Exploring Secondary Teachers’
Perceptions towards Teaching
Intercultural Competence in
Bahrain in English Language
Classroom
EdD Thesis

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Doctor of Education in TESOL
Exploring Secondary Teachers’ Perception towards Teaching Intercultural Competence in English Language Classrooms in Bahrain

Submitted by Kawther Rashed Abdulla Al Mawoda (Student Number: 580035579) to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages December 2011

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I certify that all materials in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature _________________________________
Acknowledgment

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Abstract

The aims of English language teaching (ELT) have observed a fundamental reconsideration during the past two decades, resulting in a shift in emphasis from linguistic competence over communicative competence to intercultural competence. The growing emphasis on cultural issues, which is called for by research and international curricular documents, places new demands on language teachers.

The general aim of this study is to deepen the knowledge about teachers’ perception at the Bahraini government secondary schools towards the treatment of culture in English language teaching. The research questions are: 1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concept “Culture” and Intercultural Competence in ELT? 2. To what extent do the teachers see Intercultural Competence as an objective in language classroom? 3. How do they approach the teaching of Intercultural Competence in their classrooms? 4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including Intercultural Competence in their teaching?

This interpretive and exploratory study is placed within a socio-cultural framework and can also be a contribution to teacher cognition research. The empirical data consists of semi-structured interviews with 17 English language senior teachers and a questionnaire with 197 English language teachers. The findings are presented according to three pedagogies: within the pedagogy of information; within the pedagogy of preparation; and within the pedagogy of Encounter. The minority of the participants represent the third perspective, which is the one that can be characterized as truly intercultural. My study indicates that many teachers feel unsure about how to teach culture in an appropriate and up-to-date manner. This is attributed to, among other things, lack of teacher insight, lack of time, and inadequate pre- or in-service training courses concerning teaching culture.
The thesis ends with a set of recommendations as to how ELT could be developed in a more intercultural direction.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The significance of the intercultural dimension (ICD) of foreign language teaching (FLT) as a research field is currently internationally recognized (Freeman, 2002). Language teaching has been directed for the last four decades to improving methods for teaching language competence (LC) (Byram, 2003). Given the increase in international interaction both real and virtual, it has now turned to the question of what the ICD has to be, and the continuing question of what the educational purpose of language teaching should be. However, intercultural understanding (ICU) and Intercultural Competence (ICC) are concepts which are commonly, but sometimes light-heartedly used in today’s pedagogical discussions, not the least in curricula contexts (ibid). The lack of definition of what is to be taught and the problem of what to select from the seemingly endless phenomena of culture may easily lead to dissatisfaction and return to the priority of the four language skills teaching (Byram et al., 1998).

In the past two decades, much has changed in Bahraini society and the world at large. Political and social development, new information technology, globalization, multicultural and increased mobility of the work force; students and specialists, logically place new demands on education. This has made language teachers reconsider their role as language teachers, and led them to reassess the type of knowledge and skills they aim to pass on to their students. They have also become increasingly aware of the growing importance of English as an international language (EIL) which is spoken across the globe (ELC, 2005).

Thus, recently, language teachers have started to identify the need to broaden their students’ perception beyond the purely linguistic aspects by placing greater weight on the cultural backgrounds of the target language countries, and thereby trying to raise some
kind of intercultural awareness. From the students’ perspective, these endeavors have been often met by either doubt towards learning things they feel do not belong to language studies at all, or enthusiasm at the realization that the very intention of learning a foreign language (FL) is to be able to understand people who are different from them. In the process, the word “understand” has come to take on a new meaning, way beyond the semantics and the grammar.

Intercultural language teaching (ILT), a concept which will be elaborated on in chapter 3, has indeed been widely debated. However, among practitioners it has attracted surprisingly little attention. Informal discussions with colleagues in both Bahraini schools, and at the Directorate of Training (DoT) at the Ministry of Education (MoE), have indicated that many professional teachers in the country also lack a clear notion of what can, and should be dealt with within the framework of culture. This aspect has now turned into a current challenge due to the New Curriculum for the New Millennium project, which was released by the MoE in 2003. The teachers in Bahraini schools are currently facing the challenging task of specifying the cultural aspects discussed in the new curriculum in their secondary schools curricula, and will subsequently implement them in their own teaching. In consideration of teacher training and the development of related teaching aids in the future, it is therefore of essential importance to increase the knowledge of how teachers think and talk about their own work, with particular focus on cultural aspects. This is important both in a wider context, where we need more understanding of teachers’ perception on the cultural dimension, as well as in both the national and regional context as a result of the reform of the curriculum.

1.1. Rationale for the Study

The typical Bahraini classroom consists of students coming from different countries and backgrounds due to an open policy of inviting all Arab Muslims to participate in the Bahraini community. There is no certain percentage of how many nationalities each classroom consists of (MoE, 2010); still students need help in communicating with each
other, and the same applies to their teachers. In order to achieve the goal of successful communication, ELT has been viewed as an imperative way to reach the goal. However, being fluent in the target language does not guarantee the success in transmitting messages. Misinterpretation and miscommunication are common phenomena in intercultural communication (Moore, 2006). Therefore, in order to enhance English language learners’ ICC, understanding others’ background is the foundation of making possible assumptions (Byram, 1997 and Smith et al., 2003). In other words, cultural knowledge and linguistic knowledge play an equal role in the process of communication. In addition, the relationship between culture and language learning has also been explained by language scholars (Lessard-Clouston, 1996 among others). Additionally, teaching culture in ELT is developing insight into the target culture(s) (TCs) and positive attitudes towards foreign people (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996, p.197).

Since culture plays such an important role in ELT, teachers should be considered as a major instructional tool to transmit knowledge and consequently to convey cultural aspects to their students. However, very few studies have been conducted to analyze the teachers’ perception towards teaching culture. In this study, I hope to be able to identify patterns in teachers’ perceptions about culture in ELT and to describe the objectives they set up for their teaching and the methodology they use to attain those objectives. Additionally, it was initiated by my own interest in the topic. Hence, I believe this topic could provide some useful pointers for the improvement of pre-service and in-service training courses. Besides, the research outcomes would throw valuable light on developing language teacher education programs in Bahrain, and would be beneficial to professional development in my career. Furthermore, this study may initiate new studies in the Arabian Gulf region concerning teachers’ perceptions towards teaching English as a foreign language or as a second language, which may contribute to and enhance social research community understanding of the role of the teacher’s perception in ELT.
1.2. Significance of the Study

Although there have been many studies to investigate teachers’ perception towards teaching different language skills (Berliner, 1987; Borg, 1999; Breen, 1991 & Calderhead, 1996), there were few studies regarding investigation into teachers’ perception towards teaching culture (Castro et al., 2004 & Sercu et al., 2005); and only one study in the Arabian Gulf (Al-Qahtani, 2004), which investigates students’ perception towards culture learning in ELT. The researcher found that there was a need to explore how English language teachers think about teaching culture in their classrooms in the Arabian Gulf, and especially in Bahrain; due to its multiculturalism. This study, firstly, is significant in that it was carried out by a Bahraini English language teacher who has experience of ELT in the participants’ school context. Therefore, the study is rooted in the authentic culture of teaching and learning; being an insider will add more depth to the study. Secondly, this study hopefully will help to:

- Provide teachers educators with a framework to train English language teachers to incorporate culture into the higher education English language curriculum, and also provide an in-depth understanding of the theoretical background of language-and-culture teaching.

- Stress the importance of listening to the opinions of teachers and drawing upon their experiences in designing the content of teacher education programs. The insights gained from exploring English language teachers’ views about the current status of teaching culture in the curriculum will make it clear to curriculum designers that teachers are not passive in sending and receiving information, but have their own views and perceptions that should be taken into account in designing or developing the curricula and programs.

- Raise educators’ awareness of the contextual factors affecting teachers’ perceptions and practices. This can be considered as a step towards introducing some deliberate changes into the teaching of English language. Thus, the study presents the professional realities of English language teachers. This could provide a basis for strategic English language teacher professional development.
In terms of potential significance this study holds for educational research in Bahrain, the study sets an example for further studies in education in terms of the potential and worth of using interpretive-constructivist research framework in educational research.

This study may attract the attention of English language curriculum developers and syllabus designers to take into account the teachers’ knowledge of the context. This should save time and investment in the long run and ensure an educational service that caters for the needs of the society.

1.3. Research Aims and Questions

The main aim of this study is to explore English language teachers’ perceptions towards teaching culture and ICC in their classrooms. The research questions were derived from the preliminary interviews with four English language teachers, who were interviewed to find main aspects teachers are concerned about while teaching the target language culture(s) (See Appendix 11: Preliminary Interview Sample). Triandis (1989) argues that extensive research has been conducted concerning the “how” of language teaching, whereas the “what” and “why” are seldom addressed. Therefore, the focus of this study will be on how teachers perceive the very content of the teaching of English language, and underlying aims and motivations. However, purely methodological aspects will be discussed to give the study a more concrete link to what is going on in today’s classrooms. Starting out from this overall aim, my intention is to find out:

- What meanings secondary level English language teachers in Bahrain attribute to the concept “Culture” in ELT;
- Why they think culture should be taught;
- How they themselves teach culture;
- If their pre-service preparation or in-service training prepared them to teach it in their classrooms.
Based on the research aims outlined above, the main research questions which guide the current study are:

1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concept “Culture” and ICC in ELT?
2. To what extent do the teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom?
3. How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms?
4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?

1.4. Definitions of Terms

To aid understanding of the study, three key terms are defined as follows:

*Teachers’ perception* represents the cognitive process and structures that inspire, and are inspired by, what teachers do. This unobservable cognitive dimension of thinking includes beliefs, knowledge, principles, theories, and attitudes, in addition to the thoughts and reflections teachers have before, during and after teaching (Borg, 2003).

*Culture* in this study is defined from a broad point of view and is based on the concepts of Friedl (1976), Basttista (1984), Valette (1986), Moore (1991), and Yen (2000). The researchers define culture as the way of life of a group of people, which consists of invisible components and concrete elements. Invisible components include values, beliefs, customs, and manners. Concrete elements include human languages, artifacts of daily living, figures of history, products of literature, fine arts, social sciences, and engineering achievements. In addition, detailed descriptions of both invisible components and concrete elements are also cultural.
Intercultural communicative competence as described here includes two sub-competences: Communicative competence, which includes linguistics competence, sociolinguistic competence, and discourse competence); and Intercultural competence, which includes attitudes of curiosity and openness, cultural knowledge of one’s own and other countries, skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction) (Byram, 1997).

1.5. Thesis Organization

➢ Chapter 2 concerns the background of the study. First Bahrain’s geographical position between different nations and cultures, resulting in a multicultural society, will be outlined. This is followed by a description of the educational system in general and the secondary level in particular. The ELC is going to be discussed in order to examine the place of ICC, and how it is supposed to be presented and assessed. Finally, the English language teachers for the secondary level are going to be presented by discussing their current situations, their pre-service preparation and in-service training.

➢ Chapter 3 concerns the literature review for this study, which is going to discuss both teachers’ perception, and the ICD in ELT classroom, which are accepted as the two main themes of this study. Teachers’ perception is going to be discussed in the beginning in order to locate the study in this relatively new field of inquiry. Then the development of research on ICD over the 20th century, and the current situation for English language teachers is going to be discussed. Conversely, the final theme is how to merge ICD and language teachers’ perception.

➢ In chapter 4 I will introduce my ontological, epistemological, and axiological stances. A full description of the methods used in the data collection, which are semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire, will be presented. The sampling techniques, the implementation of the instruments and their validity and reliability
are discussed in detail in relation to the ethical aspects of each step of the research study.

- Chapter 5 concerns data analysis and interpretations of the findings from the two data collection tools and a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature, which will draw a tentative conclusion. Then Chapter 6 presents the implications and recommendations for practice and further research, as well as some personal reflections on the study.

1.6. Conclusion
In this chapter, I provided an introduction to the research study. A statement of the research problem; the research aims and objectives; a definition of terms; and finally the significance of the study were stated. Then the structure of the thesis has been described, and the next chapter is concerned the study’s context.
Chapter 2

The Study Context

In the Kingdom of Bahrain an increasing importance is being paid to the English language in the country as a whole and in schools in particular. Acquiring its skills is now a governmental mission towards improving and developing the current educational system, so that the people will be able to communicate and become tolerant not only towards other developed nations, but also with people within its diverse communities, giving indigenous students the tools so they respect and understand better the different people in their society. Since the traditional Bahraini classroom consists of students coming from different nationalities and countries, they may unite in Islam and the Arabic language but they differ in their cultures. The main purpose of this study is firstly to explore English language teachers’ perception of teaching ICC in their classrooms, and secondly, how it will translate into the governmental aspiration towards greater cohesion of the society.

This chapter has three main aims; the first, is to provide an overview of the country and its multi-cultural features in relation to its internal and external communication; the second, is to describe the educational system in the Kingdom focusing on the place of the English language in its government schools, in particular the secondary level, and the teaching of ICC within its curriculum. The third is to provide relevant information regarding the English language teachers and their pre-service and in-service training, which will help us to draw a picture of their preparation to teach ICC in their classrooms. These aims will provide an idea of the setting within which I intend to explore the teachers’ perception.
2.1. The Kingdom of Bahrain’s Multicultural Society

It is important to understand the demographic features of the country and the component of its population to grasp an idea of what we mean by the multicultural society that Bahrain represents. These features explain the importance of introducing ICC in the educational system to support and maintain individuals’ understanding of their own culture and the culture(s) they encounter either within or outside of their schools.

2.1.1. Geographical Location

The Kingdom of Bahrain is the smallest country in the Gulf and the Middle East. It is an archipelago of 33 islands situated in the middle of the Arabian Gulf. The biggest, and inhabited, island is Bahrain, which is 55km (34miles) long by 18km (11miles) wide. It lies on the trading road between east and west Asia, and it occupies approximately 575,50 Km² roughly the size of greater London (O’Sullivan, 2008, p.186). Kuwait and Iraq lies to its north; Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman lie from southwest to southeast in that order; to the west is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and to the northeast is Iran. The country lies in a strategically important position in the middle of different cultures and people (See Figure 2.1).

