected data to answer the research questions. For reminder purposes, the set research questions go as follows : (1) How often do EFL teachers integrate grammar in the language classroom? (2) How often do they integrate culture in the language classroom? (3) Do EFL teachers equally integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects in their lessons for the development of learners' communicative competence? (4) How do they make such integration in the language classroom? (5) Are EFL learners aware of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture for the improvement of their communicative abilities? The chapter presents the participants, the data collection tools, and a description of both the students' and the teachers' questionnaires, followed by the analysis of the data. The findings are then discussed with a number of pedagogical recommendations for both teachers and students, in addition to the limitations of the study.

2.1. The Aims of the Research

The desire to contribute to further knowledge and understanding in the area of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture in the EFL classroom is the motivation behind the current study. That is, this study seeks to determine the extent to which teachers tend to balance the teaching of grammar and culture for the enhancement of learners' communicative abilities. In addition, it seeks to raise teachers' and learners' awareness of this important issue. Moreover, it is set to reveal teachers' practices and suggestions about integrating grammar and culture in EFL classrooms.

2.2. The Participants

2.2.1. The Students

Eighty two third year EFL students, from Mila University Centre, took part to answer the questionnaire. The population to which the sample belongs consists of 211 students, who are assigned to eight groups. The reason for choosing students of this particular level (third year) is because they have been introduced to the English grammar and culture during the first and second years, and they are to a larger extent, familiar with the grammatical and cultural aspects with an adequate level of communicative competence.

2.2.2. The Teachers

A sample of 17 teachers of English, both novice and experienced, contributed to our research work. Most of the teachers who kindly filled in the questionnaire are teachers of oral and written expression modules because they are at the heart of our issue i.e. there cannot be a better balance, of grammar and culture, than in such modules where teachers can draw on both components without running the risk of being out of topic.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

Two structured questionnaires are used to collect data about participants, opinions and attitudes. One is addressed to third year EFL students while the other is submitted to teachers teaching them. Both Microsoft Excel software and SPSS are used to make the statistical analysis of the obtained data.

2.4 The Students' Questionnaire

The current questionnaire is designed to elicit learners' opinions concerning the balancing of the teaching of grammar and culture, if at all, to improve their overall communicative competence.

2.4.1. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of nineteen open-ended, close-ended, multiple choice and clarification questions divided into four sections.

- **Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q4):**

This section investigates the participants' years spent studying English, attitudes towards learning English, the aims behind learning English, and what subjects they focus on in learning English.

- **Section Two: Learning Grammar and Culture (Q5-Q12):**

This is divided into two sub-sections. The first is about learning grammar (Q5-Q8). The first question aims to elicit learners' viewpoints on the necessity of grammar in language learning. The second tries to demonstrate whether or not teachers tend to develop in them grammatical knowledge. If participants reply in the positive, they need to state the frequency of such a practice. The third question seeks to determine students' satisfaction with the grammatical knowledge that their teachers present to them. In addition, the second sub-section addresses learning culture; it is

made up of four questions (Q9-Q12). The first question is set to determine the familiarity of students with the English culture. In the next question, they are required to express their opinion about the importance of integrating culture in language acquisition. The following item aims at investigating whether teachers tend to develop in their students cultural knowledge. If students reply in the positive, they need to state how often teachers tend to develop in them such knowledge.

- **Section Three: Developing Learners' Communicative Competence (Q13-Q14):**

In section three, students are asked to answer two questions that tackle students' views about communicative competence. Question thirteen (Q13) is meant to check participants' interest in using English in real-life communication. Next, in question fourteen (Q14), they are asked if their teachers attempt to develop in them communicative competence. If they reply in the negative, they are required to give suggestions for the development of their communicative competence.

- **Section Four: Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence (Q15-Q18)**

This section is regarded as the core part of this work. It investigates the balancing of the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of communicative competence. It consists of four questions. In the first question, five components of communicative competence are advanced, and students are asked to choose the one they want to develop. The second question, seeks to determine which component of communicative competence they have developed so far. The third question highlights whether or not teachers tend to create a balance in the teaching of grammar and culture. If the participants choose “no”, they need to choose whether teachers focus on grammar or culture. As a conclusion to this questionnaire, students are requested to indicate whether balancing between the teaching of grammar and culture enhances their overall communicative competence.

2.4.2. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The process of administering the questionnaire and collecting data took about two weeks.

2.4.3. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

In this section, the data obtained are analysed in terms of descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage). All along, summary tables are made use of.

2.4.3.1. Background Information

Q1. How long have you been studying English?

Table 2.1.

Years of studying English

Years	Number	Percentage
10 years	72	87.8%
More than 10 years	10	12.2%
Total	82	100%

When asked about the number of years spent in studying English, seventy two students have been studying English for 10 years, representing a majority 87.8 %. The other percentage (12.2%) represents 10 students who have been studying English for more than 10 years. This is a minority which remains exceptional.

Q2. In your opinion, learning English is:

Table 2.2.

Students' opinion about the difficulty/ easiness of learning English

Options	Number	Percentage
A difficult task	25	30.5%
An easy task	57	69.5%
Total	82	100%

From the table, 57 respondents think that learning English is an easy task, representing 69.5%. On the other hand, 25 respondents, representing 30.5%, believe that learning English is rather difficult, perhaps making them struggle to understand the different areas of the language.

Q3. What are your aims behind learning English?

Table 2.3.

Students' aims behind learning English as a foreign language

Options	Number	Percentage
To carry on my studies abroad	32	39%
To get a job	53	64.6%
To communicate with natives	33	40.2%
To build English cultural knowledge	34	41.5%
Others	1	1.2%

From the table above, we find that 39% of the students are learning English to carry on their studies abroad, and 64.6% of them aim at getting a job. An important proportion of 41.5% study it to know about the English culture, and an almost equal proportion want to use it for communication with natives (40.2%). A very tiny minority seems to have another aim which is to

please parents. In light of the results, more than half of the respondents learn English for the sake of getting a job.

