

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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The Situation of Culture in Algerian Secondary Schools
in Relation to Textbooks and Teachers
Case Study: First Year Level, Constantine

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of "Master"
in Applied Language Studies.

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2009-2010

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My FATHER and my MOTHER the dearest persons to my heart

My dear BROTHERS Skander and Hamza

My dear SISTERS Wissam, Hanen, and Rofia

My lovely NEPHEWS and NIECES

Boulkroune Khalida, the most faithful friend in the universe

Mouissat Hadjer, the kindest friend I have ever met

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**All the praise is due to God alone who guides
helps, and gives me the capacity for doing this work**

**I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. RIAD
BELOUAHEM for his valuable guidance, help and especially patience
during the progress of this work**

**My special thanks should be expressed to the teachers who accepted to
answer the questionnaire**

**Thanks are due to my close friends Khalida Boulkroune, Hadjer Mouissat
for their unquestionable and undeniable encouragement, help, and support**

ABSTRACT

The present research is an attempt to examine the way culture is introduced in teaching English in the Algerian secondary schools. Throughout the study, this issue is examined with reference to the relevant theoretical background, the first year secondary school textbook “At the Crossroads”, and the teachers cultural knowledge. The evaluation of “At the Crossroads” demonstrates that the cultural component is not adequately covered within the textbook. That is, the findings make it clear that the textbook is shallow and superficial with respect to its treatment of culture. It is, therefore, inadequate to the task of teaching culture specifics in the deeper sense or culture general skills like communication and understanding. Likewise, the results of the teachers’ questionnaire reveal that most of them lack the sufficient cultural knowledge to teach culture. In addition, the results show the absence of materials which might have helped teachers to introduce the culture efficiently in classrooms. On the basis of these results, some recommendations have been directed in order to help students reach cultural understanding to accompany their linguistic one.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. T: Teacher
2. Q: Question
3. Nb: Number
4. P: Page
5. BA: bachelor of Arts

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Introduction

1. Aims of the study

This research aims at investigating the place of teaching culture at the level of Algerian secondary schools and showing its importance as a part of teaching English. It also aims at exploring the teachers' knowledge, views and perceptions of culture teaching in theory and practice. Our main aims in this research are:

- To examine the situation of teaching culture in the Algerian secondary schools.
- To show the importance of integrating culture within the English syllabus.
- To test the teachers' awareness of the importance of teaching culture as well as their cultural knowledge.

2. Statement of the problem

The need to integrate culture and its teaching in foreign language is not a new debate, and has been long highlighted by many researchers in the field of foreign language teaching like Kramsch, Byram, Seelye...etc. Yet, it seems to be common practice that English textbooks designers, in Algeria, frequently overlook the conclusions drawn in such studies, and neglect the essential information about the target language culture that would help students reach a cultural understanding to complement their linguistic one. In fact, the major purpose motivating this study is that there is a need of studies that examine the quality of materials used in teaching culture in Algeria. It is intended to find out whether the Algerian classrooms provide sufficient content for students' cultural understanding and make them ready for communication. Developing learners' ability to communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural

boundaries is the objective of teaching English in Algeria which cannot be reached unless the target culture is fully understood.

3. Research questions

Our study aims at addressing the following questions:

- What is the importance of teaching culture in foreign language classrooms?
- Can language and culture be separated?
- Do secondary school teachers and textbooks give importance to culture in teaching English?

4. Hypothesis

As a major step in the present research, we put forward the following hypothesis:

First year secondary school curriculum does not provide sufficient content for culture understanding.

5. Means of research

To meet the objectives of the study, we will examine the place of culture in the first year secondary school textbook “At the Crossroads”. We chose it as a sample because students have gone through four years of English because they are following the new curriculum. At this stage, they need to know about culture to achieve communication. In addition, as the teacher role is major in drawing pupils’ attention to cultural information and making them aware of the reasons behind learning English, a

questionnaire is designed to 15 secondary school teachers to test their awareness of the importance of teaching culture as well as their cultural competence.

6. Structure of the study

The present study is divided into two main chapters:

The theoretical chapter starts with the definition of the word ‘culture’ as a key term in our study. It discusses the relationship between language and culture and explains the importance of integrating culture in English classes. Since our study is based on textbooks and teachers, the theoretical part deals also with culture in textbooks and the role of the foreign language teachers in introducing the target culture.

The practical part deals with data analysis, an evaluation of the place of culture in the first year textbook and the teachers’ questionnaire.

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING CULTURE IN ENGLISH TEACHING

1.1 Introduction

The relationship between language and culture has been a subject of rapid change in the history of foreign language teaching and learning. Many scholars and researchers like Kramsch and Byram emphasized that without the study of culture, teaching a foreign language is inaccurate and incomplete. Therefore, teachers must not only help to improve students' linguistic ability, but also focus on developing students' cultural awareness. Foreign language study seems senseless if students know nothing about people who speak the target language or the country in which it is spoken. That is to say, in addition to the linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge should be introduced and developed. In this way, learners not only achieve effective communication in the target culture but foster their knowledge about their own culture as well as the target one.

1.2 Definition of culture

Due to its complex nature, the word "culture" cannot be easily defined. Nieto (2002) argues that the term "culture" has not one meaning since it can mean different things to different people and in different contexts. Hence, it is impossible to give a standard definition of it. She goes on saying that culture can be connected to people with formal education and high social status like those who attend the Oprah regularly (the Winfrey Oprah Show). On the other hand, there are people who reduce culture meaning to food, holidays, lifestyleetc, however, it cannot be restricted to these

meanings because culture is a combination of beliefs, customs, shared values as well as common history, geographical location, language and religion that a group of people share.

To start with, Chastain (1976) distinguishes between small “c” culture and big “C” Culture. The former refers to the social life, family institutions, customs, and leisure activities....etc of a given society, whereas the latter is related to the civilization and society’s contributions to the world. In this context, Byram (1989:15) defines culture as “the whole way of life of the foreign country including but not limited to its production in the arts, philosophy and high culture in general”. More specifically, Williams (1965) identifies three dimensions of “culture”. The first one labeled “the ideal” is related to some certain universal values, the second is defined as “the documentary” which consists of the intellectual works in all the fields like: arts, sciences....etc, and “the social” type which is related to the meanings, values, and behavioral patterns (cited in Byram, 1989).

However, the term “culture” was first used by Taylor in his book “ Primitive Culture” (1971) who defines it as” That complex whole which includes knowledge , belief, art ,moral, Law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society “. It is apparent that according to Tylor the concept culture is related only to society and norms acquired by man within his social group (small c culture). From that time, studying the meaning of culture became an important concern in anthropology. (cited in Sander & Loon, 1997:4)

Scholars of other fields differ in defining the word culture. For example, Yule (2006) defines it as a social knowledge that members of the same social group acquire

unconsciously .It is building assumptions about things and people in the real world. People belonging to the same social group share the same ideas and assumptions. According to Hinkel (1999), the term “culture” has many definitions that usually deal with forms of interpretations and speech acts, rhetorical structure of discourse, society rules and conventions and knowledge constructs. We can identify culture with notions of personal space, appropriate gestures, and so on. Byram (1989) argues that there are two concepts of culture. First, “culture” is seen as distinguishable, homogeneous, and objectively describable or essentialist system. .Second, it is understood as dynamically developing events which are consequently only seized as momentary perceptions.

Furthermore, Vallette (1986) highlights the two major components of culture in the following broad sense. The first one is anthropological, or it is related to the target society, that is to say, the values, customs, and way of life of a given speech community and their frame of reference in the real world. These, in fact, cannot be fully understood or appreciated without the knowledge of the target language. Therefore, the knowledge of a language helps to understand and appreciate the society in which it is spoken. The second component of culture is “the history of civilization”. It refers to history, arts, geography, achievements in the sciences and the social sciences.