Figure (2.1) Bahrain’s Geographical Location
2.1.2. Population

The Kingdom of Bahrain’s population is just over 1 million (exactly 1,107,000); according to the 2010 census (CIO, 2010, p.4). 48.6% are Bahrainis, and 51.4% are non-Bahrainis, from Asia, Far East, and Africa, Europe, USA, and Australia; however, there are no certain numbers of how many each nationality represents. At present it is estimated that almost 16% of the Bahraini population is under the age of 17 (school age) (CIO, 2010, p.8). The mixture of indigenous people and cultures with foreigners coming from all around the world, is the result of the openness that Bahrain has, not only due to the discovery of petroleum in 1932, but also because of the strategic location of Bahrain and its trading relations with other countries.

2.1.3. Culture and Religion

Islam is the official religion of the Kingdom, and is embraced by the vast majority of the population. The Kingdom of Bahrain blends modern communications with an Arabian Gulf identity and, unlike other countries in the region, its wealth is not only a reflection of the amount of its oil, but it is also related to the creation of an indigenous middle class. This distinctive socioeconomic development in the Arabian Gulf means that the country is more liberal than its neighbors (O’Sullivan, 2008). Even though Islam is the main religion, the country is known for its tolerance; Churches, Hindu temples, Sikh Gurdwara, and Jewish Synagogues are found alongside Muslims’ Masjeds. Due to an influx of immigrants and guest workers from non-Muslim countries, such as India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, the overall percentage of Muslims in the country has declined in recent years. According to the 2001 census 81.2% of Bahrain’s population were Muslims, 9% were Christian, and 9.8% practiced Hinduism and other religions (CIO, 2010, p.10).
2.2. Education in Bahrain

Education in Bahrain was originally found in the form of traditional Quranic schools (Kuttab), which were the only form of education at the beginning of the 20th century. However, it was felt that this type of education did not fulfill the academic requirements to match the spirit of the age. After the WWI, the situation changed and the country became widely open to influences from the West. Political and social changes occurred in the country and these resulted in the rise of social and cultural awareness among the people. The result has been a demand for educational institutions which can offer new and different systems, curricula and objectives (MoE, 2010).

In 1919 the first government boys’ school was established, which marked the beginning of the modern public school system in the Kingdom, followed by the first girls’ school in 1928. The first committee of education consisted of several leading merchants and was presided over by the MoE. However, due to the financial and administrative difficulty faced by the Education Committee, in 1930 the schools came under direct control of the government, and in 1956 the committee changed its name from “Al Ma’aref” to the “Ministry of Education” (Ismaeel, 2004).

2.2.1. MoE’s Current Educational System

2.2.1.1. MoE’s Educational Vision and its Mission

The MoE seeks to develop a quality education system to reach a high degree of excellence and creativity and provides educational opportunities for all citizens, Bahrainis and non-Bahrainis, to develop their mental, physical and emotional potentials and skills (MoE, 2010). Education in Bahrain is compulsory for the ages 6 to 14, and all school age children attend either public or private schools. The MoE provides free education for all Bahrainis and non Bahrainis in public schools; government education is not co-educational but is offered in separate schools for boys and girls with all students,
teaching and administrative staff of the same sex. However, there are some public boys’ primary schools where the teaching and administrative staffs are females. Coeducation is generally applied at university level, and in private schools, although a few of them also have separate schools for boys and girls, especially Islamic schools.

2.2.1.2. Compulsory Education in Bahrain

Compulsory education in Bahraini government schools consists of 3 stages: the first is the primary stage, both in general education or government religious education is of six years duration and is divided into two stages. The first cycle serves students from 6 to 8 years old; and the second cycle serves students from 9 to 11 years old. The intermediate cycle serves students from 12 to 14 years old. The last cycle is the secondary, which serves students from 15 to 17 years old; the same applies to government religious education (MoE, 2010) (See Table 2.1).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Government Religious Education</th>
<th>Compulsory Education</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Basic Education (Third Cycle) Intermediate</td>
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<td>Primary</td>
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<td>First Cycle (Primary)</td>
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Table (2.1) Compulsory Education in Bahrain

2.2.1.3. Secondary Education

The secondary cycle, of interest to this study, is “The Unification of Academic Secondary Education Track”, and is divided into three levels. It is considered as a new phase for the students as it prepares them for higher education or the labor market. Entry is conditional
on obtaining the intermediate school certificate or its equivalent. Students are obliged to accomplish a certain amount of English language, Arabic language, Math, and Science courses, as compulsory subjects to graduate whatever their major choices are.

2.2.2. English Language Teaching in Schools

ELT started in the year 1924 in Bahrain. Within the formal educational system in the government schools, EL is viewed as the first FL, a view which stems from the vision of the MoE, and the Directorate of Curricula (DoC)’s statement of general aims for secondary education, and which had been established as a result of the international move towards global and free market economies (ELC, 2005, pp.12-13). Various textbooks following different learning and teaching theories and approaches have been used (Al Dosery, 2003, p.8, and Al Zayani, 1971). With the opening of the government schools, ELT started at the 4th grade of primary education; however, in 2004 the MoE applied teaching the English language starting from grade 1. Students have 50 minute periods 5 to 7 times a week. By grade 12, secondary level students are supposed to have acquired a sufficient amount of the English language that helps them continue their university studies or enter the labor market; “those who have a good command of English usually have better opportunity for employment, professional development and future prospects” (ELC, 2005, p. 12).

2.2.2.1. English Language in the Secondary Level

The Bahraini English language syllabus is based on the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Strasbourg, October 2002” in order to position the targeted language learning outcomes within an international dimension and facilitate the ability of the students to communicate with an international public. Accordingly, the expected learning outcomes include language-specific as well as the generic skills of critical thinking, self-directed learning and cultural awareness which are of particular interest to this study. Students need to develop a degree
of “cultural awareness”; therefore, they should acquire the language communicative competencies (CC), namely LC, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence, and the ability to apply these in speaking, listening, reading and writing (ELC, 2005, p. 38).

According to the ELC (2005), by the end of the secondary cycle, students are expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. Use English to express ideas, feelings, and emotions, and to mediate and exchange information and opinions on a variety of topics; to negotiate meaning, and to develop a multiplicity of informed perspectives.
2. Use critical thinking skills to understand and interpret print and non-print texts on varied topics from a variety of media and sources.
3. Apply self-directed learning skills to access knowledge from a variety of resources and use it for further language development and life-long learning.
4. Appreciate a variety of genres and develop knowledge and appreciation of different cultures and perspectives (pp.38-40).

Thus, the notions underpinning the ELC, established in 2003, consist of the following components, all of which are incorporated in the new textbooks (See Figure 2.2):
2.2.2.2. The Role of ICC within the Curriculum

Figure 2.2 explain different notions underpinning the ELC; however, what is of particular interest to this study, is the second notion which is contributing to overall development of the learner. This notion is derived from the MoE’s aims to provide learners with English language proficiency levels and competencies, which will place them on a par with their international counterparts and help them, realize the vision of the UNESCO’s International Commission on Education in the 21st Century. This vision stresses the importance of enabling students to transfer the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to life outside the classroom, and are expressed in the following four themes:

1. Learning to know: learning skills required to continue learning throughout life.
2. Learning to do: acquiring skills, such as those needed to earn a living.
3. Learning to live together: developing civic values and the capacity for understanding, team working and respect for others.


The curriculum sees the links between these four themes and learning another language as embedded in the following understanding:

1. Proficiency in English and seeking knowledge and information, either about it, or other foreign languages.

2. Personal competence based on a body of theoretical and practical knowledge, which will provide learners with a range of functional skills to achieve effective communication and performance of tasks and activities.

3. Knowledge of another language will form a gateway to learn about other cultures and creates awareness of cultural similarities and differences, while appreciating one’s own culture plus cultural diversity. Providing students with tools for discovering the other cultures and working towards common goals will enable them to create new forms of identity, widening the scope of their perspectives, and enabling them to transcend the routines of their personal lives to attach value to what is shared in common.

4. Learning English language will further contribute to the widening of learners’ knowledge, the development of their personalities, and enrich their experiences, which will lead them to become tolerant, caring and responsible (ELC, 2005, p. 41).

The conceptual framework of the ELC is based on a triad framework of three learning theories: construction of knowledge, multiple intelligences, and critical thinking, which share many concepts on individual and social language development through theory and application relevant to the English language classroom. These three theories combine to form a constructive and negotiable form of social and academic knowledge, and they all
contribute to developing depth and breadth of thinking through methods of problem-solving and inquiry-based learning, and have key influences on ELT, learning and assessment. The goal of the triad paradigm is to prepare students to lead effective and successful lives as life-long learners in a rapidly changing socio-economic world; to help them function effectively in academic and professional endeavors; and to facilitate their social development as fair-minded, critical thinking citizens who will play a significant role in their country’s democracy (ELC, 2005, p. 36) (See Figure 2.3).

One of the curriculum aims is that students can achieve a language CC, which is one of the realizations of constructive language development. For effective communication language learners need to become aware of language varieties and how they differ in formal or less formal communication contexts. They have to understand that the language used by a sociocultural group is closely connected with its values, attitudes and beliefs and that learning a language involves understanding and interpreting the culture of which it is a part. Also, learners need to know that their effective use of the target language is further influenced by situational factors, which determine the appropriate usage of the language and the media to the communication tasks or goals. This participation in communicative events results in further development of the learners’ competences for both immediate and long-term use. Therefore, sociolinguistic competence is one of the competences that students have to accomplish as a realization of communicative tasks.
Secondary students have to achieve two specific levels, amongst others, in the sociolinguistic competence by the end of this cycle, and which are of particular interest to this study. These two levels come under the appropriateness as a specific competence. The first is being aware of the most significant differences between the customs, usage, attitudes, values and beliefs prevalent in the community concerned and those of him or herself; while the second is, being able to sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker.

With regard to teaching materials, the cultural content of the new textbook for the secondary cycle “Opportunities”, which is used in the participating schools in this study, is informative and simple enough to offer students sufficient knowledge about different cultures including their own. Every unit contains a cultural section, and at the end of every two units there is a cultural corner, which deals with various aspects of English speaking countries’ culture(s) and the students own cultures (See Appendix 1: A Sample of Textbooks Content; and Appendix 2: A Sample of a Chapter). The place of ICC is clear in the implementation of the new curriculum, and the teachers are guided by a manual in order to teach it in their classrooms (ABTL, 2005). Teachers process certain criteria against which to assess their students’ ICC, which is going to be discussed in the next section. Therefore, in my opinion, the need to explore teachers’ perception of how to teach ICC in their classes is important in order to understand how they can establish the governmental aspiration towards tolerance and empathy.

2.2.2.3. ICC Assessment within the Curriculum

While designing the ELC around the triad framework of social constructivism, multiple intelligences, and critical thinking, the assessment practices have been re-conceptualized in order to provide assessment procedures that match the theoretical concepts underpinning the curriculum and their implications for teaching and learning (Al Dosery,
The evaluation system in this level is based on the continuous diagnostic and formative evaluation, as well as the internal, and external evaluation, which are carried out by their teachers, by the school, and by the MoE respectively (MoE, 2010). The formative evaluation which is carried by their teachers depends on observations, projects, students’ activities, written reports, and small research papers, which all gather in the students’ portfolios (ELC, 2005, p. 77).

Students’ evaluation system is based on building their ability of how to use the language in different contexts, and increasing their role as social learners; in addition to that, textbooks allocate an adequate part of text to cultural aspects and real life situations of both the students’ culture and the TCs (DoC, 1997). However, teachers do not follow specific criteria of how to assess their students’ ICC, and it was left to them to use this competency as an activity on the margin while concentrating on LC in their classrooms. This is an issue which leads teachers to confusion in how to approach the MoE’s objectives of providing students with a sufficient amount of knowledge about the TCs, and how to prepare an intercultural learner. At the same time they are obliged to follow more important objectives of providing their students with the linguistic aspects of the language, which takes a large part of their classroom time. Teachers are expected to shift their role from the operative model to the problem solving one, which is necessary for coping more effectively with the real nature of teaching; a shifting process which could be possible if teacher training and development programs become grounded in teacher experiences to encourage deliberate reflection, and the closing of the cognitive gap between general learning theories and teacher practice (ELC, 2005, p. 82-84).

For example, the manual for assessing English language learning at the secondary level (ABTL, 2005) gives a full description to the teachers on how to deal with both the summative assessment and the formative assessment, and provides them with a guide line to use the formative assessment tools, in particular. However, and despite all evidence,
exploring English Language Teachers’ Perception

research shows that high-quality formative assessment is relatively rare in classrooms and that most teachers do not know how to engage in such assessment (Black & William, 1998, cited in ABTL, 2005, pp.7-8).

Formative assessment tools have been chosen for their practicality, applicability and anticipated value for learning and achievement; and to encourage the use of assessment methods which are meaningful and more comprehensive than pen and paper tests (ABTL, 2005, p. 5 & 8). One of the tools called structured observation studies students’ behaviors using an observation checklist (See Appendix 3: Observation Checklist). The check list focuses on a range of behaviors exemplifying self-study and social skills arranged in three categories: management of self; management of learning; and working with others. The manual suggests that students and parents receive copies of the checklist and its content is explained to them in order to become fully informed about its use as one of the formative assessments tools (ibid, p.11). However, do teachers use this checklist in their classroom? This issue may be answered by interviewing the teachers themselves and exploring their perception of implementing this type of assessment within their teaching.

2.3. English Language Teachers

The effective implementation of the linguistic and sociocultural curriculum depends more on developing the quality of teachers and teaching than the provision of good textbooks or educational equipment alone. Therefore, it is important to consider how the quality of teachers and teaching can be maintained (ELC, 2005). The following section concerns shedding some light on the preparation of the English language teachers, their in-service training, and their professional development.
2.3.1. Bahrain’s Teacher Education

Teacher education started in 1966 when the government decided to establish “Teachers Institute” for males, and in 1967 for females, from which teachers graduated with a diploma allowing them to teach in government schools. After that, in 1986, the University of Bahrain (UoB) was established, and made it possible for teachers to obtain a BA in their majors in order to teach in schools (Shirawi, 1989). Later on, Bahrain Teachers College (BTC), which is a part of the UoB, was established in September 2008 to serve the country through teaching, research and service in the preparation of teachers, administrators and education professionals (UoB, 2009, p.10).