Q4. What module do you focus on more in learning English? (You can tick more than one answer)

Table 2.4.

Modules focused on more

Options	Number	Percentage
Grammar	54	65.9%
Culture and civilisation	37	45.1%
Written expression	50	61%
Oral expression	61	81.7%
Literature	9	11%

When asked about which module they focus on the most in learning English, the results in table 4 reveal that 61 students representing a high percentage of (81.7%) focus more on oral expression and 50 students with a percentage of (61%) focus on written expression; it happens that both modules have a potential for the teacher to focus on grammatical and cultural features at a time. It might be true that such students give importance to both components of the language. Fifty four students give more importance to grammar, whereas a lower percentage of 45.1% (representing 37 students) are interested more in learning culture and civilization and the remaining 11% focus rather on literature. Contrary to those who opted for grammar, the last two proportions seem to favour culture. On the whole, it is noticed that most of the respondents focus on the oral

expression module targeting thus grammar and culture. It goes without saying that it is an adequate module to improve their communicative skills.

2.4.3.2. Learning Grammar and Culture

A/ Learning/ Teaching Grammar

Q5. Do you think that grammar is essential in language learning?

Table 2.5.

The necessity of grammar in language learning

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	80	97.6%
No	2	2.4%
Total	82	100%

This question aims to determine whether students consider grammar being essential in language learning. The results obtained show that 80 students, constituting a majority of (97.6%), admit that grammar is necessary in the learning process. In contrast, the remaining two students (2.4%) view it as not necessary. According to the results, grammar has a crucial role in language learning from the learners' perspective.

Q6. Do your teachers (namely of oral expression and written expression) develop in you grammatical knowledge?

Table 2.6.

Teachers' development of students' grammatical knowledge

Options	Number	Percentage
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Yes	67	81.7%
No	15	18.3%
Total	82	100%

This question aims at investigating if teachers develop grammatical knowledge in their students. The table shows that 67 respondents (81.7%) replied in the positive while the remaining 15 students (18.3%) replied in the negative. Thus, the majority of teachers view that grammar is essential in language learning. As a result, they work on developing grammatical knowledge in their students.

Q7. If yes, how often?

Table 2.7.

Frequency of teachers' tendency to develop grammatical knowledge

Options	Number	Percentage
Often	17	23.9%
Sometimes	51	71.8%
Never	3	4.2%
Total	71	100%

The subjects who answered the previous question in the affirmative are further asked to state how often the teacher provides them with grammatical knowledge. Seventeen students, representing 23.9% of the sample, reveal that their teachers often provide them with grammatical knowledge. The majority (71.8%) choose the second option “sometimes”, which indicates that most teachers tend not to integrate grammar in every lesson they teach. This is understandable

enough for every single lesson has its specific objective. Still, 3 respondents (4.2%) show that their teachers neglect grammar when teaching.

Q8. Are you satisfied with the grammatical knowledge that your teachers present to you?

Table 2.8.

Students' satisfaction with the presented grammar knowledge

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	50	61%
No	32	39%
Total	82	100%

This item aims at determining whether students are satisfied with the grammatical knowledge that their teachers present to them. The analysis of the results demonstrates that 50 students (61%) are satisfied with what is presented to them. Contrastively, 32 students with a percentage of (39%) of the whole population claim that teachers' presentation of grammar is not satisfactory to them. For that, it can be said that teachers can reach students' satisfaction if they succeed to meet their needs and target their interests; however, neglecting those factors might well slow down or handicap the process of learning.

B/ Learning/ Teaching Culture

Q9.What is the extent of your familiarity with the English culture?

Table 2.9.

Students' extent of familiarity with the English culture

Options	Number	Percentage
Much	29	35.4%

Little	48	58.5%
Very little	5	6.1%
Total	82	100%

This question is designed to know the extent of the students' familiarity with the English culture. The findings indicate that 29 students (35.4%) are much familiar with the English culture. Forty eight out of 82 students state that they have little familiarity while the rest, constituting (6.1%), confess their unfamiliarity with the English culture which may be caused by their ignorance about its importance, or simply by their lack of interest.

Q10. Do you think that integrating culture in the learning process gives you access to a better acquisition of English?

Table 2.10.

English acquisition through culture integration

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	79	96.3%
No	3	3.7%
Total	82	100%

This item seeks to explore students' perspectives regarding the integration of culture for a better language acquisition. The highest percentage (96.3%) of students are for the idea that integrating culture in the learning process gives them access to a better acquisition of English. On the other hand, a tiny minority of (3.7%) finds it otherwise.

Q11. Do your teachers (namely of oral expression and written expression) develop in you cultural knowledge?

Table 2.11.

Teachers development of students' cultural knowledge

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	57	69.5%
No	25	30.5%
Total	82	100%

This question investigates whether or not teachers develop cultural knowledge in their students. The table above shows that 57 students (69.5%) replied in the positive while the remaining 25 students(30.5%) replied in the negative. Thus, students are said to have a tendency to view that culture is needed in language learning.

Q12. If yes, how often?

Table 2.12.

Frequency of teachers' tendency to develop cultural knowledge

Options	Number	Percentage
Often	17	26.2%
Sometimes	39	60%
Never	9	13.8%
Total	65	100%

The subjects are further asked to state how often the teacher provides them with cultural knowledge. Seventeen students, representing 26.2% of the sample, reveal that their teachers often provide them with cultural knowledge. Thirty nine respondents, choose the second option “sometimes” while 9 respondents (13.8%) show that their teachers never include any cultural knowledge when teaching.

2.4.3.3. Developing Learners’ Communicative Competence

Q13. Are you interested in using English in real-life communication?