1.3. Interrelationship between language and culture

Since 1990, different scholars have dealt with the relationship existing between language and culture. Risager (2006) considers culture as a component and a part that cannot be separated from the language. She adds that linguistic production and practice is a way of cultural practice since language is always embedded in culture. Furthermore, Kramsch (1998) relates language to identity and culture. She believes that there is a

natural connection between speakers' language and their identity, in other words, by their accent and vocabulary, speakers are identified to a given speech community. Speakers draw a social importance, pride, historical, and cultural unity by using the same language as the group they belong to. In the same context, Byram (1989:41) argues that

language pre-eminently embodies the values of meaning of a culture, refers to cultural artefacts, and signals people cultural identity. Because of its symbolic and transparent nature; language can stand alone and represents the rest of cultures phenomena.

Moreover, Byram (1989) believes that language is a tool to express speakers' knowledge and perception of the real world. Thus, it reflects their cultural concepts and values. He goes on saying that one cannot learn a language and neglect its culture because speaking a language means expressing its culture, exchanging a language embodies a particular way of thinking and living.

Language is bound up with culture in different ways. First, language expresses speakers' beliefs, points of view, and assumptions about the real world. People of the same social group utter words which express common experiences. That is, they refer to facts, events, and ideas that are shared and known among the same social group. In addition to this, the languages people speak reflect their authors' attitudes and beliefs. Second, members of the same social group create experience through language. They give meaning to it through the way they interact with each other either with verbal aspects like face-to-face conversations, speaking on the phone or non verbal ones such as gestures. For example, the way of sending an e-mail or message creates meaning that members of the same society understand. Thus, language always embodies cultural

reality. Thirdly, language itself is seen as a cultural value. In fact, it is through language that speakers identify themselves as members of the same social group having the same culture (Kramsh 1998). All in all, Kramsh puts three links between language and culture which can be summarized as follows:

-Language expresses cultural reality.

-Language embodies cultural reality.

-Language symbolizes cultural reality.

In the same vein, Fishman (1985) is the sociolinguist who has dealt most with this issue. He as Kramsch identifies three links between language and culture. First, Language is an inseparable part of culture because it is impossible to ignore the place of language in a given culture. Hence, in order to understand a given culture it is crucial to study its language. The second link he puts is that language reveals the ways of thinking and norms which are common in the culture. Finally, “language as a symbolic” of culture. That is, language can be considered as a symbol to defend or attack, foster or reject the culture associated with it. Fishman summarizes the relationship between language and culture as follows:

-Language as part of culture.

-Language as an index of culture.

-Language as symbolic of culture. (cited in Risager 2006:13-14)

However, the most influential scholars dealing with this issue are Edward Sapir and Benjamin Wolf. Their theory is known as “Sapir-Worlf theory” (Yule, 2006). According to them, people from different culture think differently and so they perceive the world in a different way. They claim that the Eskimo speakers’ view of the world is different from that of the English one because the word “snow” has different meanings in the Eskimo language. For example, snow on the grounds, snow in the air..etc, however, there is only one meaning for the word “snow “in the English language. So, language obliges the speech community to a restricted view of the world. (Steinberg, 1995).

1.4. The history of teaching culture

In 1918, the British council “Modern Studies” was the first to stress the need for culture teaching. The council emphasized “the need for culture knowledge of a country and its people as parts of second language education.” (Stern, 1992:205). Before 1960, many teachers stressed on teaching aspects like history, art, literature of the target culture. However, in 1960 the emphasis shifted to an anthropological approach to the study of culture. That is to say, the behavior patterns of everyday lifestyle. This view was introduced first by Nelson Brooks in his book “Language and Language learning” (1964), who wrote a chapter on “Language and Culture” where he emphasized an anthropological approach to the teaching of culture. Brooks is one of the prime movers who stressed the importance of teaching the culture of the target language. He points out that

language is most typical, the most representative, most central element in any culture . Language and culture are not separable; It is better to see the special characteristic of a language as cultural entities and recognize that language enters into the learning and use of nearly all other cultural elements.

(cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2008:92)

Since then, many educators as well as teachers have stressed the importance of introducing cultural aspects in language teaching. The most prominent ones are Seelye (1984), Valdes (1986), Kramsch (1998). These scholars have offered ways of incorporating culture into language teaching. However, it is only in the 1980s that scholars contributed successful language learning to culture. That is, they started to see it as a variable that affects the learning process either positively or negatively . For example, Byram et al (1994:5) argue that language is used in social situations and exchanges. Thus, learners' attitudes, feelings, and motivations towards the target language and its speakers as well as the culture of that language will affect how learners interpret and respond to the input to which they are exposed. That is to say, "these effective variables will determine the rate and degree of second language learning".

The work of Michael Byram (1989) played a very important role in this issue. He noticed that culture in second and foreign language learning has a "hidden" curriculum. According to Byram, culture is always introduced implicitly in language teaching because it represents the speakers' knowledge and assumptions about the world. He believes that communication competence incorporates appropriate use of language which is part of the language. Indeed, cultural awareness has strongly emphasized as a significant aspect of language learning as stated in the department of education and sciences :

a growing awareness of the people who speak the language of study is intrinsic to the learning of it (...) without the cultural dimension, successful communication is often difficult: comprehension of even basic words and phrases (such as those referring to meals) may be partial or approximate, and speakers and writers may fail to convey their meaning adequately or may even cause offence

(cited in Byram,1989:4)

1.5. The importance of teaching culture

There is a general agreement that culture should be taught in language course because cultural competence is indisputably an integral part of foreign language learning. For many scholars, knowing the conventions, customs, and system of meaning of the target country plays a crucial role in foreign language learning and teaching. Valdes insisted that it is impossible to ignore or avoid teaching culture when teaching language since they are inseparable (Harrison, 1990). Moreover, according to Byram (1989) cultural awareness is very important in language teaching because it contributes to language proficiency. He insists that any language curriculum should include whether implicitly or explicitly elements of its culture because language reflects the speakers' values and perceptions of the world. Thus, it is impossible to learn a language and ignore its speakers' values and intentions. In other words, speaking a language is speaking its culture, and exchanging messages which embody a particular way of thinking and living.

Moreover, one fundamental aim of foreign language teaching is to develop students' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in different situations. Thus, teaching culture is undoubtedly needed because "language use has its own social grammar of roles, settings, rules of speaking, and norms of interpretation." (Kramsch, 1998:10). Littlewood (1981) agrees with Kramsch when he says that the foreign language learner should be aware of the norms and social meanings of language

used because sometimes he needs to use language as a means to achieve immediate communicative needs. In this situation, functional effectiveness and appropriateness are needed more than structural accuracy and correct grammar rules. Besides, in order for learners to communicate inter-culturally they must know the historical and geographical facts and facts about the target society. For instance, the name of the capital city and the geographical features and can help the learners to discover the foreign culture. Moreover, the selection of what should be taught in foreign language classrooms should reflect what natives of the culture perceive to be significant. For example, in addition to knowing the date and characteristics of the French revolution, it is important to know the significance of the French revolution for French culture and people.

A lot of scholars agree with the necessity of integrating culture in foreign language classrooms. In a seminar on linguistics and language teaching in Georgetown, Pulitzer (1959) pointed out

as language teachers we must be interested in the teaching of culture not because we necessarily want to teach the culture of the other country, but because we have to teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning; for what he is warned, unless he receives cultural instruction he will operate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols.

(cited in Brooks, 1999:123)

That is to say, foreign language learners are not asked to adopt beliefs and assumptions of the target culture. However, they should understand them in order to master the language that members of the target language produce. For instance, it is necessary for foreign language learners to know what is acceptable and what is

considered as unacceptable in some social situations like phone conversations, face to face interactions, and rules of greetings and so forth (Corbett, 2003). Moreover, Harrison (1990) argues that culture is present in every piece of talk or discourse. He goes on saying how can a foreign language teacher ignore teaching culture since from the first day in class culture is present. The simplest example to take is the way in which people greet each other. The differences are made in selected expressions, in who may be called by first names, or surnames, in formal greetings, casual greetings. These are certainly not universal and can be a good introduction to the culture of people who speak the language. It is important to say that every lecture must include cultural elements which would surely enhance the learning process. (Harrison, 1990)

Another important goal of integrating culture in foreign language teaching is to make learners understand written discourse. Kramersch (1993) argues that the difficulties faced by foreign learners to read and understand authentic texts is due to cultural impediments rather than linguistic ones. Thus, cultural meaning in discourse should be made explicit as they are perceived by native speakers in order to fully comprehend the text. Harrison (1990) says that the message in any text will be interpreted according to the readers' sensibility, world view, and cultural experience, and since the reader's culture is different from that of the writer in foreign language texts, then what will be understood is may be quite different from what is intended. Therefore, learners should understand first the cultural assumptions and norms of the target culture in order to be able to encode the message in the discourse. In the same sense, Kramersch (1998) ensures that foreign language texts reflect particular features and styles belonging to the target culture, hence, it is impossible to get the full meaning of a given text unless you consider the contextual factors of its production and perception.