The BTC offers training courses to prepare student teachers to teach in schools at different levels. It offers them a B.Ed. after finishing four years of study, which aims to provide teachers with appropriate training in teaching methods and provide teachers qualified in specialist subjects. It also offers a PGDE certificate, which targets university graduates with a BA or B.Sc., which offers appropriate content knowledge as the basis for becoming effective subject specialist teachers in post-primary schools. It lasts for only an academic year. BTC also offers an intensive course, LDP, which is specialized for senior teachers and assistant principals. Finally, it offers a professional development and in-service training in collaboration with the MoE. Until the year 2005/2006 the majority of the in-service training courses were held at the DoT at the MoE in collaboration with the DoC.

2.3.1.1. English Language Teachers Pre-service Preparation

English language teachers total 397 split between male and female in the 2008/2009 academic year at the secondary cycle alone; 65% of them are Bahrainis and 35% are non-Bahrainis (MoE, 2010). The main requirement for the Bahraini teachers to be recruited is having a BA in teaching English either from the UoB, or of an equivalent university abroad. If they finished only a BA in English literature, they are obliged to take a one
year educational diploma to become teachers. Non Bahraini English language teachers should, also, have obtained a BA in English and education with at least 5 years teaching experience in their own countries (MoE, 2010).

Since 2008, secondary cycle teachers are required to graduate with a PGDE in their specialty area. English language teachers are supposed to finish certain modules which allow them to acquire an appropriate knowledge as the basis for becoming effective English language teachers in their classrooms after acquiring their BA. As mentioned earlier, this program has two preparation tracks which provide the necessary competence for novice teachers to play a transformative and professional role in their classrooms. Those teachers are advised to complete educational studies courses; curriculum studies courses; communication for educators’ courses; and professional practice courses. None of the above courses have specific criteria on how to teach ICC in the target language classroom (UoB, 2009); while the ELC explains and guides teachers on how to implement this competency in their classrooms and accept it as an important one in teaching their students how to understand their own culture and being tolerant towards other cultures (ELC, 2005 & ABTL, 2005).

2.3.1.2. English Language Teachers In-service Training

Since 2008, and after the opening of the BTC, the in-service training courses for the English language teachers have been transferred to the PGDE and LDP after being the responsibility of the DoT in collaboration with the DoC. During that period teachers were obliged to finish a certain number of in-service training courses in order to be promoted. The in-service training courses were mainly about preparing them for the Cambridge examination certificates (FCE and CAE), which are provided by the British Council, and until 2006 were an important prerequisite for teachers professional development. Unfortunately, the teachers support in the BTC, or the DoT at that time concerning in-service training, were not based on a holistic view of teacher development, and most of it
tended to be fragmented, textbook specific, and focused on providing quick fixes rather than permanent solutions (ELC, 2005).

2.4. Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, a brief description of the Kingdom’s geographical location, population, culture, and religion were presented. This description was important in order to show the reader the Kingdom’s multicultural society, and its location in the Arabian Gulf, which gave it its uniqueness in comparison to other countries in the same region; with a mixture of different religions and cultures that joined together to produce mixed groups of students in schools in general, and in English language classrooms, in particular. This brief description led into an outline of education in Bahrain: The current systems of education; the compulsory education; the secondary cycle; the teaching of English language and ICC within it.

In my opinion, the most important area, which we need to concentrate on, is the English language teachers and their role in presenting ICC in their classrooms. A brief description of their preparation at the pre-service level and their in-service training were important issues to present for the reader in order to draw a clear picture of what kind of training they go through. Those teachers have to become not only linguistic teachers but teachers of the sociocultural aspects, as well. They are supposed to follow the curriculum outlines and present ICC, following extensive materials in the prescribed textbooks (Al Dosery, 2003). Therefore, there are some issues that we need to explore, such as:

- The effect of teachers’ perception on their teaching ICC in their classrooms;
- The effect of their perception on them taking decisions in their classrooms;
- The role of the pre-service preparation and/or in-service training in molding teachers’ perception of how to deal with ICC in their classrooms; and
The role of clear criteria of assessment on the teachers dealing with teaching ICC in their classrooms on a par with the LC.

Those important issues need to be explored in order to provide stakeholders with recommendations to develop teacher education programs. Consequently, this study should give answers to the following research questions:

1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concept “Culture” and ICC in ELT?
2. To what extent do the teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom?
3. How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms?
4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?

In the next Chapter, I shall review a body of relevant literature on teaching of culture, in order to inform my study and to construct a theoretical framework within which the present investigation is carried out.
Chapter 3

Literature Review

This chapter starts with introducing the need for an intercultural learning to accomplish peace education amongst language students, especially with the intercultural encounters they face within their international societies; this is followed by a detailed discussion of teachers’ cognition and its characteristics, which is explained by reviewing different international studies. Then the next section introduces the meanings of the terms language and culture, and their interrelated relation with the development of FLT aims, and how it moved from teaching the LC towards the teaching of the CC, then towards the teaching of the IC, and finally, towards the teaching of the ICC. However, to understand this shift in language teaching aims, I need to present Byram’s perception of teaching ICC in the language classroom, considering its potentials and the criticisms it received from different scholars. Intercultural FLT has its potentials and challenges; therefore, there was a need to explore those two aspects in the following section. Finally, the specifications of this study’s research questions will be presented in order to comprehend teachers’ cognition towards teaching ICC in their language classrooms.

3.1. The Need for an Intercultural Education

The necessity of peace education and international understanding at all levels has long been recognized (Dervin, 2007); however, terms such as Intercultural Education, Intercultural learning, Intercultural Understanding, and Interculturalism are all relatively new within the educational research field (Sercu et al., 2005). Intercultural Education and Intercultural learning are two terms which were interpreted in different ways by several cultures; if not within the same culture. Doyé (1999, p.15) argues that the term Intercultural Education was used first in the USA after the two world wars to describe educational programs for the integration of different ethnic groups in North American society, and later on in Germany during the 1970’s as a way to minimize the conflicts between the native Germans and foreign workers. Additionally, in multicultural countries where a number of cultural minorities can be found, such as refugees,
exploring english language teachers’ perception

immigrants, or ethnic groups, intercultural education has aimed at blending together different cultures and improving their life quality (Dervin, 2007).

It seems that many parties agree that Intercultural Education has to become a fundamental aspect of school education all over the world. For example, Klafki (1997, pp.47-61) introduces the Culture-specific and the Intercultural, which should be thought of now and for future oriented educational work. He stresses the responsibility which schools should bear for issues such as environmental problems, war and peace, population explosion, inequality and the dangers of new information and communication media. According to Klafki, exploring these themes with the learners will help develop their empathy, critical thinking and argumentative skills, which he sees as an important pathway to a more humane and democratic society. Furthermore, for transition into the new millennium, UNESCO in 2006 established “Guidelines in Intercultural Education” with a main concern of how to develop concrete suggestions for an intercultural approach in worldwide pedagogy. UNESCO’s international plan of action, thus, promotes intercultural education at all levels of the preparation of teachers for this new dimension in teaching, the awareness of cultural pluralism and the need for intercultural dialogue (Batelaan & Coomans, 1999 & UNESCO, 2006). However, in a country such as Bahrain, with a fairly homogenous cultural background, intercultural education is principally concerned with the education of citizens towards internationalism and multiculturalism. The aim of intercultural education is to promote mutual and reciprocal understanding, and in this respect, aimed at the students of the majority.

Similarly, Kaikkonen (2001) presents some factors which play a role in the need for intercultural learning in today’s world. He argues that one of the factors is the individual’s own cultural identity and drives to strengthen it, where self-esteem and consciousness of one’s own identity turns into a kind of foundation for intercultural learning. He describes it as the National Identity where it is related to an individual’s roots, which are the ethnic origin of that individual’s forefathers, the cultural mould
which is formed by the social environment the individual is accustomed to, in addition to perceptions, and value judgments. Another factor is the descriptions of the individual’s own culture, their beliefs about foreign cultures, and the others’ beliefs about their own culture in contrast. Kaikkonen (ibid) raises an important issue, which is the multicultural reality in which we live, as a need for an intercultural learning. He also clarifies that languages have a fundamental part in any social change that occurs, because all nations wish to hold on to their own languages and the right to use them, despite their size or national policy. Moreover, this multicultural reality may highlight the awareness of the differences between cultures and people with different religious, historical, and value backgrounds.

My view does not differ from the world’s view in understanding and implementing intercultural education in our schools; “The New Curriculum for the New Millennium” 2003 symposium agreed that an intercultural education may on the one hand, help and encourage students’ awareness towards peace education, empathy, and the understanding of other nations. On the other hand, this type of education may open wider opportunities for students to obtain and share knowledge with other people from around the globe. English language is one of the main mediums which enables practicing intercultural education, and which is represented either in the planning process of the ELC, the preparation of the English language teachers, or the textbooks being used in language classrooms.

In this study, the term Intercultural Education will be used when referring to teaching, while Intercultural Learning is going to be used when referring to the process of acquiring some kind of ICC. It should be noted that real intercultural encounters may be regarded as the foundation of the learning process rather than educational arrangements, and that both inside classroom (formal learning) and outside classroom (informal learning) situations are relevant (See Figure 3.1). I will focus here on teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards formal learning.
3.2. Intercultural Encounters

Our societies are becoming increasingly international, and consequently we are producing wealth from our intercultural encounters either through trade, tourism, or the mobility of people generally; but still our ability to deal with foreigners and their differences seems restricted. Regardless of the growing intercultural cooperation at various levels, phenomena like racism, xenophobia, Islam-phobia, ethnocentrism, stereotypes, prejudices, and various forms of extremism appear to be becoming even more familiar, and these factors are important for us to be aware of.

The term *racism* here can be accepted as the various forms of inequality which are based on characteristics such as ethnic backgrounds, and commonly involve the intimidation of people who are culturally different. On the other hand, *xenophobia*, which is the fear of the unknown, lies deep in some humans, who consider what is unknown as dangerous and threatening, maybe because it is unpredictable. For example, when cultures meet, the majority culture will have a tendency to fear greatly that the minority culture will try to impose their own culture and behavior upon them which will negatively affect safe and familiar traditions within the majority culture (Kaikkonen, 2001). Furthermore, the term *Islam-phobia* could be included as an example when discussing *xenophobia* or *racism*; it is identified as an irrational distrust, fear or rejection of the Muslim religion and those
who are Muslims. In this case, it is noted that Islam-phobia is a subcategory of xenophobia and closely related to anti-Semitism as another rejection of an ethno-religious group (Gardner et al., 2008, p.121).

*Ethnocentrism* is related to an individual’s own culture, which some believe to be superior to other cultures, and the tendency to assume that its values and standards are universally accepted (Seeley, 1988, p.101). Seeley names three main elements involved in ethnocentrism: the first is integration and loyalty among in-group members, the second is hostile relations between in-group and out-group members, and the third is the positive self-regard among in-group members in contrast to the derogatory stereotyping of out-group characteristics. Ferraro (2006, p.35) agrees with him that *ethnocentrism*, literally meaning “culture centered”, is the tendency for people to evaluate a foreigner’s behavior by the standards of their own culture and to believe that their own is superior to all others. Similarly, Lusting & Koester (1999, p.146) argue that all cultures have a strong ethnocentric tendency to use the characteristics of one’s own culture to evaluate the actions of others. As Kaikkonen (2001) puts it “ideas of one’s own excellence are as deep as prejudices towards diversity and foreignness” (p.72).

Moreover, *prejudice* and *stereotypes* are closely related, to the extent that some researchers, especially during the 1980s, have regarded them as synonyms for one and the same term; based on the work of Katz & Braly (1933), who identified stereotypes as the cognitive aspect and prejudice as the affective aspect of human attitudes to groups of people. Jensen (1995) and Moore (2006, p.35) both agree that stereotypes are categorizations or statements about whole groups of people or phenomena that are valid only for a part of these groups; they see it as the tendency to categorize individuals or groups according to an oversimplified standardized image, and attribute certain characteristics to all members of the group. Conversely, Kennedy Vande Berg (1990) defines cultural stereotypes as “inaccurate characterization of target culture by foreigners” (p.518).
A distinction can be made between *auto stereotypes*, which refer to stereotypes about one’s own culture, and *hetero stereotypes*, which refers to stereotypes about foreign cultures, stereotypes of a community mostly developed outside the community, but which seem, interestingly enough, to be maintained quite effectively by the community itself (Jensen, 1995). This leads to a certain image of a culture to be held by members of another culture and for that reason, stereotypes should be dealt with sensitively no matter how harmless they may seem in daily conversations. In more extreme scenarios, this kind of thinking may lead to racism, which can happen, for example, by discrimination against minority groups (Bruggeling, 2008, p.16).

With regard to the term *prejudice*, Lusting & Koester (1999) view it as referring to a negative reaction to other people, which is based on being short of experience or personal knowledge; in other words, it is “a premature judgment that may be fairly fixed” (p.153). A person, who is prejudice, has a tendency to overlook evidence that is contradictory with his subjective viewpoint, or then he easily alters the evidence to fit his prejudices. Prejudices can be understood as tools of projection, meaning that emotions like fear, anger and aggression are transferred to others, who become what we often call scapegoats. It is always easier to blame somebody else for one’s mistakes than to start looking for the reason for them in one self. Thus promoting unprejudiced attitudes and preventing discrimination, which can be seen as prejudice in action, is a highly important, but difficult, task for today’s intercultural education. Although it is to be conceived as one of the cross-curricular issues that pervade the whole curriculum, it should receive particular attention in specific subject area. FLT is in a particularly favorable position to contribute to this general task. At best, it could be regarded as training in respecting otherness and developing a non-ethnocentric perception and attitude. The question, however, is whether this opportunity is fully exploited.

In the following section, I will discuss some significant characteristics of teachers’ thinking, as well as provide an overview of findings from research into the area of
teacher’s cognition. Kramsch and Van Lier all highlight the fact that the role and tasks of the FL teacher have become increasingly diverse and complex. This logically raises the question of what the teachers themselves think about their work and the factors influencing their professional decisions.

3.3. Teachers’ Cognition

It is important to find out teachers’ beliefs, and knowledge about culture within language teaching. Therefore, in this section I will look through the area of cognition as a whole before looking at the findings from research related to the investigation of teachers’ cognition regarding culture.