Table 2.13.

Students’ interest in using English in real-life communication

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	80	97.6%
No	2	2.4%
Total	82	100%

According to table14, the majority of students (80 out of 82, representing 97.6%) claim that they are interested in using English in real-life communication. The remaining 2.4% do not show any interest in communicating in English in real-life situations which may be caused by shyness, hesitation, and lack of motivation. Also, it may be due to their weaknesses in some aspects of language that makes it difficult for them to practise the language outside the classroom.

Q14. Do your teachers attempt to develop in you communicative competence? If no, what are your suggestions for them to develop your communicative competence?

Table 2.14.

Developing students' communicative competence

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	76	92.7%
No	6	7.3%
Total	82	100%

The yielded data reveal that 76 students, the equivalent of 92.7%, acknowledge that their teachers attempt to develop their communicative competence. In comparison, the remaining participants (7.3%) indicate the reverse situation. In suggestion, they state that teachers should vary discussion topics and make the lessons based on learners' needs in communication. One student suggests that teachers should use advanced grammar when addressing excellent students in grammar and using intermediate (simple) grammar with average ones. Others insist on devoting more time to presentations and group discussions in order to be competent communicators. It can be said that the development of learners' communicative competence is the main concern for most teachers.

2.4.3.4. Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence

Q15. Which component of communicative competence do you like to develop?

Table 2.15.

Students' preferred component of communicative competence

Options	Number	Percentage
Grammatical competence	11	13.4%
Pragmatic competence	2	2.4%
Sociocultural competence	9	11%
Discourse competence	5	6.1%
Strategic competence	1	1.2%
All of them	54	65.9%
Total	82	100%

This question deals with the students' attitudes towards the preferred component of communicative competence. The results reveal that more than half of the participants (54) with a percentage of 65.9% affirm that they like to develop all components of communicative competence in order to enhance a high level of communication skills. This means that they prefer a balanced version of communicative competence. More than thirteen per cent of students prefer to develop grammatical competence while 11% opt for sociocultural competence. Pragmatic competence and strategic competence are estimated by students with a percentage of 2.4% and of 1.2%, respectively. The results indicate that a big proportion of students are more interested in developing a balanced communicative competence with all its components.

Q16. Which component of communicative competence have you so far developed?

Table 2.16.

Components of communicative competence so far developed

Options	Number	Percentage
Grammatical competence	41	50%
Sociocultural competence	23	28.1%
Discourse competence	9	11%
Pragmatic competence	3	3.6%
Strategic competence	4	4.9%
None of them	2	2.4%
Total	82	100%

Concerning this item, the focus is on which component of communicative competence students have developed. Clearly, 50% of the students have developed grammatical competence. Conversely, 28.1% opt for sociocultural competence. Pushing further, 11% state that they have promoted discourse competence. Additionally, 3.6% affirm that they have enhanced pragmatic competence, and an approximate proportion of 4.9% have succeeded to develop strategic competence. Finally, only 2.4% have failed to develop any component of communicative competence. These answers show that half of the students have developed grammatical competence but less so far sociocultural competence.

Q17. Do your teachers (namely of oral and written expression) create a balance in teaching them?

Table 2.17.

Teachers' balancing of grammar and culture teaching

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	13	15.9%
No	69	84.1%
Total	82	100%

This question enquires about whether teachers tend to create a balance in teaching grammar and culture. The table above shows that the majority of the students (84.1%) indicate that teachers do not balance between the teaching of grammar and culture. The remaining 15.9% say they rather try to establish a balance in teaching them.

In case students answered "no", we asked them the following question:

Q18. If no, do they:

Table 2.18.

Teachers' focus on grammar or culture

Options	Number	Percentage
Focus more on grammar	45	61.6%
Focus more on culture	28	38.9%
Total	82	100%

The basic purpose of this question is to know what language area teachers focus on more in their teaching: grammar or culture. Table 18 illustrates students' choices, demonstrating that 45 out of 82 students (61.6%) claim that their teachers focus more on grammar. By contrast, the rest of the sample who constitute (38.9%) affirm that focus is put more on culture. The results provide a clear indication that teachers mostly focus on grammar in their teaching. It may be explained that those teachers consider grammar as the most important part of language learning and teaching, or that their students need more grammatical than cultural knowledge. Still, the list of explanations is open.

Q19. The balance between the teaching of grammar and culture enhances your communicative competence.

Table 2.19.

Enhancement of learners' communicative competence through the balance of grammar and culture teaching

Options	Number	Percentage
Agree	37	45.1%
Strongly agree	39	47.6%
Disagree	4	4.9%
Strongly disagree	2	2.4%
Total	82	100%

To bring the questionnaire to a conclusion, this question is designed to investigate students' perceptions of the importance of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of their communicative competence. The results indicate that 37 students (45.1%)

“agree”, with the potential importance of such a balance, and that 39 students (47.6%) happen to "strongly agree". However, those who said that they “disagree” with the above statement constitute (4.9%), with 2.4% who “strongly disagree”. Clearly, this is a very tiny minority. What can be deduced from the results is that it is high time for teachers to go towards balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners’ communicative competence.

2.5. The Teachers’ Questionnaire

The teachers’ questionnaire is the second tool for collecting data; it is administered to the teachers of the University Centre of Mila. Its chief interest is to find out their different perspectives, practices, and suggestions about the subject of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners’ communicative competence.

2.5.1. Description of the Teachers’ Questionnaire

The questionnaire is administered to 17 English language teachers at the University Centre of Mila. It is divided into four sections, consisting of fifteen questions of different types: open-ended, close-ended, clarification questions, and multiple-choice questions.

- **Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q2):**

This section consists of two questions. It attempts to collect information concerning teachers’ scientific degree (Q1), and their experience (Q2).