1.6. Approaches of teaching culture

Vallette (1986) stated that it is not easy to find good techniques for teaching culture. Though, many educators gave some practical ones such as: culture capsules, culture assimilators, mini-drama, genuine materials, and role playing.

1.6.1. Culture capsules

Culture capsules are one of the best known methods for teaching culture. This concept was developed by Tylor & Soremson (1961) who define it as “short (5-10) minute representation that focusses on one minimal difference between the target culture and native culture of the student. That is to say, the learner is asked to present an explanation about an aspect in the foreign culture such as greeting, cuisine, dating..etc. The explanation is followed by or incorporated with comparing and contrasting information about students’ home culture. It is preferable to use audio-visual materials to support the effectiveness of the lecture

1.6.2 Culture clusters

It was developed by Meade & Morain (1973). Culture clusters are a combination of two or three capsules in one related theme. In this method, the teacher acts as a narrator to guide students. For example, a culture cluster about grades and their significance to university students could contain the capsule how a grade point average is figured, plus another about what kind of decisions are affected by person’s grade point average like being accepted in graduate study, receiving scholarship, getting a better job.....etc.

1.6.3. Culture assimilators

It is based on the assumption that as the learners think about and analyze the intercultural interactions provided from real experiences, they would gradually understand the target culture values. In this method, students read a description of an incident where one person from the target culture interacts with people from the home culture. Then, four possible interpretations of the meaning of the behaviors or words of the target culture are given. Every student should choose one of the four options he thinks the most appropriate. Another stage consists in having a discussion with the teacher why some options are correct or incorrect (Wang, 2000). Culture assimilators are good methods for giving students understanding about cultural information and inter-cultural communication.

1.6.4 Mini-drama

Mini-drama consists of three to five episodes in which misunderstandings are portrayed. However, additional information is available with each episode, but the cause of misunderstanding does not appear until the end. After each part, the teacher asks students what do the actions and the words of the characters in the drama mean, so they make judgments about the play characters. Mini-dramas work best if they deal with highly emotional issues.

1.6.5. Genuine materials

Authentic sources provide students with actual access to the target culture, and help them engage in authentic cultural experience, so that they can use the language

effectively in different situations (Rivers,1987).Moore (2003) points out that exposing students to authentic sources is the most effective way of teaching culture. She adds that high school teachers conducted experiment that revealed useful uses of other strategies such as including proverbs, songs, and films. Kramersch (1993) argues that besides using pictures, realia, slides, and other visual aids which help to reach both comprehension and communication in foreign language classrooms, it is efficient to use multimedia materials. These help to explore the target culture as they bear authentic cultural load, and enable to discuss and negotiate the meanings of that culture.

Corbett (2003) points out that it is not necessary to use authentic materials as members of the target culture. However, they act as evidence about how the target culture operates in real situations. He goes on arguing that it is effective to compare home magazines with foreign ones to discover how each culture constructs news values.

1.6.6. Role playing

After learning about ways of addressing different people in the target culture, learners have to play a role in a way that background information on the situation are given in advance. For instance, to practise apologizing, arguing, and asking, students are given the following information:

Student a: you have asked for a food and the server brought a different one.

Student b: you are sure that you brought what the customer has ordered.

(Cortazzi & Jin, 1999:199)

According to Kramsch (1993), cultural awareness can be reached through role playing. That is, learners would learn how to cope with similar situations through adopting the speaking style of the target culture in different contexts.

1.7 Cultural awareness

Cultural awareness is a concept in which learners think about the similarities and contrasts between home and target culture as a tool to achieve communication. (Byram, 1989). Bamgbose (1994) argues that foreign language teachers should give their learners insights and information about the target culture from the native speaker point of view. He goes on saying “learners need to be prepared for experience of the daily rhythm of the foreign culture, of the behaviours which are different and those which are the same but have a different significance” (117). In the same vein, Kramsch (1993) argues that learners should explore, examine, and interpret the differences existing between native and target cultural meanings and reflect critically upon them. This makes them experience new ways of thinking and acting, and view the world from their own perspective and the other one. She goes on to say that cultural knowledge should not be viewed only as an aim to achieve communication or enrich ones’ knowledge, but more importantly as to develop the ability to take on the perspective of the other as well as ones’ own.

Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996) say that there is no other better way than including the teaching of the target culture which should not be seen as a support to language teaching, but it should be placed on an equal footing with the foreign language teaching. This claim is supported by recent research where incorporating the target culture does not only affect effectively the students’ linguistic success. However, it also

can be an efficient tool in communication when “culturally-determined” behavioral conventions are taught. The purpose as claimed by Tavares and Cavalcanti is to develop students to build cultural awareness which would surely improve the understanding of their own culture as well as the target one. Furthermore, cultural awareness must be seen as an educational goal in foreign language teaching and learning as Kramsch (1993) argues that cultural awareness must be seen both as enabling language proficiency and full competence, and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency.

1.8 Culture in textbooks

Foreign language textbooks serve as a guide for language teachers. It is of vital importance that textbooks provide a systematic and comprehensive cultural perspective for both teachers and learners.

Before 1950, textbooks were designed to serve linguistic purposes, containing grammatical rules, isolated sentences....etc. However, from 1950 the social context, everyday life, and the nature environment of the target culture have been gradually introduced. This means that culture in foreign language textbooks is getting more importance in the field of language teaching. Risager (1991:333) points out that

foreign language textbooks participate in the transmission within the education system and in the rest of society.....and as cultural texts they can be compared with other types of texts and other media participating in cultural reproduction : travel, photographical reportage in newspapers and magazines, museums displays of life and culture, and so on.

In fact, textbooks vary in their content and approach to cultural treatment. However, it is usually expected that elements of the target culture should be included in

second and foreign language textbooks. That is to say, the target culture is not always representing them (Hinkel, 1999). Moreover, Pickering (1992) assumes that “if the programme is balanced and varied and the source material is authentic, it is probable that it will automatically give a good insight into the foreign culture”. (cited in Byram et al 1994:13)

Huhn (1978) summarized the process of evaluating the treatment of cultural content in textbooks as follows:

- Giving factually accurate and up-to-date information.
- Avoiding (or relativizing) stereotypes by raising awareness.
- Presenting a realistic picture.
- Being free from (or questioning) ideological tendencies.
- Presenting phenomena in context rather than as isolated facts
- Explicit relating historical material to contemporary society.
- Making it clear how personalities are products of their age.

(quoted in Cortazzi & Jin, 1999:203)

1.9. The role of teachers

Foreign language teachers are among the most important mediators. They have to experience and understand the foreign culture. Moreover, it is important for them to make a comparison between their own culture and the target one. Teachers are

responsible for introducing the target culture to their learners. This would challenge and modify their perspective on the world and their cultural identity as members of a given society. In fact, the role of the teachers is to face implications and provide them with the practical and theoretical support (Byram et al, 1994). Likewise, Valdes (1986) highlights that the process of teaching will be more effective if the teacher is aware of the nature of culture he is teaching, and provides the learners with explanations, interpretations of the target values along with the explanations of tenses, grammar rules, and other aspects. Such explanations double the usefulness of the lesson, not only in adding cultural knowledge to the learners, but also in making the lesson more interesting and easier to understand.