3.3.1. What is Teachers’ Cognition?

Teachers’ cognition represents the cognitive process and structures that inspire, and are inspired by, what teachers do. This unobservable cognitive dimension of thinking includes beliefs, knowledge, principles, theories, and attitudes, in addition to the thoughts and reflections teachers have before, during and after teaching (Borg, 2003). Studying teachers’ cognition intends to shed some light on these cognitive processes and structures. It investigates their origins and development, and strives to understand their relationship to what teachers actually do in the classroom (ibid).

The study of teacher cognition is characterized by some degree of conceptual ambiguity, which is complicated by the fact that identical terms have been defined in various ways by different authors, and different terms have been used to describe similar concepts. For example, Crookes & Arakaki (1999) mentioned the term ‘routines’, which is the habitualized patterns of thought and action, while Gabonton (1999) came out with the term ‘pedagogical knowledge’, which he explains as the teacher’s accumulated knowledge about the teaching act, for example, its goals, procedures, strategies, which
serves as the basis for his or her classroom behavior practice. On the other hand, Meijer et al (1999) used the term ‘practical knowledge’, which is the knowledge that teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers, and their reflections on these experiences. Furthermore, Richards (1996) presented the term ‘maxims’, which he explained as the personal working principles that reflect teachers’ individual philosophies of teaching. Then again, in their book, Richards et al (1998) presented the terms ‘pedagogical reasoning’, ‘content knowledge’, and ‘implicit theories’; the first means the process of transforming the subject matter to learnable material, the second means the factual information, organizing principles, and central concepts of a discipline, while the third means partially articulated theories, beliefs, and values about the teacher role and about the dynamics of teaching and learning. Finally, Pajares (1992) used the term ‘beliefs’ to describe the person’s representation of reality that has enough validity, truth, or credibility to guide thought and behavior.

Freeman (2002, pp.1-2) claims that during the last four decades, to be precise, since 1975, mainstream educational research has documented the impact of teachers’ cognition on teachers’ professional lives, and has resulted in a substantial body of research. Borg (2003, p.81), as a forerunner in this research area, maintains that the findings point to a fact that is now largely accepted that “teachers are active thinking decision makers who build instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” (ibid, p.23).

Borg (1999) clarifies reasons for studying teacher cognition: introducing a more complete theoretical description of teaching than an exclusively behavioral model offers; understanding divergences between theoretical recommendations, based on research and classroom practice; providing policy-makers in education and teacher education with the basis for understanding how best to implement educational innovation and to promote teacher change; engaging teachers in a form of reflective learning, by making them aware of the psychological bases of their classroom practice; providing the basis of effective
pre- and in-service teacher education and professional development; providing descriptive information about subject-specific teacher cognition and pedagogy; and finally, understanding how teachers develop. Borg (2003, p.81) identifies the main issues in teacher cognition as follows:

- What do teachers have cognitions about?
- How do these cognitions develop?
- How do these cognitions interact with teachers’ learning?
- How do these cognitions interact with classroom practice?

In order to answer his questions, Borg (2003) came out with a diagram (See Figure 3.2), which implies that teachers have cognition about all features of their work. His diagram represents a graphic theoreticalization of teaching within which teacher cognition plays an important role in their lives. It also outlines relationships suggested by mainstream educational research between teacher cognition, classroom practice, and teacher learning where the last comprises both schooling and professional education.
Borg (2003) described teacher cognition in his diagram as a term that is multidimensional, including concepts which are hard to separate from each other. The division between teachers’ knowledge and beliefs about a particular subject matter is extremely unclear; the same can be said about the model for the categorization and description of different forms of teacher knowledge which is proposed by Shulman (1986). Verloop et al (2001, p.446) argue that the reason for this is that in the mind of the
teacher, components of knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuitions are inextricably intertwined.

Holt Reynolds (1992) claims that research points out that teachers experience as learners can enlighten their cognitions about teaching and learning which, again, continue to influence them throughout their career. Moreover, Kettle & Sellars (1996) argue that evidence implies that even though teacher training as a professional preparation does shape the cognition of teacher trainees, then programs ignoring their prior beliefs may be less effective at influencing them. On the other hand, Beach (1994) suggests that research has also confirmed that teacher cognition and practical classroom work affect each other equally, with contextual factors playing a considerable role in determining to what extent teachers are able to employ instruction similar to their cognition.

Another complicated issue has to do with methodological concerns and the question of what counts as evidence of teacher cognition. The studies examined by Borg are mostly qualitative, gathering data from interview material, observed or reported classroom practices, teachers’ retrospective commentaries on their instructional decisions and comments drawn out from video-based stimulated recall. It may be questioned whether such material can be considered evidence of what Borg (2003) calls, the ‘unobservable psychological context of learning’ (p. 106). He also brings to attention the question as to whether teacher cognition can be usefully studied without reference to what actually goes on in the classroom. According to Borg, we are, despite everything, more interested in understanding teachers’ professional actions, not what or how they think in isolation of what they do. In my opinion, cognitions or conceptions are also well worth exploring. An insight into teachers’ lines of reasoning has a value in its own right. Furthermore, this may later provide a useful basis for further inquiry.
3.3.2. Characteristics of Teachers’ Cognition

Based on studies in this area, even though some have certainly included investigations of actual classroom practices, clear characteristic features of teacher cognition can be recognized:

1. Teachers’ thinking is *practical* in two ways (Borg, 2003 and Richards et al., 1998). The first is that education by nature is a practical undertaking which calls for practical solutions to practical problems. The second is that teachers’ understandings of instruction are basically influenced by their accumulated practical experience of classrooms, and by what works and what does not work for them as learners and teachers. Castro et al (2004, p.94) assert that research has shown that teachers’ beliefs about teaching are well established by the time they get to university, and that new teachers tend to teach as they themselves were taught, despite their intentions to do otherwise.

2. Teacher cognition is *personal* in a way that it is created by a broad range of experiences teachers have as learners, teacher trainees, and classroom practitioners (Borg, 2003 and Pajares, 1992). As mentioned above, these exceptional experiences interrelate to support perceptions of education which are highly personalized, forming ‘personal theories’ rather than objective knowledge, and these are reflected in teachers’ classroom work. In addition, being part of teachers’ cognitions, beliefs are considered to have an affective, attitudinal domain. They tend to act as a filter and define what a teacher considers to be important or negligible information (Castro et al., 2004).

3. Borg (2003) refers to teacher cognition as *systematic*. He refers to studies suggesting that teachers’ cognitive structures exist in some form of system or organized pattern, the need for which becomes obvious when one considers the wide range of issues that teachers have conceptions of: students, themselves, the subject matter at hand, curricula, schools, classroom management, parents and so
forth. This systematic feature is something we as practitioners do not always acknowledge.

4. Borg (2003) and Nunan (1992) state that teacher cognition is the dynamic way in which teachers constantly develop, test, and refine theories on the basis of ongoing professional experience. This procedure may also regularly occur subconsciously, but may be made possible through deliberate conscious reflective behavior. However, Castro et al. (2004) suggest the opposite: that teacher’ beliefs tend to persevere, in other words be resistant to change. According to Castro and his colleagues, beliefs are self- maintaining, persevering against contradiction caused by reason, time, schooling or experience. They say the earlier a particular belief system is obtained and integrated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to change, and freshly obtained beliefs are most vulnerable to change (p.93). In my opinion, and in the light of what was said above about the personal nature of teachers’ thinking, one can conclude that it depends on individual teachers, whether or not they are willing to modify or discard particular beliefs when confronted with new and more relevant beliefs. I would like to think that teachers do indeed develop in their profession and consequently also develop their personal theories.

5. Castro et al (2004) and Gabonton (1999) argue that teacher cognition involves the co-occurrence of contradictory beliefs within one and the same teacher, resulting in conflicting educational practices; an example of this is co-operative learning, which may be perceived as an effective method for increasing student learning, but which may also raise fear of increasing off task behavior, making the class difficult to handle. Castro et al. (2004, p.94) conclude that the perception of teachers as needing control over student behavior is a conservative and strong force, which could even hinder the implementation of curricular reforms.
6. Teacher’s cognitive structures frequently appear to be *tacit*, which is implicit, subconscious or unarticulated (Borg, 2003). The beliefs, which tend to be pervasive in the sense that they encourage everything the teacher does and say, have a tendency to operate without teachers’ explicit attention to them (Berliner, 1986). Teaching, as well as all other activities related to working in a school and dealing with young people, involves making continuous choices, both consciously and unconsciously, often under pressure. Kohonen (2001) focuses on this exact matter when discussing teacher development and teachers’ professional growth. He draws attention to the fact that professional thinking is derived from an understanding of the values and assumptions that inspire a specific pedagogical approach, involving both the theoretical principles of this approach and their manifestation in classroom practices and teaching techniques. This understanding contains both tacit and conscious knowledge. The first is related, according to Kohonen, to fundamental, philosophical issues, such as the teacher’s perception of themselves as well as his/her perceptions of the essence of learner. He argues that every teacher has an implicit perception of themselves which is inherent and embedded in their methods and practices, and which form the foundation of their ontological decisions (pp. 54-55). Kohonen (2001) argues that unconscious beliefs, tacit self knowledge, and assumptions can be seen as the broad basis of an iceberg on which conscious choices regarding teaching goals, contents, processes and forms of evaluation are made, while conscious self-understanding and action simply form the tip of the iceberg. He claims that it is crucial to teachers to clarify for themselves their fundamental educational orientation.

From my point of view, a teacher should from time to time stop to critically reflect upon what his/her personal educational philosophy is, and try, as it were, to raise the unconscious to a conscious level. If practices are to change, the beliefs and assumptions behind them need to change, as well. Self-motivated professional growth, as suggested earlier, can happen only when teachers actively and willingly pursue this search, and when social and situational factors do not get in the way. Unfortunately, as pointed out by Kohonen (2001, p.55) there are often factors at play that offer teachers the technical
curriculum implemeneter’s role, rather than invite them to work towards an educational innovator’s position. This, again, is one of the topics addressed in studies on language teacher cognition.

3.3.3. Language Teacher Cognition Research

Language teacher cognition has been investigated mostly in the last two decades, with more than 100 studies published between 1976 and 2002 (some examples are Almaraz, 1996; Andrews, 1994, 1997, 1999a and 1999b; Bailey, 1996a, 1996b; Borg, 1998b, 1998c, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c and 2001; Breen et al., 1991; Brown & McGannon, 1998; Brumfit et al., 1996; Burns, 1992 and 1996; Crookes & Arakaki, 1999; Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997; Freeman, 1993; Gabonton, 1999; Johnson, 1992a, 1992b, 1994 and 1996; MacDonald et al., 2001; Meijer et al., 1999 and 2001; Numrich, 1996; Nunan, 1992; Richards, 1996 and 1998; Richards et al., 1992, 1996 and 1998; Spada & Massey, 1992 and Woods, 1991 and 1996 among others; cited in Borg, 2003, pp. 84-86). The period 1990-2000 emerged as the decade of change as far as analyzing teacher cognition in language teaching is concerned. The predominant amount of research into language teacher cognition has concentrated on general processes, such as cognition and prior language learning, cognition and teacher education, and cognition and classroom practice, while grammar and literacy instruction concentrates on specific curricular points. Moreover, the majority of those studies, which were conducted in UK, USA and Hong Kong, focused on both teaching English as an ESL and English as an EFL. The next section will be an overview of some research studies, which are concerned with teachers’ cognition in the above mentioned categories.

3.3.3.1. Cognition and Prior Language Learning

In the Bailey (1996) study exploring the role of the English language teachers’ learning history in shaping their current teaching philosophies and practices, various factors related to teaching and learning situations were found. Those factors made the teachers’ own language learning experiences positive. For example, personality and style of their
teacher had mattered more than methodology, as had caring and committed teachers that respected and were respected by their students. Learning had been facilitated by the positive classroom environment, and their own motivation to learn had enabled them to overcome inadequacies in the teaching. This, in the end, proved useful for articulating their own theories of teaching, and becoming aware of their origins.

In his study of novice teachers, Numrich (1996) noticed that particular instructional strategies were encouraged or discouraged on the basis of how these were perceived by the teachers as language learners. Almost a third of the participants said that they wanted to integrate aspects of culture into their teaching for the reason that they had found learning about the culture of the target country enjoyable in their L2 studies. However, the same teachers noted that they avoided teaching grammar and correcting mistakes, because their own experiences of these aspects were negative. In addition, Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers (1997) refer to experiences of very formal language study, including memorization, reading, writing and grammar, which made teachers adopt a much more communicative approach in their own work.

### 3.3.3.2. Cognition and Teacher Education

Almaraz (1996) examined the inconsistent influence of teacher education on teacher trainees’ and in-service teachers’ cognition. His findings especially draw attention to the separation between cognitive and behavioral changes, which teacher training may induce. Participants in his study adopted the specific teaching method that they had been taught, and applied this in the classroom during practice teaching. We may argue, of course, that this decision was at least partly influenced by the fact that the trainees were assessed, and therefore, felt a need to match with specified principles. Cognitively, however, the participants varied in their acceptance of the suggested method, which became obvious when they talked about their work, rather than through their practice. Borg (2003) commented on this study’s findings by pointing out that behavioral change does not
necessarily imply cognitive change, and the latter does not guarantee changes in behavior either.

3.3.3.3. Cognition and Classroom Practice

A considerable number of studies in mainstream pedagogical research bring attention to a symbiotic relationship between teacher cognition and classroom practice (Almarza, 1996; Bailey, 1996; Burns, 1992; Johnson, 1992b and Woods, 1991, cited in Borg, 2003). It represents a topic which has been discussed in research in the field of language teaching. The findings prove the fact that language teachers’ classroom practices are influenced by a wide range of interacting and often conflicting factors. Four areas have been focused on: teachers explaining their instructional decisions; teachers’ improvisational teaching; how a specific context or environment may conflict with teachers’ cognitions; and finally, the relationship between cognition and experience.