- **Section Two: Teaching/ Learning Grammar and Culture (Q3-Q8):**

Section two is divided into two sub-sections. The first aims to uncover the teachers’ viewpoints about teaching and learning grammar (Q3-Q5). Question three (Q3) aims to elicit teachers’ opinions about the importance of integrating grammatical aspects in language teaching and learning. The next question (Q4) is set to measure the frequency of grammar integration in

their lessons. Question five (Q5) explores teachers' perspectives regarding the integration of grammar for a better language acquisition. Moving to the second sub-section which is designed to investigate teachers' attitudes toward teaching and learning culture (Q6-Q8), question six (Q6) digs into teachers' opinions about the importance of including cultural aspects in the language learning and teaching process, followed by question seven (Q7) that targets the respondents' frequency of culture integration in their lessons. Item 8 taps on teachers' viewpoints about the integration of culture for a better language acquisition.

- **Section Three: Learners' Communicative Competence (Q9-Q11)**

The third section consists of three questions. Focus is on teachers' opinions about their students' communicative competence. Question nine (Q9) asks teachers to rate their students' level of communicative competence. The next question (Q10) aims at discovering teachers' viewpoints on English proficiency in relation to two main components of communicative competence. The last item is an open-ended question in which teachers are invited to contribute some suggestions to improve learners' communicative competence.

- **Section Four: Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence (Q12-Q15)**

The last section covers four questions (Q12-Q15). It rotates around improving learners' communicative competence through the balancing of the teaching of grammar and culture. The first question (Q12) invite teachers to situate themselves regarding the relative importance of grammar and/ or culture. The second question (Q13) requires teachers to report whether they integrate culture and grammar equally in their sessions, with justifications. The third item (Q14) asks teachers if their students are aware of the importance of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of their communicative competence. The last question (Q15)

invites teachers to indicate the module that enables them to create a balance between teaching grammar and culture.

2.5.2. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

In a period of three weeks, we administered the questionnaire to 17 teachers in the department of English at Mila University Centre. Most respondents were teachers of oral and written expressions.

2.5.3. Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The data collected are analysed in terms of descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage). All along, summary tables are made use of.

2.5.3.1 Background Information

Q1. What scientific degree do you hold?

Table 2.20.

Teachers scientific degree

Options	Number	Percentage
License (BA)	0	0%
Master(MA)	9	53 %
Doctorate(PhD)	8	47 %
Total	17	100 %

The data obtained reveal that 9 respondents (53 %) have a Master degree, while the remaining 8 respondents (47 %) are doctors.

Q2. How long have you been teaching English?

Table 2.21.

Teachers' years of experience

Options	Number	Percentage
[1-5[years	6	35.3%
[5-10[years	6	35.3%
More than 10 years	5	29.4%
Total	17	100%

When asked about their years of experience, 5 respondents (29.4%) indicate that they have an experience of more than ten years. Six teachers (35.3%) state that the period they have spent teaching English ranges from five to ten years, whereas the rest 35.3%, being an equal proportion, have less than five years of experience. Thus, most of the teachers have a good experience in teaching and this should be beneficial for our research.

2.5.3.2. Teaching / Learning Grammar and Culture

A/Teaching/ Learning Grammar

Q3. Do you think it is important to include grammatical aspects in language learning and teaching?

Table 2.22.

Teachers' attitudes toward the importance of including grammatical aspects in language learning/ teaching

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	100%
No	0	0%
Total	17	100%

Table 22 reflects that all teachers (100%) think that grammar is important in language learning/ teaching, justifying that :

- Teaching grammatical aspects in language learning and teaching can help the learners acquire, speak, and write good English. There is no language without grammatical rules. Learners combine linguistic elements together to convey a specific meaning.
- Grammar is the backbone of any language and it is one of the components of communicative competence which is the ultimate aim of foreign language. teaching and learning.
- No language skill is completely learned without an adequate mastery of grammar rules.
- Grammar is an important aspect of learning a language. We cannot ignore its role and its importance.
- Grammar is the basis for properly speaking and writing a foreign language. However, in modern times it needs to be taught in an integrated way with other disciplines.
- Students should be given the chance to know about the grammatical system of the English language. They need to be able to write grammatically correct sentences so that they can communicate effectively.
- Grammar is the basic foundation of the language system
- Mastering grammar helps students to understand the language and communicate comprehensibly.

Q4. How often do you integrate grammar in your lessons?

Table 2.23.

Frequency of integrating grammar into lessons

Options	Number	Percentage
Often	13	76.5%
Sometimes	4	23.5%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	17	100%

This items draws on the frequency of grammar integration in lessons. The higher percentage recorded (76.5%) indicates that grammatical aspects are taught in classes by the overwhelming majority of teachers. The remainder (23.5%) claim that they “sometimes” integrate it, while no one ticks the options “rarely” and “never”. This means that grammar is highly taught in English language teaching classrooms.

Q5. Do you think that integrating grammar in the teaching-learning process gives your students access to a better acquisition of English?

Table 2.24.

English acquisition through grammar integration

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	100%
No	0	0%
Total	17	100%

The fifth question of this section seeks to investigate the teachers' opinions and views concerning the role of grammar in English acquisition. The results above demonstrate clearly that all the teachers (100%) agree that grammar is an essential tool for a better acquisition of English.

B/Teaching/ Learning Culture

Q6. Do you think that including the target culture in language learning and teaching is important?

Table 2.25.

The importance of including the target culture in language learning/ teaching

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	100%
No	0	0%
Total	17	100%

This question aims to investigate whether teachers believe that the inclusion of culture in their lessons is of any importance. All the respondents (100%) admit that such practice is important. Here are some of their comments:

- Culture is another skill that helps in learning any foreign language. By knowing the cultural elements, the learners will enhance their acquisition of the English language.
- Culture constitutes one of the many components of communicative competence that teachers endeavour to develop.
- Teachers should expose students to the cultural specifications of the target language to help them know when, where, and under which circumstances a grammatical structure should be used.