Foreign language teachers should relate language to culture. For instance, successful teachers usually start their classes with a five minute discussing either similarity or sharp difference existing between home and target culture. (Byram et al, 1994). Kramsh (1993) thinks that the teachers' responsibility is not restricted to tell the students what to say, or have to be appropriate in different situations. Rather, it is his task to give the students space to make their own meanings, and help them to realize the cultural implications of those meanings in a way that stimulates critical thinking.

However, it is important to note that teachers' knowledge and experience of the target culture is based on a limited personal experience rather than a systematic description and analysis. The foreign language experience varies from one teacher to another and from one educational system to another. For example, in Britain most of foreign language teachers will have spent one year of their academic course in the foreign culture. Consequently, they experience the foreign culture. On the other hand, in

Denmark for example teachers are not obliged to spend any period in the foreign culture. (Byram et al, 1994).

Teachers to a large extent teach by textbooks. However, it was observed that teachers have the freedom in selecting the teaching materials for their classrooms. In addition, they usually turn to additional teaching materials when textbooks do not meet their expectations. Thus, the role of teachers is crucial in presenting the target culture to their students (Sercu & Bandura, 2005). In the same vein, Byram et al (1994) summarize the role of teachers pointing that foreign language teachers should be foreign culture teachers, having the ability to experience and analyze both the home and the target culture.

1.10 Conclusion

Language and culture are closely associated and interrelated. Hence, the teaching of culture in foreign language classrooms should always be present. In fact, foreign language teaching is foreign culture teaching, and foreign language teachers are foreign culture teachers. Only if culture is integrated in language teaching, the whole teaching process would be complete. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce culture in foreign language textbooks because they serve as basic sources of knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ANALYSIS OF “AT THE CROSSROADS” AND THE TEACHERS’ QUESTIONNAIRE

2.1 Introduction

It is extremely important that textbooks include culture as an important component. Yet, it is the teachers’ responsibility to make learners familiar with the target culture. That is, teaching culture is massively dependent on textbooks, in addition to the teachers’ attempts to integrate it into language classes.

In accordance with the rationale of the research, this chapter is divided into two related sections. First, the first year secondary school textbook “At the Crossroads” will be examined from the cultural side. In other words, the place of teaching culture will be analyzed in accordance with the following questions: does culture exist in the textbook? ,if yes, is it covered adequately?. Second, the analysis of the teachers’ questionnaire is presented to complement the role of the textbooks in transmitting the cultural knowledge .This chapter, therefore, helps to describe the current situation of teaching culture in secondary schools.

2.2 Analysis of “At the Crossroads” textbook

2.2.1 Procedure

The descriptive analytical approach will be used in this study. That is, the evaluation of “At the Crossroads” will focus on the treatment of the cultural content

included in it. It also explores whether the image of the target culture is representative or not. In other words, it is intended to examine whether the socio-cultural component is adequately incorporated in textbooks used in Algerian secondary schools. The first year textbook is chosen mainly for the reason that pupils have already studied four years in the middle school where they have acquired vocabulary, grammar,.....etc. At this stage, it is necessary to expose them to cultural knowledge in order to complement the linguistic one.

2.2.2 Presentation of “At the Crossroads” textbook

“At the Crossroads” is designed for first year secondary school learners for all streams. However, the second unit entitled “once upon a time” is intended only for the literary stream. It consists of 59 pages and five units, each one includes four sequences which are:

Section 1: listening and speaking

Section2: reading and writing

Section3: developing skills

Section4: consolidation and extension

2.3 Evaluation of the place of culture in “at the crossroads”

2.3.1 Unit one: “Getting through”

Culture is present in unit (1), in p 9 students are introduced to the customs and traditions of Finland. Through an e-mail Krisi, a common name in Finland who has approximately the same age as the students, is describing her country, her family, and their way of life. Such a text, gives the students insights about Finland as a country and how people in Finland live. More importantly, in p 11 students are asked to write a short reply to Krisi's e-mail where they introduce themselves, their regular activities, their family, and their country. This would surely lead them to compare and contrast the Algerian culture with the Finnish one. Thus, this broadens their cultural horizon and understanding of both cultures. However, it would have been more effective if this e-mail was sent from an English or an American, or any other English speaking country. In fact, this is a textbook of English, and students are more interested in knowing and discovering English speaking countries.

In p 12, phone conversations are provided to pupils in different situations. After, they are asked to choose the appropriate answer in each one. In this way, pupils are first made aware of the way people speak in phones, and second they are shown the differences existing in phone conversations in terms of formality and informality. However, it is apparent that the conversations provided do not contain pauses, hesitation, fillers, and other features of authentic spoken English. Moreover, they follow the question/answer, question/answer pattern which do not reflect telephone conversations in the English culture. In addition to this, in the same page pupils are

asked to play a role of two speakers on the phone in different situations. For example, a company secretary with a client and they are offered tactics summary in the next page. It is true that role playing is a very useful technique in teaching culture. Therefore, it should imply spontaneous and free language that enables the pupil to use his own words and language. This is not the case in the above activity where the pupils are supposed only to read the phone tactics summary without making any effort to communicate and express what they want to convey. This activity would be more effective if the pupils were asked to play role providing the summary tactics only as a help to explain cultural differences not more. In contrast, the culture of the British people is introduced in p 17. That is, authentic messages from the New York times about births, deaths, and marriages are provided. This would enable students to handle authentic language and become familiar with it in real life.

2.3.2 Unit tow: “Once upon a time”

This unit is full of cultural aspects .To start with, in the first page there are pictures of different English novels and famous people like Shakespeare. They represent and draw a broad picture of the English culture and history whereby pupils have the opportunity to discover them through pictures which play an important role in culture teaching. However, texts in unit two are very complex and difficult for first year secondary school level. On the one hand, it is difficult for teachers to explain and introduce such complex cultural elements to beginners, especially Charles Dickens’ text and Chinua Achebes’ one, since pupils need some background knowledge of the issue. Hence, pupils will feel bored in dealing with such complex elements so they will learn nothing from it. On the other hand, there are some words in these texts that are beyond

the linguistic proficiency of the pupils .In other words, some words and expressions are very difficult for them. Consequently, this unit is not useful for our pupils, it does not fit their needs and interests .That is to say, at this stage pupils need to know easy and simple cultural elements which would raise their interests and motivation in learning English.

Apart from this, “once upon a time” represents cultural insights about both home and target culture. For example, in p 42 pictures of famous people who played an important role in their culture such as Imam Abdelhamid Ben Badis from Algeria, and Charlie Chaplin from England are provided. With the help of teachers, pupils would talk and discuss about such influential characters and learn about both home and target culture. In the same regard, the biographies provided like those of Shakespeare and Charlie Chaplin are very useful in stimulating the pupils’ knowledge of the target culture and introducing people who influenced their cultures. Moreover, the sayings and folktales in p 58 are of vital importance if pupils contrast them with the home culture ones because they reflect the beliefs and norms of the target society. In this way, it would be easy to identify the similarities and contrasts between the cultures.

Furthermore, this unit incorporates the teaching of the target culture in contrast with the home one. For instance, the poem entitled “my country” by Drothea Mackellan in p 57 is a poem about Australia in which the writer is describing what she likes in her country. Likewise, the pupils are asked to write a poem about Algeria to say what they love in it using Mackellars’ poem as a model. Hence, pupils will discover their own country and the differences between Algeria and Australia, For example, weather, food...etc.

2.3.3 Unit three: “Our friends”

To start with, unit three begins with pictures of popular American magazines and newspapers. It is very important to know about famous newspapers in the target culture because they reflect the foreign society and their way of thinking. More importantly, pupils would unconsciously think of similar Algerian newspapers and the difference between the two countries' newspapers. In fact, this is what the textbook asks for in p 66. Furthermore, a picture of the English society in a bus is offered in the next page. Most people are seating and engrossed in reading newspapers. Pupils are asked whether people in Algeria are fond of reading too. Such an exercise makes pupils familiar with the target culture and leads them to identify the differences between the two cultures since it is not ordinary to sit in a comfortable way and read newspapers in a bus in the Algerian society. However, it is worth noting that there are few pictures in the textbook which are very small and colourless.