➤ The first involves the reasons most commonly mentioned by teachers explaining their instructional decisions. For example Breen (1991, p.91), a worry for the cognitive procedures, which assist learning, was the most frequently given reason. Whereas in Johnson’s (1992a) study the pre-service teachers declared they made most decisions to ensure that their students would understand, and being motivated by, the subject matter. However, generally speaking, inexperienced teachers appeared to be more concerned about classroom management, the pacing and timing of lessons as well as unexpected student behavior than about the actual language (Nunan, 1992). Additionally, Richards’s (1996) study suggests that teachers also base their pedagogical choices on maxims, i.e. personal working principles that reflect their own philosophies of teaching and learning.

➤ The second area is improvisational teaching, which involves the teachers’ reasons for disconnecting from lesson plans during their lessons, which Bailey (1996) discussed as the aim to serve the common good. A teacher may choose to move away from the lesson plan to deal with unexpected issues that are raised during
the lesson, if they seem to be of interest and relevance to the whole class. In addition, Richards (1998) argues that teachers may make this move away from the lesson plan, or what he called “on the spot modification of planned activities” (p.115), in order to maintain students’ interest and engagement.

➢ The third area of interest in the research of classroom practice, addresses how a specific context or environment may conflict with teachers’ cognitions. For example, Borg’s (1998) study referred to the fact that the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school or the classroom may hold back the ability of language teachers to implement practices which reflect their beliefs. He described some factors that may restrain experimentation and innovation, and may promote sticking close to prescribed material and familiar teaching methods. Those factors are represented in difficult working conditions such as large classes, unmotivated students, a set syllabus, and even pressure to match up to more experienced colleagues.

➢ The fourth, and the last, area involves the relationship between cognition and experience. As suggested by Borg (2003), teachers’ classroom work is shaped by their cognition; however, cognition in turn is shaped by accumulated teaching experience. He referred to a number of studies which clarified transformations of teacher cognition that may take place over time. For example, Richards et al. (1998) and Nunan (1992) both agreed that experienced teachers are more likely to engage in improvisational teaching than novices; while novice teachers may not yet have automatised the routines associated with managing the class, and, therefore, may pay less attention to the actual issues of content. However, longitudinal studies appear to be lacking in this area, meaning that one can only assume some of the possible processes that novice teachers go through in developing the cognition and skills more characteristic of experienced teachers.
Since 2003 research has focused on how classroom teachers think and on teachers’ practice during their lessons, and how they reflect and research their own work (Allison & Carey, 2007; Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Altrichter et al., 2008; Bartlett & Burton, 2006; and Borg, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, and 2009a, cited in Borg, 2010a). Other research studies concerned how researchers can mostly benefit from teachers cognition in improving and developing teachers education programs (Atay, 2006; Borg, 2009b; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; and Darling-Hammond et al, 2005 cited in Borg, 2010a).

I found that what is lacking from the studies on teachers is more focus on various curricular features of language teaching. Work is still to be done in this domain of inquiry. As already mentioned, grammar teaching and literacy instruction in FL and L2 contexts have both been awarded some attention, whereas other major areas, such as the teaching of speaking and listening, not to mention the ICD, have remained unstudied. I am aware of very few studies in language teacher cognition which have focused on culture as a component of the language teaching curriculum. Integrating research into language teachers’ cognitions and the essence of intercultural FL education thus seems to be a novel approach, well worth developing.

In the next section I shall explore the intercultural component in language teaching from a historical perspective. First, however, I need to shed some light on the various points of view of culture, followed by the relationship between culture and language.

### 3.4. Culture and Language

#### 3.4.1. What is Culture?

It is necessary to define our terminology clearly from the beginning because culture is a broad concept, which in its anthropological sense embraces almost all aspects of human life, and several scholars from many fields perceive it differently. Even within the same
field of FLT, culture has been approached from a number of perspectives in relation to language teaching, although they mean roughly the same thing. Culture is accepted as nationally defined, and thus, cultural differences are appreciated as differences between nations. This view traces back to the Enlightenment and to the 18th and 19th centuries. However, in present-day society, which is characterized by a multitude of cultural phenomena and cultural groupings, such a restricted view is no longer acceptable.

A culture may be synonymous with a country, a region, or a nationality, and it may cross several countries or regions, it is crucial to be aware that not everybody is the same, and that we should not be prejudiced. Culture is defined as one of the two or three most complicated terms in the English language; it seems a notoriously vague term which is used in different contexts. Many researchers from a wide range of scientific disciplines, tried to formulate definitions, which changed considerably in their orientation. Edward Burnett Taylor sees it as that complex whole, which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities, and habits acquired by humans as members of a society (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007).

According to Hubernere (1965, p.78) culture is divided into three categories: the sociological or social sciences dimension of culture, which includes the history, geography, economics, and political development of a nation; the artistic dimension of culture, which consists of literature, music, art, etc.; and the anthropological oriented dimension of culture, which covers aspects such as the behavioral patterns of the people e.g. customs, daily life, standard of living and religion Also, another categorization places culture as a “large or capital-C culture” and a “small-c culture” (Chastain, 1976, p.338& Doyé, 1999, p.19). The former categorization focuses on the major products and contributions of a certain society generally, or of outstanding individuals within this society, or what Doyé describes as the elite’s culture. Within this category, the students study the economic, social and political history and the great politicians, heroes, authors, artists, etc. of the target country. The second category is a broad definition of the culture,
or anthropological definition of culture, which refers to the way of life of a society, the ways of thinking, habits, customs, traditions, etc, which Doyé (1999) refers to as the product of everyday life and the conditions of its production. Chastain (1976) and Doyé (1999) both argue that this explanation of culture as the way people live is the one most commonly and most highly recommended as the basis for selecting cultural content for second or FL classes, as it would seem to be of most interest and of most importance to the typical student enrolled in such a language class.

Some authors define culture as a restricted and creative concept, which is typical in the humanities, while, the anthropological concept of culture has been an open and collective one, involving assumptions and norms that people adopt and share, as a result of upbringing and socialization. For example, in the first half of the 20th century, it was normal to focus on empirically observable features, such as habits, customs and artifacts. However, some of the post-war definitions detail culture in terms of ideas and values shared by members of a certain society or a social group (Brogger, 1992; Greetz, 1973; Brislin, 1990, p.27). This transformation is also discussed by Doyé (1999) referring to Triandis’s (1989) objective culture and subjective culture.

Robinson (1985) provides a set of definitions from the point of view of FLT, and shows that the heart of culture is how it is learnt or acquired. He differentiates between behaviorist, functionalist, cognitive, and symbolic definitions. Culture in behaviorist anthropology is understood as being made up of different forms of behaviour such as customs, habits and rituals which are associated with particular conditions and social groups. This way of looking at culture, in the field of language learning, is recognized through examples in teaching, such as how spare time is spent in Australia, what a typical British family looks like, or how you buy food on the market in USA. Therefore, culture is comprehended as something solid that can be seen and experienced, but very little attention is devoted to why, or under what circumstances the behavioural models occur. However, this line of thinking is increasingly outdated today.
Yet again, *functionally* oriented anthropology deals with culture as a social incident, but appears to go further than the behaviorist approach in the sense that it tries to explain and understand the structure and diversity of these forms of behavior, as well as reveal the roles they play in society. Both methods provide the learner with a moderately solid model for dealing with a foreign culture, by trying to describe how and why a representative of another culture acts in a certain way. Therefore, the teaching aim is to enable the learner to comprehend culture-specific behavior, and, in the long run, to prevent the so-called culture shocks. Understanding what lies behind certain events or behaviours, such as eating a particular type of food or speaking in a loud voice, is seen as contributing to a deeper understanding and tolerance in the learners. Equally, the behaviorist and the functionalist approach represent a product perspective on culture, which, according to Robinson (1985), has a tendency to rule FLT. He indicates that both kinds of definitions have quite a few faults, one of which rests in the belief that culture-specific forms of behavior and its functions can be independently observed, and the underlying reasons assumed by the observer. Behavior can be interpreted in various ways, often influenced by one’s own cultural background, or even prejudices.

According to Robinson’s (1985) *cognitive* definitions, culture does not contain material occurrences, such as objects, people or behavior, but, is rather a process of memorizing, associating and interpreting incoming data, which is frequently going on in every individual’s brain. Therefore, culture might bear a resemblance to a computer program within the individual. Cognitively-oriented anthropologists have encouraged individuals to be aware of, and investigate, their personal experiences, in order to be able to clarify the essence of culture. Robinson (ibid) considers this “inner” view of culture as a beneficial input to the *behaviorist* and *functionalist* approaches. It symbolizes a view of culture as an ongoing *process*, which, according to him, has had a quite restricted impact on FLT. This definition also has its restrictions, which are related to the involvedness of grasping and researching feelings, which are still very closely bound to experiences of culture.
The fourth definition, according to Robinson (ibid), understands culture as a vigorous system of *symbols* and meanings, and places emphasis on the importance of constant change. It neither focuses on outer events, nor on internal mechanisms, but on the whole meaning emerging as a result of the dialectic process between the two. Every person plays a part in a process where previous experiences influence the interpretation of new phenomena and previous interpretations influence new experiences. Connor (1996) similarly argues that culture is not a material phenomenon that consists of things or behavior; still, it is the shape of things that people have in their minds, their styles of perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. As a result, in every society and in every individual, culture takes on a new meaning, that is to say, culture can also be viewed historically; it is an ever-changing conception of the world around us. This development starts out at birth and is only influenced by the individual’s own culture, until he or she is challenged by a foreign one. Therefore, when this theory is applied to FLT, it means that cultural understanding is an enduring process, where the learners are continuously combining cultural data with their own previous and present experiences, in order to create meaning.

In the 1990’s, researchers started to doubt the effectiveness of trying to find a commonly acceptable definition. Every attempt to do so would lock the concept of culture to something static, which does not correspond to current views of culture as something that is constantly re-created. Cultures have always been in the process of change, but the rate of change has increased as our fates have become increasingly interacted through migration, trade and the rapid exchange of information (Bruner, 1996, p.97). For this reason, in today’s internationalized world, where borders between national cultures are gradually being erased and cultural phenomena tend to emerge into each other, a re-evaluation of the concept of culture will be necessary.

One may conclude that it is difficult to agree on one single definition of culture that would be valid in all contexts. My personal view of culture is inspired by various
perspectives discussed above. I understand culture as something that both unites and separates people. *Culture* is often the power that brings people together. However, if there were no *cultures* by which people sharing the same traditions, values or ideas could identify themselves, there would be one universal way of human interaction. Culture is first, and foremost, a social phenomenon, created by people for specific purposes, in specific contexts and at specific times; in other words, it is an historical phenomenon. We acquire culture through the interaction with people and the contemporary world around us. I think the image of culture being the web that we ourselves create is very appropriate. It shows the fact that cultural features tend to be hard to recognize when one is right in the middle of them. What is too close is either taken for granted or not seen at all, until a situation arises when one suddenly notices that there are other webs out there as well. When talking about cultures, one should always assume that no culture can be promoted to a higher level, in the sense that it would be more valuable, sophisticated or simply more “right” than any other.

In today’s world it does not make sense to treat cultures as if they were clearly limited, defined or detached from one another. Cultures today tend to be mixtures, specifically, of a wide range of cultural elements. They are characterized by inconsistency and a permanent state of instability. Consequently, we can claim that every person belongs to a number of different constellations which could be considered of as cultures. Besides belonging to a national or ethnic culture, people are grouped by gender, age, education, profession, social class, living environment, and many other factors that together shape their identity. Our language and ways of behaving are influenced by the cultural contexts that we find ourselves in, since it is through language that the interaction takes place. The language also influences the way in which we think and perceive the world around us. All this calls for a closer look at the complicated relationship between culture and language.
3.4.2. The Relationship between Language and Culture

To accomplish a productive discussion of the relationship between culture and language, both terms should be defined. On the one hand, it is crucial to differentiate between language, which Salzman (1993, p.15) defines as a part of human genetics endowment, and language, which is one of the several systems of communication used by various people; the same is acceptable for culture, as a general term and a culture as referring to a particular group. Since it is not an easy task to give a universal definition of the relationship between language and culture, I present a number of points of view to understand this relation.

Fishman, a sociolinguistic who has dealt at length with the relationship between language and culture, and who sees language as an inevitable part, and a major and important part of culture, claims that all those who seek fully to enter into, and understand a given culture, have to master its language (cited in Risager, 2005). Conversely, Risager (ibid, p.12) claims that language and culture can be separated in certain respects. According to her, it is a paradox that language and culture pedagogy build on the first language bias while dealing with language as foreign and second language competence, and that it is the first language speaker who counts as the only acceptable model for language learning. On the other hand, another agreement which says that language expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality, and supported this argument by what American linguist Michael Agar wrote, when he introduced the concept of languaculture, which to him refers to the necessary tie between language and culture (Kramsch, 1998, pp. 13-14).

Agar (1994) argues that “culture is within language and language is loaded with culture” (p.28). Furthermore, most scholars believe that the relationship between language and culture is tremendously complicated. It is because of the fact that, on the one hand, language is an internal part of culture, while, on the other hand, it is an expression of culture. It is both the substance and medium at the same time. Sapir and Whorf (1956), in the early decades of the 20th century, estimated that language influences perception and
shapes our world view and our culture, rather than reflects it. However, Brown (1986, p.46) claims that the strong version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which is also named linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism, has few followers. The majority of linguists today are concerned about the fact that language and culture interact and have apparently been so from the very beginning.

Kaikkonen (2001, p.103) claims that the spoken language seems to have developed within the last 100 to 150 centuries, and that early anthropological findings propose that even the hominids led prehistoric cultural lives. Consequently, it is easy to imagine that culture has inspired the development of the language spoken in this community, if one perceives culture as the shared ideals, values and meanings guiding the actions of members in a particular community, as well as the outcomes resulting from these actions. Over time, people have then maintained their culture from generation to generation with the help of oral traditions.

In addition, the mind could not exist without culture, and the development of the human mind is associated with the expansion of a mode of life, where reality is embodied by images or symbols shared by members of a cultural society. This representational manner is not only shared by a society, but also preserved, expanded, and passed on to following generations who continue to maintain the culture’s identity and mode of life (Bruner, 1996, p.3). Accordingly, culture can be described as “super organic”. As a result, the relationship between language and culture may be understood in the light of the symbolic explanation of culture, according to which culture is the process where symbols and meanings are learnt; this process makes the human being recognize and interpret different phenomena, and express them linguistically.