- Culture is the key element in learning any language. We cannot separate culture from learning a language.
- Language and culture are linked. You cannot understand and learn a language without knowing its culture.
- The integration of culture assists successful cross-cultural communication.
- Culture enhances the foreign language learning process; it promotes tolerance and acceptance as it gives learners the chance to learn about the target culture.

Q7. How often do you include cultural aspects in your lessons?

Table 2.26.

Frequency of teachers' inclusion of cultural aspects in lessons

Options	Number	Percentage
Often	7	41.2%
Sometimes	9	52.9%
Rarely	1	5.9%
Never	0	0%
Total	17	100%

Responses to this question show that roughly more than half of the teachers (52.9%) “sometimes” include culture in their lessons. Forty one per cent of teachers report that they often address cultural aspects in their lessons. However, only one respondent, that is (5.9%) of the whole sample which is equivalent to one teacher, confirms that he/she rarely integrates culture in his/ her lessons. No one picked the “never” option. In the light of these findings, for the majority of the participants, culture occupies an important place in the teaching of English.

Q8. Do you think that integrating culture in the teaching and learning process gives your students access to a better acquisition of English?

Table 2.27.

English acquisition through culture integration

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	100%
No	0	0%
Total	17	100%

The aim of this question is to identify teachers' position regarding the role of culture integration in the teaching and learning process for a better English acquisition. Clearly, all teachers (100%) assert that integrating culture gives learners access to a better acquisition of English.

2.5.3.3. Learners' Communicative Competence

Q9. How do you rate the communicative competence of your learners?

Table 2.28.

Learners' level in communicative competence

Options	Number	Percentage
Poor	5	29.4%
Average	11	64.7%
Good	1	5.9%
Total	17	100%

This question invites teachers to rate their learners' level of communicative competence. Surprisingly, only one teacher has reported that his/ her learners have a good level, and this is after three years of study. Besides, 11 teachers (64.7%) assert that their students have an average level, while the remaining 5 teachers (29.4%) indicate that they have a rather poor level. In the light of

the results obtained, one may deduce that almost all teachers in our sample are of the idea that learners are far from having developed a full communicative competence.

Q10. A learner is said to be proficient in English if:

Table 2.29.

Elements of learners' proficiency in English

Options	Number	Percentage
He uses grammatically correct English	4	23.5%
He can express the appropriate meanings in a wide range of sociocultural contexts	3	17.6%
Both of them	9	53%
Others	1	5.9%
Total	17	100%

This question aims to determine what, according to the sample, constitutes the elements of learners' English proficiency. Four teachers (23.5%) believe that a learner is proficient in a language when he use grammatically correct English. On the other hand, 3 teachers (17.6%) believe that students are proficient when they can express the appropriate meanings in a wide range of sociocultural contexts. Clearly, while the former proportion has a grammatical focus, the latter is rather cultural in orientation. However, 9 teachers (53%) consider students as being proficient in English when they secure grounds in characteristics. This emphasises that in the development of their learners' communicative both dimensions; they focus on both grammatical correctness and sociocultural appropriateness. Only one of the respondents provides other ideas. He/ she adds that the learner should be fluent in speech and strategic in conversation.

Q11. What do you suggest to effectively promote learners' communicative competence?

This question is open-ended, intended to collect the teachers' suggestions to effectively promote learners' communicative competence. Their comments are cited as follows:

- ❖ Learners should be exposed to the target language as it is used by native speakers (authentic materials). They need to know how to communicate effectively; using different grammatical structures in specific social situations.
- ❖ Creating contexts and devoting time for the practice of each component of it, with teachers feedback and guidance.
- ❖ Exposing them to authentic written and oral structures of discourse. Giving them time to practice at their own pace.
- ❖ Doing activities at the classroom like role plays, project work, group discussion, and collaborative tasks.
- ❖ Using interactive classroom activities as a basic element to improve learners communicative abilities.

2.5.3.4. Towards Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence

Q12: Which of the following statements best reflects your belief?

Table 2.30.

Teachers' beliefs about the components improving learners' communicative competence

Options	Number	Percentage
Grammar is more important than culture in improving students' communicative competence	4	23.5%
Culture is more important than grammar in improving	3	17.6%

students' communicative competence		
An equal balance between grammar and culture improves students' communicative competence	10	58.9%
Total	17	100%

In response to the question about teachers' beliefs regarding what best constitutes learners' communicative competence, the answers tabulated above denote that most of the teachers (58.9%) believe that an equal balance between grammar and culture improves students' communicative competence. This is not the case for the rest of the sample; (23.5%) of the remaining teachers report that grammar is more important than culture in improving students' communicative competence, whereas (17.6%) believe that culture to be more important. In view of such results, an important proportion of the sample seems to favour a balance between the teaching of grammar and culture which is promising.

Q13.Do you integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects equally in your sessions to develop your learners' communicative competence?

Table 2.31.

Equal integration of the grammatical and cultural aspects

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	58.9%
No	7	41.1%
Total	17	100%

This item further explores whether teachers do integrate equally the grammatical and cultural aspects in order to develop learners' communicative competence. From their answers, (58.9%) give equal attention to both components whereas the rest, constituting (41.1%) happen not to treat them equally.

- **If “yes”, how? / If “no”, why not?**

When invited to provide their justifications, those who answered “yes” state on the whole that:

✓ Yes, but it all depends on the objectives of the lesson, and this is by varying the activities such that they cover both of them.

✓ The actual relationship between language and culture cannot be separated. I integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects equally by using electronic media, newspapers, magazines, audios, and videos.

✓ I try to get their attention first by discussing interesting topics about culture and let them free to express their opinions. Then, I collect the common grammatical mistakes and corrects them.