In addition to this, most of the texts in this unit are designed for educational purposes. That is, they are not authentic except the text in p 76 and the poem of Michael Rosen in p 78, what remains is devoid of authentic passages which reflect how the English language is used in reality, in addition to the names used in conversations which are Aicha, Meriem, Bachir. To illustrate the non-authenticity of the conversations used in this unit, a dialogue between Aicha and Meriem in p 78 is provided as follows:

Aicha: I'm bored .I have nothing to do today.

Meriem: let's revise our lessons.

Aicha: oh! That's a good idea. Let's start immediately.

In fact, this is one example of many where full and long sentences are used instead of usually sentences broken off half way through and other familiar characteristics of informal speech. Another example is provided in p 80, Rachid says to Karim: “could you please give me the pen”. This piece of talk does not reflect the everyday dialogues between friends and colleagues because it is too formal. So, they mislead the pupils and give them an artificial picture about how the target language is used in actual situations by native speakers. In other words, the texts and the activities in “At the Crossroads” focus on the correct grammar and ignore the cultural knowledge related to the English society.

In p 87, the unit focuses on cross-cultural information. A graph about how the consumption of milk and cream in Great Britain between 1980 and 1987 is presented. Then, pupils are asked to write a health report about the change in food consumption in Algeria and make comments about it.

2.3.4 Unit four: “Eureka”

This unit speaks about inventions in the field of science. In p101, pictures of famous foreign scientists are provided and pupils are asked to match each one with his correspondent name, date of birth, and nationality. Then, they are asked to write a short biography about one of them. Consequently, pupils will benefit and learn a lot of things from this unit, in other words, learning and discussing the achievements of people from different cultures and countries. However, the unit represents general information without any reference to the English speaking countries. In fact, such factual information does not arise the pupils’ motivations because they already have dealt with

them earlier in their studies. Moreover, it is worth noting that we still come across small and colorless pictures in the textbook that mislead the pupils.

“Eureka” unit is all about modern technologies and inventions like: telephone, television...etc. It also speaks about diseases such as Malaria. A part from a text in p 117 which speaks about George Washington Carver life, the unit is devoid of any socio-cultural information. The pupils need to learn English in a communicative framework. Henceforth, texts and activities provided in textbooks must contribute meaningfully to the presentation of the target culture. Furthermore, the unit also ignores the home culture since there is no information about the pupils’ home culture and it is strongly recommended to include English songs, proverbs, and other effective ways in teaching about culture which would clarify the target culture and raise the pupils’ motivation towards learning the English language because such ingredients usually attract adolescent pupils.

2.3.5 Unit five: “Back to nature”

“Back to nature” is about everything related to nature and earth .This unit lacks cultural information, pictures related to the target culture, and as the previous units it is devoid of songs, proverbs, and games. However, there are some dialogues and activities which help pupils to have insights about the target culture .For instance, in p130 a dialogue about earth warming is provided, and then the pupils are asked to play out the dialogue with the right intonation. This activity is very useful since global warming is a very important up to date subject that pupils have to know about. On the other hand, role playing enables the pupils to use the language and communicate effectively. It is apparent that “At the Crossroads” asks pupils to role play in a way they have only to

read passages from it and does not push them to try to communicate in their own way. In addition to this, in p 136 and after reading a dialogue between Mr Peter Roscoe ,Mrs Mary Higgins, Mr John Smith, and Mr Beter Burns on traffic pollution, the pupils are asked to prepare a dialogue about any environment problem that faces their country. Hence, they will understand cross- cultural differences and similarities. In the same vein, in p149 the pupils are asked to pretend that they are environment inspectors and to write a memo to inform the authorities about the dangers resulting from pollution in their area.

It is important of vital necessity to provide the pupils with information related to a specific culture and prevent them from stereotyping and overgeneralising because each country has its own specificities. On the contrary, the unit presents a very general aspect of information without referring to any culture or society.

2.3 Analysis of the teachers' questionnaire

2.3.1 The sample

This study was conducted with a group of 15 teachers at three different secondary schools in El-Khroub/Constantine. In each school there are five English language teachers, all of them have taught first year pupils. They were selected mainly for the easiness of access, in other words, for the ability to get in touch with most of them in their secondary school or through their colleagues. We tried to be present while the teachers were filling the questionnaire in order to be sure they did not check any source to get information. Yet, some teachers insisted on taking the questionnaire with them and fill it at home.

2.3.2 Description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire begins with a small introduction which explains the aim of our study. It involves 13 questions and can be divided into three sections.

2.3.2.1 Section one: experience information

This section aims at obtaining information about the teachers' experience: their qualification (Q1), their teaching experience(Q2),whether they have been to England, America, or any other English speaking country(Q3).These three dimensions ,in fact, give the opportunity to teachers to express their knowledge in terms of their familiarity with the target culture.

2.3.2.2 Section two: Approach to culture teaching

In this section, the teachers are asked to define the word culture because it is important to know how teachers consider culture to be (Q4). They are also asked if they consider culture as an essential component of language teaching, providing their justification (Q5). After; it is important to know if teachers discuss cultural issues in their classes (Q6); if they face difficulties in explaining them (Q7); if they use audio-visual materials to support their teaching effectiveness (Q8). As part of the study, teachers are asked if the textbook “At the crossroads” offers enough cultural knowledge (Q9).

This section is intended to explore the teachers' understanding and awareness of the importance of teaching culture as well as, to examine the situation of teaching culture in secondary schools.

2.3.2.3 Section three: teachers' test

In this section, the teachers are asked simple questions about the target culture. In each question, except (Q1), they are provided with options. The aim is to test the teachers' cultural knowledge.

2.4.3 Analysis of the results

2.4.3.1 Section one: teachers' experience

Q1: what is your qualification?

BA

b-Master/Magister

c-Other

Options	Nb of teachers	%
BA	13	86.66%
Master/Magister	2	13.33%
Other	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Table1: Teachers' qualification

Table1 indicates that 86.66% of the teachers have got a BA degree, while 13.33% have the degree of master/magister. Though, most of the teachers have studied English ranging from three to four years at the university, in fact, this is the required degree for teaching English in the Algerian secondary schools. However, this is not enough in order to be linguistically and culturally competent in a foreign language, especially the case of English in Algeria where learners need to study at list 5 years to build a good level in English. Teachers who have got master/magister or doctorate degree usually teach at the university level.

Q2: How long have you been teaching English at the secondary level?

a-less than 5 years

b-between 5 and 10 years

c-more than 10 year

Options	Nb of teachers	%
less than 5 years	4	26.66%
between 5 and 10 years	2	13.33%
more than 10 years	9	60%
Total	15	100%

Table 2: Teaching experience at the secondary level

As table 2 might suggest, 60% of the teachers have a long experience in teaching English (more than 10 years), 26.66% between 5 and 10 years, and 13.33% less than 5 years. This can be explained by the fact that English teachers are very few in Algerian schools. That is, in each school there are five teachers at most; hence, it is extremely difficult for new graduates to teach at the secondary level. However, this can have a positive effect because the majority of the teachers are well acquainted with the programme and textbooks. Moreover, they know how to deal with adolescents.

Q3: Have you ever visited England, America, or any other English speaking country?

a-yes

b-no

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes	4	26.66%
no	11	73.33%
Total	15	100%

Table 3: English speaking countries visited by teachers

In table3, 73.33% of the teachers have answered no, while 26.66% have answered yes. Those who had a direct contact with the foreign culture will be more confident as well as interested in dealing with cultural issues. The pupils also would benefit a lot from the teachers' experience through detailed explanations, examples, and comparison between the home and the target culture. Nonetheless, it is apparent that most of the Algerian teachers do not have this opportunity. They rely only on the limited knowledge they have learned from the university. Consequently, most of them will face difficulties in teaching the target culture and so ignore dealing with it in classes because a good command of the English culture requires direct experience with its culture and people. Unless teachers have documentation and read a lot or watch documents.

2.4.3.2 Section two: Approach to culture teaching

Q4: how would you define the word culture?