Van Lier (2004) agrees with Hall (1976, p.91) that body language as well as prosodic features, turn-taking signals, hesitations, repetitions, and so forth, can be stated as direct
affordances, which is known as opposed to indirect affordances, which are of a social and cognitive nature. They are communicated directly to the participant in a linguistic event, and become part of the meanings generated. Affordance according to Van Lier (2004) stands for what is available to a person in a particular situation to do something with, that is to say, signifying material provided by the environment, which creates opportunities for action. In other words, nonverbal communication, including facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture, patterns of touch as well as things like clothing and smells, is closely linked to culture and indirectly also to language. When you communicate with another person, that person understands you as a result of the whole picture conveyed, not simply on the basis of what is said. When we communicate as human beings, we do not deliberately detach verbal and nonverbal signals from each other, except, when for some reason, they give contradictory messages, and do not assist each other in a way that would be accepted in that culture.

Ockert-Axelsson & Norman (1993), in their research into differences in communication style between cultures, argue that people involved in activities such as multinational business and international politics, are believed to benefit greatly from having at least some notion of how their counterpart’s communication style may differ from their own. Hofstede’s (1994, 2001) work is frequently cited in this context, where in his classic work Culture’s Consequences he explores the differences in communication, thinking and social action that exist among members of more than 50 nations. Within every culture there are individuals who differ from general patterns of communication. As a result, the social structure, as well as the norms and values associated with a specific culture, tend to colour both the semantics and the pragmatics of the language. The language holds a multitude of cultural information, a fact that will have to be recognized when one considers how languages are taught and learnt.

Many of the existing misunderstandings of the tasks of language teaching are derived from an insufficient respect of the twofold relationship between language and culture
Buttjes and Byram (1991, p.18) add that language is not simply a reflector of an objective cultural reality; it is an essential part of that reality, through which other parts are shaped and interpreted; it is both a symbol of the whole, and at the same time, a part of the whole, which shapes, and is in turn shaped by, sociocultural actions, beliefs and values. They continue that, in engaging in language, speakers are performing sociocultural phenomena; in acquiring language, children acquire culture. Given this theoretical viewpoint it follows that to teach culture without the language is fundamentally flawed, and to separate language and culture teaching is to imply that an FL can be treated in the early stages as if it were self-contained and independent of other sociocultural phenomena. The convection that language and culture belong together in language education was provocatively expressed in the title of Byram et al.’s (1994) book Teaching-and-Learning-Language-and-Culture. Through the demonstrative use of hyphens the authors wanted to draw attention to the fact that a separation of cultural studies from language learning cannot be justified.

The multifaceted relationship between culture and language, in addition to the complexity of the concept of culture, is reflected clearly in the different methods taken to FLT at different times. The following overview of the development of teaching aims shows that integrating language and culture has not always been considered as educationally reasonable as it might appear in the light of the reflections presented above.

3.5. The Development of Foreign Language Teaching Aims

3.5.1. From Linguistic Competence to Intercultural Communicative Competence

At the end of the 19th century, and prior to the educational reform, it was believed that having sufficient knowledge about a language was enough. However, during the past century, a shift in emphasis in the overall aim of FLT has taken place. Even though the changes were slow, they can be described in terms of paradigms with certain characteristic features.
The study of language in the early years of the 20th century was closely related to the field of philology, where the language of texts was the object of careful historical explanation and interpretation in terms of the age and culture to which it belonged (Brogger, 1992, pp.11-12, 47). One could say that philology represented a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to the study of texts, in view of the fact that language, literature and culture were strongly connected. However, in the period between the 1930s and the 1960s, much of this general, cultural orientation was lost. Educators were inclined to ignore, or perhaps even deny, the importance of sociocultural context for the understanding and acquisition of the language. Students were expected to understand and use the language correctly only by having learnt the distinctive features of phonology and grammar. In other words, general structural patterns were thought to ensure the essential LC, which became the unquestioned aim of the FL teacher.

The focus was on the mastery of rules and vocabulary, but often illustrated in decontextualized sentences with an emphasis on the four language skills, namely, speaking, reading, writing and listening, which were secondary to language knowledge, until there was greater awareness of language as communication. Through that time, the social dimension of a language was of less significance. However, still we have these four skills listed as objectives in curricular documents. A new paradigm which appeared at the second half of the 20th century, known as the pragmatic reform (Doyé, 1999, p.11), considered significant such conditions as setting, communicative intention and the relationship between the interlocutors and entailed a shift in the overall aim of FL instruction from LC to CC. Educators realized that producing grammatically correct phrases was not enough for students if they lacked the knowledge of how to use these phrases in real communicative contexts. During that time lists of language functions in curricular texts appeared instead of catalogues of grammatical structures. Thus, a new paradigm appeared which took the process of teaching an FL to a new level, and the terms, such as, CC, IC, and ICC, appeared in most scholars’ manuscripts (See Figure 3.3).
The term CC has been interpreted in different ways by educators. The term derives from Hymes (1972) and Habermas (1972). However, Van Ek (1986) claims that he was the one who originally applied CC to FLT, and it was clearly explained in his thorough analysis. He presents six partial or super-ordinate abilities, which should be seen as various aspects of one and the same concept:

1. LC (vocabulary and grammar)
2. Sociolinguistic Competence (how language is used in various contexts)
3. Discursive Competence (rules for how a discussion is built up)
4. Strategic Competence (strategies for how to cope when one runs out of words and expressions)
5. Social Competence (ability and willingness to interact with others)
6. Sociocultural Competence (which was added to the list at a later stage).

Van Ek (1986) realized that a person cannot be regarded as communicatively competent unless s/he possesses a certain insight into the sociocultural context which every language is an integrated part of, and which tends to function as a frame of reference for its speakers. CC became popular in FLT in the mid 1970s, and has been criticized for focusing on the language and culture of the target language at the expense of the learners’ own culture (e.g. Byram, 1997). This competence is usually seen as consisting of four elements: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Savignon, 1983 & Alptekin, 2002). The grammatical competence, which is linked to the Chomskyan theory, was understood as the native
speaker’ knowledge of the syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological aspects of the language; where learners are able to produce well-structured sentences with the help of this competence. The *sociolinguistic competence* represents knowledge of rules of language use in a social context, including understanding the roles and social statues of participants as well as the information shared in a particular communicative situation.

The *discourse competence* is described as the ability to deal with the extended use of language in context. It refers to culture-specific thought patterns the understanding of which is sometimes crucial in avoiding serious misunderstanding. The *strategic competence* refers to the ability to handle an authentic communication episode and keep the communicative channel open. This requires knowledge of such communication strategies which one needs for compensating for imperfect knowledge of the rules, or for instance in a situation where the speaker cannot think of a suitable word.

In consequence, a new phase, which focused on the content dimension of language use, started in the development of FLT. Brogger (1992, p. 12) argues that CC is vague as far as the subject matter is concerned, in that, although referring to knowledge and skills related to communication, it says very little about what the communication is about. Byram (1997), among others, has in fact criticized the communicative turn in language teaching in EFL for emphasizing speech act and discourse competence. Then again, the perception of culture regained appreciation as an important component of FL studies, intended to contribute to the students’ CC.

Brogger (1992) claims that British, and American studies worked their way into universities, but it took quite some time before these fields of study gained a status, even remotely equal to those of linguistics and literary studies. Actually, they were regarded as “a kind of stepchild of the two other disciplines – something bothersome yet tolerated as part of the undertaking” (p. 16). Moore (1996) argues that at first, the term used for the
cultural dimension was “Background”, because the idea was to give the students some additional information about the countries they were studying. Many attempts to teach culture followed with what is sometimes humorously referred to as the “4-F Approach”, which focuses on folk-dances, festivals, fairs, and food. However, gradually, the study of culture changed its focus from historical, geographical, and socio-political items about specific nations to a deeper analysis of ideas and values shared by the members of a society or social groups (p.597).

In the 1990s, IC emerged as an added concept for the overall aim of FLT. The term was introduced by Michael Byram, professor at Durham University in the United Kingdom, whose research on intercultural skills, as well as his noteworthy contribution to the formation of the language program of the Council of Europe, are recognized worldwide. His conceptual framework is worth clarifying, since it has influenced many other researchers and also bears significance on my empirical study. However, others give the credit to Edward T. Hall in originating the initial paradigm for IC during the second half of the 20th century in USA (Rogers et al, 2002).

Starting from the beginning, identifying the notion of IC has proved to be a challenging task, due to its interdisciplinary nature and its being used in different contexts. As it is the case with the notion of “Culture”, an attempt at finding a definition for IC has attracted researchers from all over the world. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus will be on Byram’s explanations of this term, and how it is applied in FLT, as it is the explanation most suitable to the learning situations in our classrooms. Also, there will be a discussion of how this competency changed from being an IC consisting of Byram’s five saviors to ICC which includes Van Ek’s IC.
3.5.2. Byram’s Perception of Intercultural Competence

Byram extended the linguistic, sociocultural, social, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competences, which were presented by Van Ek, to include IC. Byram & Zarate (1997) define acting inter-culturally as placing two cultures into a relationship. They argue that the outcome of teaching languages, and cultures, should be the ability to see how different cultures relate to each other in terms of differences and similarities, and to act as mediators between them, or rather between people socialized into them. It is a question of being able to interpret and understand the perspective of others as well as to question one’s own perspectives, which often tend to be taken for granted. According to them, this mediation means, also, being able to observe oneself from an external standpoint when interacting with others, and to analyze and adapt one’s own behavior as well as underlying values and beliefs. In that case, if an individual had the ability to take a double perspective by bringing into contact two sets of values, beliefs and behaviors, then s/he is called “the intercultural speaker” (Byram & Zarate, 1997; Byram & Fleming, 1998; and Chambers, 2001).

Byram (2003, p.61) argues that the stress on the speaker is convenient because it maintains the connection with language, and the suggestion that mediation assumes some LC. Byram and Zarate (1997) questioned former long standing beliefs that the goal is to imitate the native speaker by elevating the intercultural speaker to the norm for FLT. Learners had been expected to imitate the LC of native speakers, including phonetic competence and a native speaker accent, and also their cultural competence. Byram and Zarate (1997) saw this imitation of the native speaker as undesirable and unattainable, because to some extent it suggests that an individual abandons his/her social identity in favor of another one. The learner, when compared to the native speaker, runs the risk of being seen as the weaker part in any conversation. Furthermore, in today’s English-speaking world it is very difficult to specify who is actually a native speaker.
From Byram’s (2003) point of view, being intercultural is an activity, and he stresses that the issues involved are affective, cognitive, as well as behavioral. On the one hand, it is a question of intellectually comprehending things using facts and information, and on the other hand, it is a question of attitudes and sensitive skill to take an open stand towards new and unfamiliar things. Byram offers a model of IC, which includes six overlapping “savoirs”. The elements of this model are attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness or political education, linked to the values a person acquires as a result of belonging to several social groups in a society (pp.61-62).

Byram has repeatedly modified his descriptions of what the savoirs contain. I have chosen the formulations in Byram (2003) and given the model my own design. Methodological competence (savoir enseigner), which was added at a later stage, is added to this version (See Table 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills of Interpreting and Relating</th>
<th>Skills of Discovery and Interaction</th>
<th>Critical Cultural Awareness/Political Education</th>
<th>Methodological competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(savoir être)</td>
<td>(savoirs)</td>
<td>(savoir comprendre)</td>
<td>(savoir apprendre/FAIRE)</td>
<td>(savoir s’engager)</td>
<td>(savoir enseigner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about one’s own.</td>
<td>Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.</td>
<td>Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and to relate it to documents from one’s own.</td>
<td>Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under constraints of real-time communication and interaction.</td>
<td>An ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries.</td>
<td>An ability to acquire the methods or organizing principles underlying a particular art, science, or other area of studying.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (3.1): Byram’s (2003, p. 62) Six Savoirs, Components in Intercultural Competence (IC)
However, Byram’s IC was extended to acquire a new term, which is ICC. A term was not founded by him as much as it was embraced in the theories of different scholars (Doyé, 1999).

### 3.5.3. Byram’s Perception of Intercultural Communicative Competence

According to Doyé (1999), since the 1990s, ICC has been a key term that has been embraced in the theories of several researchers as well as the concept emerging in a number of international documents. Doyé sees this comprehensive competence as combining the cognitive (knowledge of languages and cultures, as in traditional *Landeskunde*), the pragmatic (the competence to perform speech acts) and the attitudinal domains (open-mindedness and tolerance, as in political education) within FLT.

Byram (1997, pp. 4-5) expanded his original model of IC to one of ICC, containing the abovementioned six *savoirs*, together with Van Ek’s notions of linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence, which he redefined. Byram also pays attention to the locations of learning, which is made clear in the figure below, where the teacher and the learner have different roles and relationships. ICC can be exploited in the classroom, in fieldwork and as independent learning. What Byram is trying to do is to present a general framework that would be applicable in different contexts, for different levels of teaching and for different types of language learning. Every point is explained through detailed descriptions of aims, in addition to being thoroughly analyzed from both a teaching and an assessment perspective. It is worth mentioning that the benefits to be acquired are not limited to encounters with members of the specific target culture(s) whose language the learners are studying. The knowledge, attitudes and skills to be learnt are directed towards communication with members of other cultures in general (See Figure 3.4).
Byram’s model had been criticized as being weak in keeping to a fairly general level in order to fit various contexts, and appraised as being strong in enabling the formulation of distinct teaching aims which may be associated with assessment. One of the problems that must be faced regarding ICC is how to acquire it. As is obvious from the model, facts or rules that can be objectively explained or learnt by heart, and are therefore easier to teach in the classroom, is a small part of it. However, the kind of knowledge required, the attitudes and the skills proposed by Byram are aspects which have to be developed and cultivated, rather than transmitted in the classroom. If all this has to be combined with what has traditionally been considered as the teaching of a language, complications may increase. Objections made by teachers to the inclusion of intercultural, or just cultural, aspects in the FLT syllabus have been pointed out by several authors (Muller, 1995, pp.61-63; Mughan, 1999, pp.63-64); however, without necessarily becoming an expert anthropologist or sociologist, an FL teacher should make sure that students acquire some amount of cultural awareness and IC if they want to provide education in its fullest sense (Tarp, 1995, p.147; Mughan, 1999, pp.63-64). This is an issue supported also by Cortazzi and Jin (1999, pp. 196 &217), who propose that teachers and learners take a more reflective and ethnographic stance towards cultural learning.
Byram considers that some objectives of ICC, for instance discovery skills, can be included as part of the curriculum. However, there are others which may not be compatible with classroom work, especially as it is usually conceived in FLT. He comments that the ICC objectives may be even more difficult to be accepted by those teachers with more strictly linguistic training than by teachers who have been trained in literary criticism and who will probably find analogies between the skills of interpreting and discovering and some approaches to literature (1997, p. 64). In spite of these difficulties, Byram insists on the idea that ICC has to be integrated in the curriculum, and include political education and critical cultural awareness. Nonetheless, Byram identifies three possible locations for the acquisition of ICC: the classroom, where there would be a close interaction between teacher and learner; fieldwork, which is a short or long stay in the target language country, and where the role of the teacher may even disappear; and independent learning, which is part of the personal development of the learner (See Figure 3.5) (Ceseviciute, 2002, p.54).