In short, they succeed to create a balance between the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of their learners’ communicative competence through practising the cultural and grammatical knowledge that they have, using different activities, and several materials.

Those who answered “no” clarify on the whole that :

✓ Most of the modules I have been teaching are linguistics-related.

✓ Because of many factors especially time. Generally in oral sessions we don’t give much importance to grammar. We correct grammatical mistakes but implicitly.

✓ It depends on the content of my lesson. Sometimes, the focus is on grammatical more than cultural aspects and other times the emphasis is put on the cultural aspects rather than the grammatical ones.

✓ Because time isn't sometimes enough. Most teachers focus on grammar teaching rather than expanding more students' knowledge towards the cultural aspects of the language.

To sum up, teachers do not integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects equally to improve learners' communicative competence in their sessions due to the nature of the modules taught, lack of time, and the content of lessons.

Q14: Do you think that your students are aware of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture for the development of their communicative competence?

Table 2.32.

Learners' awareness of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	2	11.8%
No	15	88.2%
Total	17	100%

Table 32 indicates that most teachers (88.2%) hold that their learners lack awareness of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture for the development of their communicative competence. The rest of the respondents (11.8%) see that their students are rather aware of the importance of such a balance. Accordingly, due to their lack of awareness about the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture to enhance their communicative abilities, learners may face difficulties and struggle to maintain a particular level of communicative competence. That is, they may either have grammatical gaps in their utterances or produce them inappropriately.

Q15. In which module do you feel that you could balance between the teaching of grammar and culture to develop learners' communicative competence?

This question taps on teachers' opinions regarding which modules allow them to balance between the teaching of grammar and culture to develop their students' communicative competence. Most of the respondents, representing (35.3%) opt for oral expression classes. (5.9%) of teachers opt for written expression while some, representing (23.5%), say it is the written expression and oral expression modules. They consider them as the ideal modules where communicative competence can be promoted. Two teachers representing a percentage of (11.7%) see that they can balance between them in speaking modules. Another teacher (5.9%) claims that it should be included in literature, oral expression, culture, and written expression modules. Unexpectedly, one teacher states that it should be part of the teaching of any module and that learning languages involves including such aspects in all modules together. One respondent, representing (5.9%) opt for the civilisation and grammar modules. The remaining respondent, representing (5.9%) prefers to have it in the methodology module.

2.6. Discussion of the Main Findings

2.6.1. The Students' Questionnaire

The overall analysis of the students' questionnaire yields a number of insights regarding the importance of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. The study results reveal the fact that the majority of students are interested in learning English and developing communicative competence with all its components (Q15). Moreover, half of the students have developed grammatical competence (Q16). That may indicate that their teachers focus on grammar rather than other aspects of language in their teaching. Besides, these students have provided a clear indication that most of their teachers focus

more on grammar in their teaching of English (Q18). It may be explained that those teachers consider grammar as a crucial part of language learning and teaching. Furthermore, most students are aware of the importance of integrating both grammatical and cultural aspects equally in lessons which is likely to help promote their communicative abilities (Q19).

In a nutshell, it is high time for teachers to go towards balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of a full communicative competence.

2.6.2. The Teachers' Questionnaire

Although the results of the students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire are not clear-cut, they generously gave us the opportunity to analyse teachers' achievement of the equal integration of the grammatical and cultural aspects in their lessons.

On a close inspection of responses, teachers are undoubtedly aware of the importance of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture for the enhancement of learners' communicative competence. The integration of the grammatical and cultural aspects in the language classrooms is of divergent extents. Teachers highly integrate grammar in their lessons (Q4) while culture is less integrated so far (Q7). Notably, teachers do not follow the same direction. They have different perspectives concerning the equal integration of grammar and culture for the enhancement of learners' communicative competence. The teachers' questionnaire reveals that more than half of the teachers' sample support the idea of balancing the teaching of grammar and culture since this enables learners to improve their communicative competence (Q12). While there are those which in favour of either focusing on the teaching of grammar or to devote the main attention to teaching culture which makes learners proficient in English (Q13). Teachers go further to give glimpses of their personal suggestions about how to create such a balance. They achieve such a balance by

using several ways, for instance, applying the grammatical and cultural knowledge in solving activities and using several materials which are useful for learners in order to improve their communicative competence. Others fail due to the lack of time, the content of lessons, and the nature of the modules taught (Q13). In addition, teachers' responses clearly show their perspectives towards students' awareness concerning the importance of equally integrating grammatical and cultural aspects for improving their communicative competence. According to the most of them, students lack such awareness (Q14).

To conclude, teachers picked oral expression and written expression as the ideal modules where communicative competence can be promoted through creating a balance between the teaching of grammar and culture.

2.7. Recommendations for Pedagogy

Some recommendations are suggested that we assume will be useful and practical for both EFL learners and teachers.

2.7.1. Recommendations for Students

1. Reaching a high level of communicative competence require the mastery of the grammatical and cultural aspects of language because they play a crucial role in the process of learning a foreign language. Knowing just the linguistic rules and structures is insufficient; knowledge of the rules of the sociocultural context need to be equally developed.

2. Students should realise the importance of the English culture and try to know more about it.

3. Students should be aware of the idea that “practice makes perfect”. They have to put into practice the grammatical and cultural knowledge to increase their ability to communicate properly.

4. They require feedback from their teachers for a better communicative competence and seek other ways to express their ideas in case of a communication breakdown via the use of strategic competence.

5. Students should be always involved in all cultural and grammatical activities in the classroom.

6. Students should utilise authentic materials that hold the foreign culture and permit them to make use of the grammatical knowledge.

2.7.2. Recommendations for Teachers

1. Teachers should give students an opportunity to take an active role in their learning process, because the more communicative activities they address to students, the better their competence in communication becomes.