To know the teachers' views about culture, this question is worth asking. Each teacher wrote what he thought culture is. The following is a sample of the teachers' answers:

Ta-the culture of a country generally refers to its traditions, beliefs, arts, communication style....etc. "la culture, c'est ce qui reste quand on a tout oublie".

Tb-culture is the sum of values such as traditions, customs, history, and ways of feelings, language, and speaking.

Tc- culture is knowledge, experience, belief, values, attitude, religion, language.....etc.

Td- is everything related to a given speech community like beliefs, ways of communicating, etiquette, meanings and assumptions related to the real world.

Te- culture is a very broad concept, it shapes ones identity and can be related to aspects that differentiate one society from the others like religion, language.....etc.

What is common among the teachers' answers is that all of them related culture to aspects like: language, way of speaking, and communication. This reveals that they are aware of the interrelationship existing between language and culture, and eventually the role culture plays in foreign language teaching. In fact, this is the aim of this question to see whether teachers consider culture as a part of language or not.

Q5: Do you think that teaching culture is an important part of teaching English?

a-yes, very important

b-yes, important

c-no, not important

-Please justify your answer

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes, very important	12	80%
yes, important	3	20%
no, not important	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Table 4: The importance of teaching culture

As the above table shows, 80% of the teachers considered teaching culture as a very important factor in teaching English, while 20% saw it as an important factor. In

contrast, no teacher chose option c (no, not important). No doubt, all the teachers agreed that culture is an essential element in teaching English which indicates their awareness of integrating culture in English teaching.

The justifications provided by the teachers ensure the results obtained in (Q4) and (Q5). They can be summarized as follows:

Ta- before learning English, our students should know about the British culture, religion, attitudes towards work and time....etc. When students are aware of the cultural differences, they can establish good relationships with people of English culture and undoubtedly facilitate the learning process.

Tb- teaching English without teaching culture is as if you are giving birth to kids without educating them.

Tc- English learners are supposed to know how to be appropriate rather than knowing only the grammatical rules of that language.

Td- teaching English or any other language is not only limited to teaching vocabularies, structures....etc. We have to deal with the culture of the natives because language and culture cannot be separated.

Te- culture and language are related we cannot ignore one when dealing with the other because teaching a language involves teaching its culture

Tf- it is very important to teach culture because our pupils need more than grammar and vocabulary in order to communicate.

Q6: Do you discuss cultural issues in your class?

a-yes, a lot

b-rarely

c-never

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes, a lot	6	40%
rarely	9	60%
never	0	0%
Total	15	100 %

Table5: Discussing cultural issues in class

The most striking point here is that, 60% of the population rarely discussed cultural issues in classes. However, only 40% said that they often discuss them in their classes. A glance at the previous results clearly shows that all the teachers relate language to culture (Q4), and also all of them consider culture as an important element for teaching culture (Q5). In contrast, more than the half rarely included teaching culture in their classrooms. This can be explained by the fact that teachers are not aware of the English culture, that is, they lack the cultural knowledge and the confidence to deal with culture and sometimes because of the time constraints.

Q7: do you face difficulties in explaining cultural information?

a-yes

b-sometimes

c-no

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes	5	33.33%
sometimes	6	40%
no	4	26.66%
Total	15	100%

Table 6: Difficulties faced in explaining cultural information

According to the results recorded in table 6, option c (no) is the least chosen, followed by option a (yes), then option c (sometimes). A careful look at the table enables us to deduce that few teachers do not face difficulties when dealing with cultural information. The rest do face difficulties. This result can be the only justification to (Q6). That is, teachers rarely deal with culture in classes because they face difficulties in explaining it. These difficulties can be justified by the fact that the teachers do not master efficiently the cultural background of the language or because of the lack of materials which would be helpful.

Q8: Do you use audio-visual materials in your classes?

a-yes

b-no

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes	4	26.66%
no	11	73.33%
Total	15	100%

Table7 : Using audio _visual materials in classes

The above table shows that 73.33% of the teachers do not use audio-visual materials, while 26.66% use them in their classes. The reason is that the classes are overcrowded; a lack of materials and workshops in most schools. These results can be linked to the previous question. In other words, audio-visual materials help teachers to explain and deal with cultural issues. All the teachers (100%) who use audio-visual materials do not face difficulties because they provide a solid basis for teaching. Whereas, those who do not use them face difficulties in explaining cultural elements because it is very difficult to put the pupils' in the picture unless they watch and see what the teacher is speaking about.

Q9- Does the textbook “At the Crossroads” offer enough cultural knowledge

a- yes, a lot

b- yes enough

c- no

Options	Nb of teachers	%
yes, a lot	0	0%
yes, enough	4	26.66%
no	11	73.33%
Total	15	100%

Table8: Cultural knowledge in “At the Crossroads”

No teacher (0%) believes that “At the Crossroads” provides a lot of cultural knowledge, only four (26.66%) think that there are enough cultural information in the textbook. Whereas, the majority of them agree that it does not offer the needed cultural knowledge. This result, in fact, is an evidence to support the conclusion obtained from the analysis of “At the Crossroads” in the previous section because most of the teachers

have a long experience in teaching English at the secondary school, so they are well acquainted with the programme and the textbooks

2.4.3.3 Section three: teachers' test

Q10- What is the name of the British flag?

Answers	Nb of teachers	%
Union jack	8	53.33%
No answer	7	46.66%
Total	15	100%

Table9: Name of the British flag

Nearly half of the teachers did not answer this question which indicates that they do not have the answer, and only 53.33% gave the correct answer (Union Jack). In fact, this information should not be known only by teachers but also by the pupils. The problem here is that teachers do not have the cultural knowledge even about such simple information. Consequently, we question whether they can teach about culture. This also indicates the ignorance of culture in our schools. That is, the flag is the symbol of the country and the point is that why such information is not presented in our classes.

Q11- What is the name of the official London residence of Queen Elizabeth?

a- Windson castle

b-the Tower of London

c-Buckingham palace

Options	Nb of teachers	%
Windson castle	0	0%
the Tower of London	3	20%
Buckingham palace	9	60%
no answer	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Table10: Name of the official London residence of Queen Elizabeth

In accordance with table 10, 60% of the teachers gave the right answer, 20% chose option b, and the same percentage (20%) gave no answer. While option “a” recorded no answer (0%). In fact, 40% of the teachers asked do not know the name of the official London residence of Queen Elizabeth. The results obtained from the above table make us think that in addition to the fact that teachers lack knowledge about the target culture, they are not motivated to enrich their knowledge because such information should be known by everyone concerned with English.

Q12- When did William Shakespeare Live?

a-in the 14th and 15th century

b-in the 17th and 18th century c-in the

c-in the 16th and 17th century

Options	Nb of teachers	%
in the 14 th and 15 th century	5	33.33%
in the 17 th and 18 th century	2	13.33%
in the 16 th and 17 th century	6	46.66%
no answer	1	6.66%
Total	15	100%

Table11: Period in which Shakespeare lived

The results obtained from table 11 illustrate that only 46.66% chose the right (option c). Whereas, the other options have recorded the following percentages 33.33% (a), 13.33% (b), and 6.66% (no answer) .This question is intended to explore the teachers' ability to discuss cultural information in relation to "At the Crossroads". As it has been shown, Shakespeare has been introduced in the textbook (unit2). More than half of the teachers do not know the period he lived in, so how can they explain about his writings and works. Shakespeare is a prominent character whose writings have great effects on the English culture in the 16th and 17th century and even with providing options more than the half of Algerian teachers lack such important information.

Q13: Look at the following list of words hoggis, spotted dog, Welsh rarebit, bubble.

These words are

a-names of food

b-names of animals

c-names of drink

Options	Nb of teachers	%
names of food	7	46.66%
names of animals	4	26.66%
names of drink	2	13.33%
no answer	2	13.33%
Total	15	100%

Table 12: The classification of the list of the provided words

Only 7 teachers, representing 46.66% gave the right answer (option a). 13.33% thought that the words provided were names of drinks, the same number did not give any answer. Whereas, four (26.66%) believed that they are names of animals mainly because there is a word like dog in the list, and some teachers even corrected the word “rarebit” and wrote “rabbit”. The results come to confirm another time that the teachers are not culturally competent enough to deal with cultural issues in their classes (Q6) that is why they face serious difficulties in dealing with them (Q7) .