A subsequent aspect of what we have commented so far regarding acquisition is the question of teachers. As Mughan points out (1999, p.64), not all language teachers want to be responsible for intercultural learning and it is necessary to have committed teachers.
who believe in ICC and even in peace education or peace studies as the final objectives of ICC. These teachers will have to include in their syllabi activities that encourage tolerance for ambiguity, foster empathy and cooperation and build an understanding for cultural values (Coffey, 1999, pp.28-29).

The last problem is that of assessing; if there were difficulties spotted in acquisition and in grading of ICC, one cannot escape them in the process of evaluating whether students have become interculturally competent, and to what degree. Seeley (1984) reflected on ways to assess whether students had changed their attitudes throughout the course, and he proposed a pretest at the beginning and a posttest at the end, and provided some examples (pp. 164-189). Byram (1997) also devoted a whole chapter of his book to the issue of assessing, and he proposed in a very detailed way for several modes of assessment for knowledge, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness. Teachers will need imaginative ways of testing, and traditional exams will not be of much use here; they will have to resort to careful interviews, simulations of situations, and activities requiring comment and analysis, for instance. However, one of the main difficulties, in the teachers’ opinion, may be that of objectivity at the moment of judging their students’ competence as such intangible aspects as attitudes are really hard to measure in an objective way. The question of how to assess ICC entails a number of practical considerations, and, therefore, it is a dilemma which the model does not fully address.

Sercu (2004) clarifies that competence, in general education theory, tends to be defined in terms of domain-specific knowledge, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies and affective characteristics. However, when we apply this general educational framework to Byram’s model we can see that Byram’s model addresses the first, second and fourth dimensions very well, but pays insufficient attention to the third dimension, which is the metacognitive strategies. These criticisms have led different theorists to find a solution; so for example, Sercu (2004) introduced a systematic framework for the operationalisation of assessment of ICC in an educational article, even though she admits
that this might be difficult to assess holistically. The table (Table 3.2) below, which represents the different dimensions of IC that in Sercu’s opinion, which need to be addressed in today’s education, and therefore also in assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills/behaviour</th>
<th>Attitudes/traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Culture specific and culture general knowledge.</td>
<td>-Ability to interpret and relate</td>
<td>-Attitudes to relativize self; value others;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Positive disposition towards learning IC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Knowledge of self and other</td>
<td><strong>Savoir comprendre</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Knowledge of interaction: individual and societal</td>
<td>-Ability to discover and/or interact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language and communication</td>
<td>-Ability to acquire new knowledge and to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constrains of real time communication and interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savoirs</td>
<td>-Metacognitive strategies to direct own learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Savoir apprendre/faire</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Ability to evaluate critically perspectives, practices and products in own and foreign cultures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Savoir s’engager</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (3.2) Aspects of IC which needs to be addressed in Education (Sercu, 2004, p.75)

In her framework, Sercu (ibid) argues that the cognitive dimension may be implied in *savoir apprendre*; however, it is not made explicit in the definition given. She addresses the question of why the assessment of IC is important by defining IC and discussing the implications of that definition for assessment purposes; and presented her framework of criteria, which high quality tests should meet, and applies it to two assessment formats
commonly used in FLT. Sercu argues that the assessment procedure of IC is a complex and an important issue. At a time where there is an implicit commandment in education to promote the acquisition of IC, and where employers demand quality instruments which can predict whether or not employees will function successfully in intercultural contact situations, it is high time that systematic action was taken to develop adequate assessment tools, and which Byram’s model did not address (pp. 79-85).

3.5.4. The Changing Aims of Foreign Language Teaching

A number of developments in the last three decades led to a more defined consideration of the aims of language teaching, with a more deliberate focus on cultural issues. It is not an easy task to move away from the traditional scenario, since theories of second language acquisition and following methods of language teaching, such as, grammar-translation, the direct method, and the communicative method, had a tendency to underestimate the cultural dimension. The research into the role of culture in language learning was necessary to underpin the new directions which language learning was taking (Chambers, 2001).

This successive development, which is known to some as the cultural turn, was most certainly inspired by the transforming social and historical context in today’s modern world. What has happened is a change in emphasis from the “what” and “how” to the “why” of FLT. Abdallah-Pertceille (2001) formulated a key question, which is, why do we learn languages? Is it to know a language? Or is it to understand another language? She answered the question by saying that learning another language is above all a means to learning otherness. It is not simply a matter of knowing other languages and cultures, but of understanding other people through their language use and their culture(s). She makes a distinction between two significant moves in language training currently taking place. One is the move from historical, geographical and institutional knowledge to cultural learning. The other is a passage from cultural competence to IC as a tool for understanding the stage management, as she calls it, which takes place around us.
Culture now should be accepted as an internal component of the language learning activities, and is no longer accepted as an external component. Educators should not see it as a fifth skill attached to the other four language skills, but it should always be in the background from the first day of any teaching situation (Kramsch, 1993). Additionally, Byram (2004) argues that we have concentrated too much on skills and too little on values. The ongoing research into political and cultural education is now of great importance as a means to clarify the objectives of FLT and how these objectives are implemented in the language classroom. This research study may be regarded as a contribution to this debate.

Before we move on, we should create a more understandable stance of what do we mean by IC and ICC in EFL. IC represents an idiosyncratic communication situation: the various language and discourse strategies people from different cultural backgrounds use in direct, face-to-face situations. In other words IC focuses on how people handle differences in linguistic behaviour and its various effects; the analysis of results in descriptions of culturally specific ways of expressing and interpreting the situated linguistic action of the co participants (Muller-Jacquier, 2004, p. 295). Therefore, any valuable research on IC has to focus on how the participants perceive the linguistic manifestations of others, how they create new meanings, adapted to be valid for the specific situation they are creating. This means that the persons do not rely entirely on their cultural norms but take into account other values and adapt eventually to what they assume to be the foreign cultural norms and actions that others orient their talk to (ibid, p. 297). On the other hand, ICC is the ability to interact effectively with people from cultures that we recognize as being different from our own (Guilherme, 2004). Interacting effectively across cultures means accomplishing a negotiation between people based on both culture-specific and culture-general features that is on the whole respectful of and favorable to each (ibid).
We may propose from the following diagram that the four competences which have been accepted by FLT can be seen as a continuous chain, where four of them are integrated. For example, ICC calls for a holistic approach to FLT. This holistic vision of learning means that the whole personality of the learner is involved in every learning situation. The learner is not, simply, thinking and a knowing individual, but also a feeling and an acting one. Therefore, intercultural FLT has to be regarded as new FL pedagogy. Furthermore, intercultural FLT requires that much greater emphasis be placed on subjectivity than in the FLT of the 1970’s and 1980’s (See Figure 3.6).

In the following section, I will take a closer look at what some theorists have to say about an intercultural approach to FLT, and the implications of this for the teachers.

3.6. Teaching Intercultural Competency in Foreign Language Teaching

3.6.1. The Potential of Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching

Kaikkonen (2001) explains that the most crucial aim of FLT is how to help learners to escape their mother tongues, and their own cultural shell. He clarifies that people all acquire some culture-particular techniques of thinking, speaking, and shaping their world, as a consequence of the socialization process into their own culture. Those particular patterns, which some people will take for granted, might restrict their behavior, which may lead those people to hide in their cultural shell. However, sometimes people may try to get out of their shell to encounter other people, and societies, who may perform differently from them. Kaikkonen (2001) claims that people learnt, since their childhood,
to think of themselves, and how they relate to others, especially to people who behave or look different from them. For this reason, many stereotypes and prejudices are shaped before school age. When children, as Kaikkonen describes, start to learn an FL at school, they have, already, many preconceptions about what is different or foreign. Then, as they become more familiar with an FL, learn new or other methods of communication, and maybe visit other countries, they start to cross boundaries of their own culture and reach out of their “cultural shell”, which provides them with a multifaceted experience (p.64). Kaikkonen talks about the widening of the learner’s view of culture by using new information about the foreign culture and its language, which will increase the learners’ consciousness of their own culture and language (p.85).

Seeley (1988) maintains that intercultural learning should be introduced for children during the first two years of FL study for the reason, as he explains, that the contact with members of other cultures may not occur in the distant future of the children, but could happen at any time in their everyday lives (p.4). Nowadays, individuals will encounter representatives of other cultures through popular music, the media, tourism, and the multicultural nature of many societies, without the need to travel. Therefore, they will have to cope with the situations arising from encounters with people from elsewhere who speak an FL (p. 198). However, due to the fear that cultural issues may go beyond the capacities of primary school children, the learning of the ICD in a language has been taken seriously only at the secondary level. Doyé (1999) claims that the basic ICC can be expanded in younger children as well, and the experiences presented can be chosen in accordance with the young learners’ level of development. He offers an extensive range of, what he calls, learner-appropriate contents and strategies for intercultural learning, which could be also used for older and more mature learners. (p. 25).

From the above, we understand that knowledge, skills and attitudes development in ICC is associated to the personal growth of the learner, and, indeed, the idea of influencing someone’s personality naturally raises ethical questions. For that reason, it is necessary
that pedagogues bear in mind what they want to accomplish in this respect. Specific teaching and learning objectives will have to be organized and appropriate activities to train the needed learning skills will have to be devised if they are to be able to sensitize the learners’ diversity in language and culture.

The English language is of great interest in this respect; even though it may be thought of as a threat towards the survival of minority languages, its role as an international contact language cannot be overlooked, nor can we fail to appreciate its necessity for ICU. The varieties of English existing nowadays emphasize its distinctive role, as well as the domination of English as a common language throughout the world. English is described as three concentric circles: the inner circle which considers the English language as a first language, such as, UK, USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; the outer circle which consists of a larger and linguistically more diverse group of countries, and which uses the language as an ESL; such as, Singapore, Kenya, India and Malaysia. English came on the scene in these countries with colonization, and has established itself in particular domains of society, such as business, administration and education. In some of the countries within the outer circle it has the position of official language alongside the indigenous languages spoken there before the arrival of English. The third circle, which is known as the expanding circle, can be said to include the rest of the world, and consists of countries where English is learnt as an FL at school (Kachru, 1985). In this situation it is the unofficial second language, or the third language in bilingual or plurilingual societies. Kaikkonen (2001) states that between 1860 and 1996 the number of people speaking English as a first or second language rose from 60 million to 593 million, making it the geopolitically most widespread language of all.

On the other hand, Graddol (1997) draws attention to the reality that now English is used among non-native speakers at least as much as between native and non-native speakers. He argues that more than 80% of interactions carried out in English occur in the absence of a native speaker. It is in this situation that the use of English is truly expanding and
also diversifying; and it becomes like a snowball that is picking up new features as it rolls. Accordingly, concepts such as EIL, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) have emerged, referring to its growing function as a common code for people of various nationalities (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, pp.6-13). As a result of this widespread use of English throughout the world, ownership of the language can no longer be said to rest with native-speakers.

As Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas (1996), among others, argue, there is no monolithic “hegemonic” English voice, reflecting socio-cultural norms held by an inner circle. What we have is a multiplicity of diverse voices, which reveal dissimilarities in the social, cultural, economic and political background of its speakers. House (2002, p.244) claims that ELF has a huge capability for international understanding in particular; because ELF speakers have to work out a joint linguistic, intercultural, and behavioral basis for their interactions, and they have a tendency to interact by using a dynamic Interlanguage; Interlanguage here means a language which is characterized by paraphrases, language switches, and low variation of so-called ritual speech, such as phrases of politeness.

House (2002, p.245) refers to a study conducted by Meierkord in 1996 which found that ELF speakers try to adapt their own language use to the interlocutor’s ability, by cooperating to find a suitable conversation style, having longer pauses between the various phases in the conversation, and using encouraging openings, hence the cultures form the background against which the common language of communication is shaped. Being aware that different languages have different norms for communication will greatly assist the interlocutors in their endeavor to find common ground. Meierkord’s (ibid) empirical study shows surprisingly few misunderstandings in ELF contacts. However, when misunderstandings do happen, they tend to be overcome by abrupt topic changes rather than resolved through negotiation.
All this has inevitable implications for the English language classroom. Since English today is being used as a medium among various languages and cultures, it has taken on a multicultural dimension which should be recognized. Terms such as *target language* and *target culture* must be cautiously used, for the reason that the concept of a *single standard English* is used among monolingual and mono-cultural native speakers. The main concern should be directed towards the idea of developing intercultural speakers, instead of searching for the native-speaker ideal. Coping with the “English speaking culture”, in the sense of imparting information on specific cultures, is also full of difficulties, and has to be carefully considered. Those difficulties are connected to the process nature of culture as ever changing, and the multifaceted character of the term “English speaking countries” which were discussed earlier. However, it cannot be denied that in teaching of EFL, it has been customary to focus on Inner-Circle countries. Without doubt, teaching “English culture” includes creating choices concerning what we include and what we leave out. Background information as an objective truth does not exist, because the selection and representation of cultural features is always identified by subjectivity on the part of the one who make choices, which in this case is the teacher.