2. They should take into consideration the learners’ needs and interests so that they can vary the activities accordingly for students to practice in different contexts.

3. They are advised not to take extreme positions (i.e. either focusing on grammar or culture and to integrate them equally for the development of all components of communication learners’ expressive skills.

4. They should especially develop in learners strategic competence which is as important as grammatical and sociocultural competence. This way, they become self-reliant and autonomous when communication problems arise.

2.8. Limitations of the Study

The present dissertation revealed some remarkable findings; however, there are some limitations, but none of them is a risk to the validity of the study at hand. One of the limitations is the scope of the study. The administered questionnaire was limited only to third year students at Mila University Centre. The results may be not be generalisable to other levels and universities. In addition, since the gathered data is based on students' self-reports, not all participants were really engaged and interested in answering the questionnaire items. Furthermore, due to time limitations, we used only the questionnaire as a means of research. It would have been more informative if other research instruments were utilised. It is hoped that future research works would make up for these limitations and others which are not mentioned.

Conclusion

This chapter is the practical part and the core of our dissertation. Upon analysis, the results of the present study show that, as there is a realisation among some teachers of creating a balance between the teaching of grammar and culture for the improvement of learners' communicative competence, there is also a failure to realise it among some others. As such, it is high time for all teachers to touch upon both grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence because this is in keeping with both mainstream theory and research.

General Conclusion

This research set out to investigate the extent to which EFL teachers integrate grammar and/or culture in the language classroom, and whether these are equally addressed for the development of learners' communicative competence. Additionally, it was meant to explore whether third-year EFL learners are aware of the importance of such a balance for the enhancement of their communicative abilities.

It was found that EFL teachers highly integrate grammar in their lessons while culture is less so. Furthermore, an important proportion of them indicated that they do balance between the two elements. As for students, while they expressed their awareness of the importance of a balanced communicative competence, teachers have a rather different view about them. These have certainly implications for pedagogy.

At any rate, the present dissertation approves of an equal integration of grammatical and cultural aspects for the enhancement of native-likeness. Still, the topic is vast and requires keeping the door open for further research. Hopefully, this piece of research will pave the way for future investigations.

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Appendix A

The Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of our research work carried out in the framework of a master degree. It aims at investigating the balancing of the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. We will be grateful if you devote some time to answer the questions below and take part in this questionnaire. Your contribution is very useful and important for the validity of our research. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purposes.

*Please, tick in the box where appropriate and make full answers to express your perspective.

Section One: Background Information

1. How long have you been studying English?

.....

2. In your opinion, learning English is:

☐ A difficult task.

☐ An easy task.

3. What are your aims behind learning English?

☐ To carry on my studies abroad.

☐ To get a job.

☐ To communicate with natives.

☐ To build English cultural knowledge.

☐

Others:

4. What module do you focus on more in learning English? (You can tick more than one answer)

a. Grammar. ☐

c. Written expression. ☐

b. Culture and civilisation. ☐

d. Oral expression. ☐

e. Literature. ☐

Section Two: Learning/ Teaching Grammar and Culture

A. Learning/ Teaching Grammar

5. Do you think that grammar is essential in language learning?

Yes ☐

No ☐

6. Do your teachers (namely of oral expression and written expression) develop in you grammatical knowledge?

Yes ☐

No ☐

7. If yes, how often?

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

8. Are you satisfied with the grammatical knowledge that your teachers present to you?

Yes ☐

No ☐

B. Learning/ Teaching Culture

9. What is the extent of your familiarity with the English culture?

☐ Much

☐ Little

☐ Very little

10. Do you think that integrating culture in the learning process gives you access to a better acquisition of English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

11. Do your teachers (namely of oral expression and written expression) develop in you cultural knowledge?

Yes ☐

No ☐

12. If yes, how often?

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

Section Three: Developing Learners' Communicative Competence

13. Are you interested in using English in real-life communication?

Yes ☐

No ☐

14. Do your teachers attempt to develop in you communicative competence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

- If no, what are your suggestions for them to develop your communicative competence?

.....

.....

Section Four: Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of the Learners' Communicative Competence

15. Which component of communicative competence do you like to develop?

- ☐ Grammatical competence.
- ☐ Pragmatic competence.
- ☐ Sociocultural competence.
- ☐ Discourse competence.
- ☐ Strategic competence.
- ☐ All of them.

16. Which component of communicative competence have you so far developed?

.....

.....

.....

17. Do your teachers (namely, of oral and written expression) create a balance in teaching them?

Yes ☐

No ☐

18. If no, do they:

- ☐ Focus more on grammar.
- ☐ Focus more on culture.

19. The balance between the teaching of grammar and culture enhances your communicative competence.

☐ Strongly disagree.

☐ Disagree.

☐ Strongly agree.

☐ Agree.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix B

The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

This questionnaire is designed as part of an investigation carried out in the framework of a master degree. Its purpose is to investigate the balancing of the teaching of grammar and culture for the development of learners' communicative competence. You are kindly invited to take part in this investigation by completing this questionnaire. Please take time to answer each statement by marking the appropriate box (es) or filling in the gaps. Your answers will be treated as confidential and will be used for academic purposes. Your contribution will certainly be of a great help to us.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Section one: Background Information

1. What scientific degree do you hold?

- ☐ Licence(BA).
☐ Master(MA).
☐ Doctorate(PhD).

2. How long have you been teaching English?

- ☐ 1-5 years.
☐ 5-10 years.
☐ More than 10 years.

Section Two: Teaching / Learning Grammar and Culture

A. Teaching/ Learning Grammar

3. Do you think that it is important to include grammatical aspects in language learning and teaching?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please, justify:

.....
.....

.....
.....

4. How often do you integrate grammar in your lessons?

- ☐ Often.
☐ Sometimes.
☐ Rarely.
☐ Never.