However, what can be observed is that 100% of the teachers who have been to an English speaking country completed the test correctly. In contrast, most of the teachers who did not do so failed at least to answer one of the test questions.

2.5 Conclusion

The results of the textbook analysis show that culture exists to some extent in “At the Crossroads”. However, it is not covered adequately. There are a lot of shortcomings concerning teaching culture. Some subjects, as in unit 2, are beyond the pupils’ linguistic and cultural level. Other units lack cultural information (unit 4 and 5).

Besides, the textbook does not help in developing cultural understanding. The cultural content in it provides neutral passages. Thus, instead of genuine materials pupils often meet artificial texts. Lack of songs, games, proverbs which contribute successfully in teaching culture, can also be easily noticed.

The study revealed also that teachers are aware of the importance of integrating culture in language teaching. However, they do not have the necessary cultural information to teach it. In addition to this, audio-visual materials which help pupils to handle real language are rarely used in most of classrooms. Consequently, some pedagogical recommendations are necessary in order to improve the teaching of culture in Algerian schools in a more effective way.

2.6 Pedagogical recommendations

2.6.1 Authentic materials

To begin with, it is important to note that textbooks should involve information related to the foreign language culture because no language can be taught without direct reference to its culture. In the Algerian context, textbooks rarely include cultural information related to the English society. Furthermore, it is clear that most of the texts and dialogues in “At the Crossroads” are not authentic; they do not provide real life situations to the pupils in order for them to be familiar with the target culture. Moreover, the majority of teachers do not use audio-visual materials which present everyday situations and demonstrate many cultural experiences. Henceforth, authentic materials are recommended to offer the pupils the linguistic and cultural insights.

Authentic sources can include films, television shows, proverbs, idioms, and songs of authentic English. Using them in class helps pupils to engage in authentic cultural situations and at the same time raises their motivations towards learning the English language. For instance, pupils can watch and listen to videos taken from authentic sources as a television show, and focus on some specific cultural elements like greeting. Then, they might describe the behaviours they observe and discuss with their teachers cultural similarities and differences. Moreover, discussions of common proverbs, folktales and idioms are a useful way to explore the values and beliefs of the target culture.

2.6.2 Teachers' education and training

To focus on teaching culture, language teachers need to be well informed and competent. Some Algerian teachers, as it has been revealed in chapter two, lack the necessary knowledge about the target culture and the training in how to teach it. Therefore, it is recommended that educational institutions concerned with teachers like universities and ENS (ecole normale superieure) provide a systematic pedagogical training for the future teachers. The programme must focus on an exposure to the English culture explaining everything related to the target culture. It should also train teachers how to deal with cultural issues in their classes. Furthermore, teachers must benefit from seminars in Algeria and abroad, first, to raise their awareness of the importance of teaching culture, and second, seminars abroad would help teachers to get in touch directly with the foreign culture.

The teachers' mastery of cultural matters helps in transmitting both linguistic and cultural concepts and overcomes the problems of misunderstandings, and prejudices.

2.6.3 Teach culture explicitly

Culture in Algerian schools is introduced implicitly. It is considered as an extra option. Needless to say that most of the teachers rarely discuss cultural elements in their classes. Explicit culture teaching means separate courses devoted only to teaching and speaking about culture. It is recommended to design a range of courses which address the concept of culture explicitly. The courses should be presented in workshops equipped with audio-visual materials at least once or twice a week. First, because they allow to experience directly and explicitly what a foreign culture means, and give access

to the thoughts and beliefs of others. Second, they create a good atmosphere and excitement in classes and so contribute to pupils' motivation towards learning English.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This research work is concerned with the inseparability of culture and language teaching, arguing that culture introduction is an effective way to promote pupils' cultural awareness and language proficiency. That is to say, the process of teaching a foreign language should imply teaching the cultural aspects connected to such language, and not just its grammar and vocabulary. The present study is carried out to see if this is the situation in the Algerian secondary schools with reference to the first year English textbook "At the Crossroads", and the teachers.

The analysis of "At the Crossroads" reveals that the cultural component is not addressed adequately, in other words, there is a lack of the target culture in many units, and also lack of authenticity concerning the textbook passages and activities which give the pupils an artificial picture about how the English language is used in different contexts by native speakers. Moreover, unit two "Once Upon a Time" is beyond the linguistic and cultural level of the pupils so they will learn nothing from it. It is noticeable also that the textbook is devoid of English songs, games, proverbs.....etc which promote the cultural understanding.

On the basis of the examination of the data collected from the teachers questionnaire, we have come to the conclusion that all the teachers are aware of the importance of teaching the cultural aspects, that is, they consider it as an important component for teaching English. Yet, the majority of them rarely deal with culture in their classes and even most of them face difficulties when explaining issues related to the target culture. The reason is that they do not have in-depth knowledge about the

English culture to teach it. This was proved through a small simple test about the English culture which most of the teachers failed to complete.

The results obtained in chapter two have confirmed our hypothesis that the cultural component is not given importance in the context of first year secondary school, that is, dealing with culture rarely occurs in textbooks and classrooms and teachers are not culturally competent enough to provide the pupils' with the needed information. Therefore, this issue should be examined in further studies to highlight other aspects of the reasons behind ignoring culture in our schools and to find solutions and recommendations in order to ameliorate the situation of teaching English and its culture in the Algerian schools.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1

The following is an extract from "At the Crossroads" textbook

Unit One: Getting Through

CONSOLIDATION AND EXTENSION

WORK IT OUT

UNII : SEQUENCE ↑ 1. Read dialogues 1-5 and identify the problem. Then complete each of the dialogues with replies a - e.

A: Hello, can I speak to Nora Jones, please?

B: What number do you want?

A: 873291.

①

a. No, I can't. It's a bad line.

B: _____

A: I'm sorry.

A: Hello, is that Hind Benmouloud?

B: Could you speak up? I can't hear you very well.

Can you hear me now?

②

b. Your line was engaged.

A: _____

I'll call you back.

B: Sorry, what did you say? I didn't catch that...

A: Good morning. I'm Jamila.

B: Jane here.

A: Hello Jane. I tried to call you at about nine o'clock, but I couldn't get through.

B: What was the problem?

③

c. You've got the wrong number.

A: _____

A: Can I speak to Mr Jones?

B: I'm afraid he's not in the office. He won't be back till next week.

A: Sorry, I don't understand _____

④

B: He won't be back till next week. He's not here.

A: Oh, thank you.

B: Try his mobile phone.

A: Sorry?

B: I say he has a mobile phone.

d. Yes, our phones were out of order all morning.

Unit Tow: Once Upon a Time

UNIT 2 : SEQUENCE 3

1. Look at the book cover below and answer these questions.

- A. Who is the author of the book?
- B. What is its title? Do you expect the book to be cheerful or depressing?
- C. What does the picture illustrate? Tick in the appropriate box and justify.
 - a. a beautiful village
 - b. an industrial town
 - c. a tourist resort

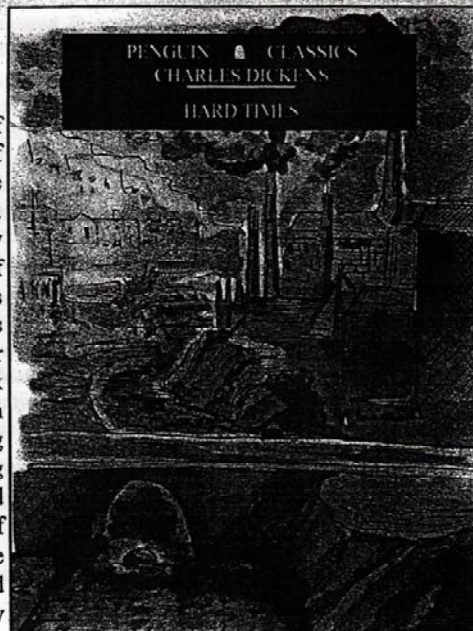
2. Read and check your answers to questions B and C above.