5. Do you think that integrating grammar in the teaching-learning process gives your students access to a better acquisition of English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

B. Teaching/ Learning Culture

6. Do you think that including the target culture in language learning and teaching is important?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please, justify:.....
.....
.....

7. How often do you include cultural aspects in your lessons?

- ☐ Often.
☐ Sometimes.
☐ Rarely.
☐ Never.

8. Do you think that integrating culture in the teaching-learning process gives your students access to a better acquisition of English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Section Three: Learners' Communicative Competence

9. How do you rate the communicative competence of your learners?

- ☐ Poor.
☐ Average.
☐ Good.

10. A learner is said to be proficient in English if:

- ☐ He uses grammatically correct English.
☐ He can express the appropriate meanings in a wide range of sociocultural contexts.
☐ Both of them.
☐ Others:

.....
.....

11. What do you suggest to effectively promote learners' communicative competence?

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

Section Four: Towards Balancing the Teaching of Grammar and Culture for the Development of Learners' Communicative Competence

12. Which of the following statements best reflects your belief?

- ☐ Grammar is more important than culture in improving students' communicative competence.
☐ Culture is more important than grammar in improving students' communicative competence.
☐ An equal balance between grammar and culture improves students' communicative competence.

13. Do you integrate the grammatical and cultural aspects equally in your sessions to develop your learners' communicative competence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

- If "yes", how? / If "no", why not?

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

14. Do you think that your students are aware of the importance of balancing the learning of grammar and culture for the development of their communicative competence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

15. In which module do you feel that you could balance between the teaching of grammar and culture to develop learners' communicative competence?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

الملخص:

يعتبر الجمع بين تدريس قواعد النحو وتدريب الثقافة لغرض تطوير مهارات الكفاءة التواصلية لدى الطلاب معادلة يصعب تحقيقها رغم الأهمية التي تكتسيها عملية اكتساب وتطوير تلك المهارات بالنسبة لهم، وعليه جاءت هذه الدراسة لتسلط الضوء على مدى استعداد الأساتذة وتقصي توجهاتهم في مسألة الموازنة بين تدريس قواعد النحو وتدريب الثقافة قصد تطوير مهارات الطلاب التواصلية وزيادة كفاءتها. طُرحت من خلال هذه الدراسة أربعة أسئلة أساسية بغية الوصول إلى أهدافها وقد جاءت على النحو التالي: (1) ما مدى دمج قواعد النحو في أقسام تعلم اللغات من قبل أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية؟ (2) إلى أي مدى يدمج أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية الثقافة في التدريس؟ (3) هل هناك توازن بين قواعد النحو والثقافة في دروسهم لغرض تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية لدى الطلاب؟ (4) كيف يتم دمجهم في فصل اللغة؟ (5) هل يدرك طالب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أهمية الموازنة بين القواعد والثقافة لرفع مستوى الكفاءة التواصلية لديهم؟ شملت هذه الدراسة عينتين مكونتين من 82 طالب سنة ثالثة إنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و 17 أستاذ إنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بقسم اللغات الأجنبية بالمركز الجامعي عبد الحفيظ بوصوف ميلة، قدم لكل منهما استبياناً مستقلاً.

خلصت الدراسة من خلال جمع وتحليل نتائج الاستبيانيين إلى وعي الطلبة واهتمامهم بمسألة الموازنة في تدريس النحو والثقافة وأهمية ذلك في رفع كفاءاتهم التواصلية من وجهة نظرهم في حين انقسمت عينة الأساتذة إلى صنفين مختلفين حول مسألة التوازن.

خلصت الدراسة في الأخير إلى تقديم جملة من التوصيات والإقتراحات البيداغوجية للطلبة والأساتذة وذلك في حدود النتائج المتوصل إليها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس/تعلم قواعد النحو، الثقافة، الكفاءة التواصلية، التوازن.

Résumé :

La compétence communicative des apprenants reste à ce jour un objectif important dans les classes de langues étrangères ; en pratique, cependant, il y a le manque d'attention à l'équilibre de l'enseignement de la grammaire et de la culture pour le développement de cette compétence. La présente étude vise à étudier la tendance et les attitudes des enseignants auto- envers l'équilibre entre l'enseignement de la grammaire et de la culture pour le développement capacités de communication des apprenants. Pour atteindre cet objectif, quatre questions de recherche sont soulevées : (1) À quelle fréquence les enseignants de Langue Etrangère d'Anglais intègrent-ils la grammaire dans la classe de langue ? (2) À quelle fréquence intègrent-ils la culture ? (3) Intègrent-ils également les aspects grammaticaux et culturels dans leurs leçons pour le développement de la compétence communicative des apprenants ? (4) Comment font-ils une telle intégration dans la classe de langue ? (5) Les apprenants de Langue Etrangère d'Anglais sont-ils conscients de l'importance d'équilibrer l'enseignement de la grammaire et de la culture pour l'amélioration de leurs capacités de communication ? Pour répondre aux questions de recherche, les données sont collectées à travers deux questionnaires administrés aux quatre vingt et deux étudiants de troisième année anglais au centre universitaire de Mila, et dix sept enseignants du Département des Langues Etrangères d'Anglais au centre universitaire de Mila. Après l'analyse des données, les résultats révèlent, dans l'ensemble, que les enseignants sont de deux positions concernant la création d'un tel équilibre ; qu'il y a une sensibilisation de la part des étudiants de troisième année EFL de l'importance de ladite pratique, du moins du point de vue des étudiants. Cette recherche se termine par un certain nombre de recommandations pédagogiques pour les enseignants et les étudiants, ainsi que une discussion de ses limitations.

Les Mots Clés : L'enseignement/ l'apprentissage de la grammaire, La culture, La compétence communicative des apprenants, Équilibre.