Coketown was a town of red brick. It was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river which ran purple with ill-smelling dye. Vast piles of building full of windows trembled all day long because of the piston engines of the machines, which worked up and down monotonously like a melancholy elephant.

Coketown contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another. The people who lived there were also like one another. They all went in and out at the same hours to work in the textile factories near their homes.

You saw nothing in Coketown but some rare facilities. The infirmary stood next to the town hall. The library was opposite the M'Choakumchild school. The bank was between the Old Church and the prison. All public inscriptions were written in black and white. So all the buildings looked like one another. There was neither a leisure centre nor a public library where children could go.

(Adapted from Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*)



Unit Three: Our Friends Show

UNIT 3 : SEQUENCE 4

WORK IT OUT

1. Read the consumer reports on health below. Two of them are alerts to the consumer. Identify them and say what the problem is in each case.

According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, many elderly women are not aware of the critical role which vitamin D plays in preventing fractures. This nutrient helps the body use calcium to maintain strong bones. "We should make people aware of Vitamin D's importance," says Dr. Meryl S. Leboff. In their study, researchers compared 30 women with hip fractures with 68 who didn't have fractures. Half the broken-hip group had vitamin-D deficiencies. ①

Common sources of Vitamin include eggs, milk and cereal. Experts advise asking your doctor about supplements. Lycopene is an antioxidant and, as you may know, antioxidants are an important part of the body's cell protection systems. Recent studies report an association between Lycopene-rich diets and a reduced risk of prostate cancer. Tomatoes, tomato paste, pink grapefruit and watermelon are excellent sources of Lycopene. Make sure you're getting enough of these fruits and vegetables in order to prevent cancer diseases. In addition to the proper diet, a healthy diet includes regular exercise, medical check-ups and refraining from smoking. ②

The FDA (Federal Department of Agriculture) has issued a warning to consumers about several sleeping pills. In the United States, at least three people died because of these pills and 119 other people have suffered serious side effects. "We can't be everywhere," says FDA drug chief Dr Janet Woodstock, "and we really want to transmit this message to consumers. Study labels. Look carefully at anything marked as an aid for sleeping" and don't consume any suspect ingredients. ③

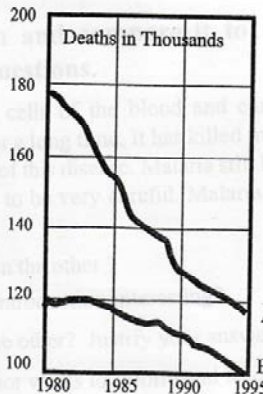
2. Read the text below and answer the questions.

A. Why does the text start with the expression 'Good News'?

B. Find in the text three synonyms for: 'went down'.

C. Look at the graph and identify the curves which illustrate the fall in numbers of heart attacks for men and women.

Good news- statistics show that fatal heart attacks went down sharply over the last years. The number of heart attacks for women fell from 120,000 in 1980 to less than 100,000 in 1995. The decrease of heart attacks for men was even sharper. It dropped from 180,000 to less than 120,000 during the same period. This decrease in heart-attacks was due to improved health habits, as well as better health care and medications for prevention and treatment.



CONSOLIDATION AND EXTENSION

UNIT 4 : SEQUENCE 4

WRITE IT OUT

1. Read the introduction below and guess where it comes from. Justify your answer.

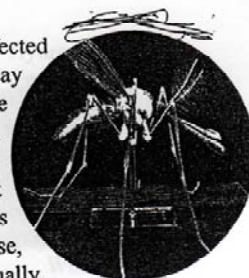
It comes from...

- a. a novel b. a scientific article c. a history book

MAN AND THE MOSQUITO

Malaria is one of the oldest diseases that have affected mankind. Some historians believe that it caused the decay of Greek civilisation. Malaria attacks and destroys the red cells of the blood and causes anaemia. Of course, a nation of anaemic people cannot work hard. So they can neither maintain nor build a civilisation. The fight against malaria makes one of the most exciting tales in human history. It has all the elements of suspense, mystery, danger and heroism, disappointment. Eventually, the fight against malaria has had a bright and hopeful ending.

Man has identified the cause of the disease. However, this does not mean that the story is over. Malaria still makes victims in some parts of the world. So man has to continue the fight against it. (A)



2. Read the introduction above again and compare it to the introduction below. Then answer the questions.

Malaria is a disease which attacks the red cells of the blood and causes anaemia. It is a disease which man has fought for a long time. It has killed many people, but at last man has discovered the cause of this disease. Malaria still kills people in some parts of the world. So man has to be very careful. Malaria can come back. (B)

- Which introduction is more enjoyable than the other?
- What does the author do to make his/her introduction interesting?
- Which introduction is more boring than the other? Justify your answer.
- Which introduction indicates that the author wants to inform and teach the reader a lesson at the same time?
- What does the author aim to teach?

Unit Five: Back to Nature



CONSOLIDATION AND EXTENSION

UNIT 5 : SEQUENCE 4

WRITE IT OUT

1. Read the text below and answer these questions:

- What are oil, natural gas and coal all called?
- What will happen if we run out of the existing energy sources?
- What consequences of pollution are mentioned in the text?
- How can we solve the problem of energy shortage and pollution?
- How many replacement energies the World Energy Council has identified?

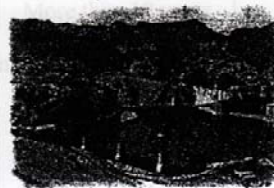
RENEWABLE ENERGY

Most of the energy we use today comes from the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas and coal. These fuels are non-renewable. Specialists predict that most of these sources of energy will run out during this century. If this really happens, what will power our cars, air planes, buses, and trains? What will provide electricity for our computers and factories?

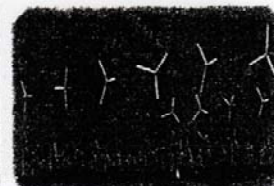
Fossil fuels pose another problem. This problem is that of pollution, which threatens our environment and man's existence on earth. If pollution goes on, we will soon wear masks both inside and outside home. Some of us will die of thirst because of the contamination of water sources.

So, what shall we do to solve the problem of energy shortage and pollution? The sun, the wind, the earth and the sea can supply man with energy until the end of time. This energy is renewable and is safer than nuclear energy and cleaner than oil and coal. The World Energy Council has identified six energy sources, which can replace fossil fuels. What are these sources and which of them is the most practical?

Hydroelectric



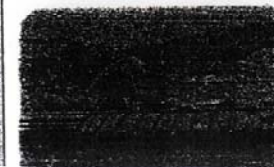
Wind



Solar



Geothermal



APPENDIX 2

Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a research work .It aims at finding out what English teachers think of teaching culture as well as testing the teachers' cultural knowledge. Your experience at the secondary level is valuable information to achieve this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Section one: experience information

1-what is your qualification?

BA Master Other, specify

2-How long have you been teaching English?

Less than 5 years Between 5 and 10 years More than 10 years

3-Have you ever visited England, America or any other English speaking country?

Yes No

Section two: approach to culture teaching

4-How would you define the word "culture"?

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

5-Do you think that teaching culture is an important part of teaching English?

Yes, very important Yes, important No, not important

Please justify your answer

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

6-How often do you discuss cultural issues in your class

Often Rarely

7-Do you face difficulties when explaining cultural issues?

Yes Sometimes No

8-Do use audio-visual materials in your classes?

Yes No

9- Does the textbook “At the Crossroads” offer enough cultural knowledge?

a- Yes, a lot b- Yes, enough c- No

Section three: teachers’ test

10-The flag of Britain is called

11-What is the name of the official London residence of Queen Elizabeth?

Windson Castle The Tower of London

Buckingham palace

12-When did William Shakespeare live?

In the 14th and 15th century In the 17th and 18th century

In the 16th and 17th century

13-Look at the following list of words: hoggis spotted dog, Welsh rarebit, bubble.

These words are :

Names of animals

Names of food

Names of drinks