As a result, teachers have to individually decide how to consider and, more importantly, how to teach English, either as an international language used worldwide, or as a language spoken as a mother tongue in some countries. The intercultural need for the English language as a school subject is related to accepting it as the means through which intercultural encounters are made possible and ICU encouraged, in addition to considering it an end in its own right. This is one of the subject matters which English language teachers, specifically, will have to address when planning goals and preparing classroom activities.

### 3.6.2. Challenges for Language Teachers

The increasing emphasis on IC within language teaching has meant that the role of the teacher also has to be reconceptualised, with additional thought given to the qualities
required of an educator who aims to promote ICU in a significant perspective, support the learners in achieving the desirable ICC, and educate open-minded and tolerant intercultural speakers.

The contribution by Kramsch (2004) is of great interest from the language teaching perspective as she concentrates on the role of the language teacher as a go-between, and argues that gone are the days when it was considered sufficient to try to pass on the standard national communicative and cultural knowledge of the native speaker to the learners. In her opinion, the reason for this lies in the fact that “symbols of national identity have become multiple; hybrid, conflictual and changing, and teachers must have a more critical, socially, culturally and politically conscious knowledgebase than just content knowledge about the language and the culture associated with it” (p.42).

I believe that this is seen as an indication that we have now gone even further than the idea of teachers-of-language-and-culture, advocated by Byram et al. in the mid 1990s. What is called for today are language teachers who are not so much authoritative transmitters of linguistic, pragmatic and even cultural knowledge. Instead, teachers must be seen as mediators between various identities, cultures, perspectives and perceptions of the world. And more than that, language teachers nowadays may also find themselves at the intersection between local and more global dimensions of language teaching, balancing between the domestic needs of the students already present and international demands that will be placed upon the students once they leave school.

Once again, Kramsch (2004, pp.44-47) explains that when we observe language teachers, we have to consider, on the one hand, how to distinguish between the expertise they have to demonstrate, and, on the other hand, the knowledge that they need to acquire. She applies Byram’s model of ICC (see above) to differentiate the intercultural teacher from the language teacher, and maintains that language teachers are being accepted as
linguistic/cultural professionals, specialist methodologists and expert professionals. The first suggests that language teachers should know not only about the language, but also they have to be able to use it accurately, i.e. to display a pragmatic, discourse, and sociolinguistic competence adapted to a particular social context. The second area of expertise refers to language teachers’ mastering of pedagogic methods and techniques of instruction; and the third is related to the teachers as professionals of the institutions they serve. These include the schools they are working in, and the professional organization, collegial networkers, as well as the national and international communities to which they belong.

The knowledge that language teachers are expected to display is applied knowledge. In the three domains of expertise mentioned above, teachers are supposed to apply their theoretical knowledge to mediate between languages, and between learners and institutions. Kramsch (2004) introduces her “go-between” concept when referring to teachers’ roles as mediators, and draws upon Byram and Zarate’s *savoirs* to illustrate the varied type of knowledge required. She argues that teachers have to understand language and culture, not as static information, however, but as a social semiotic, and be able to use the language both like native and non-native speakers, as well; and that they must be able to appreciate the political dimension of language teaching. For teachers as methodological go-betweens, “savoir” means remaining flexible with regard to methodology, mediating between what can be taught and tested and what must be taught and cannot be tested, as well as, keeping a log for self-reflection. As a final point, Kramsch (ibid) represents language teachers’ role as professional go-betweens, among other things, mediating between institutional constraints and educational value, as well as mediating between commercial interests and textbook publishers and students’ needs. She also stresses the importance of continuous professional development.

On the other hand, Van Lier (2004, pp.79-99) investigates the changing FL classroom, and implicitly the challenges faced by language teachers, from a different perspective. He
focuses on the language classroom as an arena for democratic education. This he views from a macro perspective, including the education of democratic citizens in a democratic society, and a micro perspective, including the promotion of democratic learning processes in the classroom. He sees democracy building as a bottom-up process. Traditionally, the language classroom has been about learning languages, not about changing the world, or even oneself. The content has been of a lighthearted, neutral nature, reflecting uncontroversial topics and safe ideas. What Van Lier (2004) suggests is a move away from safe, tried-and-tested language classrooms into a more critical, challenging democratic direction. He believes that teaching materials have to challenge students to think, with complex collaborative projects which push the boundaries of experience along with the language boundaries. Nevertheless, Van Lier’s suggestions may meet with resistance from both students and teachers, as both groups may tend to favor the familiar rather than take on new demands related to culture and critical pedagogy.

Van Lier (2004) maintains that language is always about something, so it might as well be about something of consequence. Here it would be crucial if the learners themselves had a say and a stake in what these ‘things of consequence’ are. Furthermore, the development of ’dually compatible identity that links the self to reality requires a voice in that language, as well as having both the right to speak and the right to be heard. Although communication and interaction are central to language development in many classrooms it is limited to the transmission of (trivial) information. The idea of language teachers as democracy educators naturally poses challenges to language teachers, who traditionally have not ventured into the area of “big questions”, to use Kramsch’s expression. In this respect, the responsibility of the teachers cannot be underestimated. Nor can one deny the importance of intuition and sound judgment regarding how a shared interest may be developed, which at the same time allows for different opposing opinions to be voiced. Deliberate communication, as I see it, is of especially great importance in multicultural classrooms, but also in every other FL classroom where the aim is increasing the learners’ ability to encounter difference, diversity and ambiguity.
3.7. Implementing Intercultural Dimension within ELT

3.7.1. International Research Studies

As mentioned in section 3.6.1 a great number of theories and research studies on intercultural education and culture in FLT can be found; however, relatively minor consideration has been given to how the ICD is understood by teachers. Therefore, an overview of some studies will be crucial in the context of this research. It should be noted that the focus of these studies is concerned with teachers’ cognition towards implementing ICD within the area of ELT.

Byram and Risager (1999) conducted a research study in the UK and Denmark, using questionnaires and interviews to collect data from language teachers. Their findings revealed that the language teachers from both countries appear to lack the in-depth understanding of culture and the complexity needed to understand its significance for language teaching in the future. Also, they noticed that the focus was on national culture with little attention paid to aspects of culture beyond that which they had in their textbooks. However, the most significant aspect is that the teachers are generally discouraged in their attempts to treat cultural dimension seriously due to the pressures to produce measurable results, and their concentration was focused on LC (pp.104-105). The Danish language teachers, who were also teaching Danish as an L2, showed more understanding of the meaning of culture, and a wider perception of their role as intercultural mediators than the language teachers from England. As a result, the researchers emphasize that teachers showed their willingness to interculturlize FL education; their responses confirm a growing awareness of the significance of the cultural dimension, and a clear motivation to implement culture within language teaching.

Another survey study conducted by Sercu (2001, cited in Sercu et al, 2005), involved 135 French, English and German language teachers from Belgium, and confirmed that most of the participants viewed culture in FLT as a traditional paradigm with no reference to
promoting ICC. She states that FL teachers’ cognition of professionalism seem to be typically those of teachers teaching for CC, not those of teaching ICC.

Diaz-Greenberg & Nevin (2003) conducted a study in the US interviewing three graduate students completing their last term in the teacher preparation program in order to determine to what extent they understood the distinction between the five Cs approach and the four Fs approach. This study clarified how critical pedagogy and multicultural education can help meet the challenges that language teachers experience while teaching culture. The researchers were aiming to explore some of the issues affecting culture teaching by achieving insight into student teachers’ reflections; and according to them, the ‘Four Fs approach’ (Food, Fashion, Festivals and Folklore) undervalues the complex nature of culture, while the ‘Five Cs approach’ (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities) involves incorporating all the five topics in a systematic approach at all levels of language instruction (p.215). The study’s findings reveal that novice teachers are able to apply the teaching of culture using the ‘Five Cs approach’, even when their textbooks may perhaps be presenting the four Fs approach. The participants are truly aware of the fact that it is the teacher rather than the textbook that should guide the teaching of culture. The researchers concluded that the cultural base of the teacher may influence, unconsciously, the cognitions and subsequent presentation of cultural norms of the other culture.

A study was conducted in Saudi Arabia by Al-Qahtani (2004) using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to collect data from middle-schools EFL male teachers in the capital (Riyadh). He explored attitudes and views of these teachers towards introducing the TC in their classrooms in order to develop their students’ sociolinguistic competence. His findings indicate that the teachers have positive attitudes towards teaching TC, and are aware of its importance in developing their students’ cross-cultural comprehension of the meaning of culture, and what its teaching may require. However, he points to the
teachers’ fear that by exposing students to the target culture it may affect their religious beliefs in an unfavorable manner.

Additionally, Castro et al (2004) conducted a quantitative comparative study in Spain which distributed a questionnaire to teachers from 7 countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Sweden, and Spain). This study questions if secondary school EFL teachers supported the new culture-and-language teaching objectives in the curricular guidelines. It was based on innovation in education, and indicated that teachers’ cognition of innovation significantly influenced the success of that innovation. The findings propose that teachers are willing to support the new objectives; however, they have difficulty in prioritizing language teaching and the teaching of culture. The final results focused on data concerning how teachers perceive the cultural dimension of FLT, their perceptions of their students’ knowledge of and attitudes to TC, and their own teaching and the significance of study trips and exchanges.

Castro et al.’s (2004) study reported two FL teachers’ profiles; the first is the favorably disposed teacher who was willing to teach intercultural competence; while the second is the unfavorably disposed teacher who was hesitant and even rejected, teaching it. However, both teachers have their own personal opinions about their perceptions which needed to be resolved before they start teaching ICC, and understanding the way in which this competence should be taught. In their actual teaching, these teachers did not appear to go beyond the traditional information-transfer pedagogy in any of the seven countries. Different topics still appear to enjoy priority in the different countries.

Another study, conducted by Hugh (2007), argues that there is a lot of tension between language learning policies which promote ICC, and persistent traditions of language teaching which identify language with national cultures. Hugh conducted interviews with teachers which confirmed that these tensions revealed that the mindset of teachers may
privilege a bicultural nationalist paradigm. Even where teachers have clear commitment to intercultural perspectives, the implications of this may not be in tune with teaching materials they find. This study suggests that a dialogue with teachers of citizenship and multicultural education could help to provide a clearer perspective. In particular the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship, linking the local, the national, and the global could help teachers to progress from the dominant nationalist paradigms. Locally, I could not find any studies concerning teachers’ cognition.

The research studies introduced here vary between large-scale quantitative research studies and small-scale qualitative research studies. The findings indicate that teachers are aware of the necessity of integrating cultural aspects in the language teaching classroom. They may not often challenge the complicated concept of culture, which is frequently connected to a national paradigm; neither do they accomplish it in their own teaching in ways that would effectively promote intercultural understanding. Of great significance is the fact that due to the pressures for quantitative assessment, the teachers have a tendency to feel obliged to direct their teaching towards measurable products.

3.8. Summary and the Study’s Focus

This study is concerned with exploring the cognitions that Bahraini English language teachers at secondary schools level have about the intercultural dimension in EFL-teaching. Consistent with the theoretical framework of the current thesis, the ICD can be recognized as containing three elements:

1. The perceptions about what culture in FLT is;

2. The perceptions about why teachers teach culture, or perceptions about the cultural objectives of FLT (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986; Schnitzer, 1995; Seeley, 1988; Castro et al., 2004; and Sercu et al., 2005); and

3. How teaching practices aim at achieving those objectives.
In this context, the term ‘belief’ is used in the meaning established by Pajares (1992), and which answers the RQs:

1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concepts ‘Culture’ and ICC in ELT?
2. To what extent do the teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom?
3. How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms?
4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?

Therefore, perceptions about culture and beliefs about cultural objectives are seen as interrelating and together affecting classroom practice. The relationship between the three elements is shown as the what, why, and how are applied as questions that form the basis of my research study. Accordingly, my main goal is to find patterns within teachers’ perceptions. Therefore, in order to achieve this goal and to comprehend the background of these perceptions and teachers beliefs, in this study I will concentrate on teachers’ cognitions on the following issues:

1. the overall aim of the teaching of English,
2. the status of English in today’s world,
3. the relationship between language and culture,
4. their own role as teachers-of-language-and-culture,
5. the importance of ILT,
6. Assessment of ICC,
7. ambitions with respect to the teaching of culture and ICC,
8. factors obstructing their teaching of culture and ICC,
9. Language teacher education and in-service training, and their impact on the teachers’ perceptions about culture and ICC.

Discussions of these issues will provide useful information on those aspects which form the basis of the participants’ perceptions and their decision-making with regard to
classroom activities, and will further my understanding of the three main topics and allow me to view them from a wide range of angles. The reasons for choosing these particular issues can be accredited to questions which developed over a period of time when I was studying literature both in the field of culture-and-language teaching, and language teacher cognition.

In Chapter 4, I will clarify the methods I have used, and how I have used them, in order to reach my desired goal to investigate whether or not language teaching in Bahraini secondary schools today can be described as intercultural, in the sense that culture is taught with the aim of promoting intercultural understanding, tolerance and empathy; qualities which are needed in our world now more than ever.
Chapter 4
Methodology and Research Design

Practicing social researchers have a responsibility to engage in philosophical and methodological debates which lead to a continuous enhancement of quality in educational research, in order to contribute to learning and teaching communities (Crotty, 2003). Therefore, engaging in such debates is the main aim of this chapter by presenting the study design, its methodology, the choice of methods for data collection, and techniques for analyzing the data. First of all, the research paradigm and exploitation of the research questions will be discussed. Then, the two data collection methods will be presented showing their advantages and disadvantages, which will be followed by a thorough rationale for the data collecting instruments. The next section is concerned with the study setting, participants and sampling techniques, while the following sections will discuss, first, the process of data gathering and recording, the ethical considerations for the study, and finally, validity and reliability of the instruments, and the way they have addressed the approach in the research study.

4.1. Research Aims and Questions

The broad aims of the present study derived from the study’s theoretical perspective, in particular its assumptions about the meanings of culture and ICC, and teachers’ perception. The research questions stated below were formulated within the discipline of teaching culture and ICC in English Language classrooms at the secondary level in Bahrain, and teachers’ perception towards this kind of teaching. As a result, research questions are:

1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concepts ‘Culture’ and ICC in ELT?
2. To what extent do the teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom?
3. How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms?
4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?
4.2. Theoretical Perspectives in Educational Research

Research Paradigms, known originally as theoretical perspectives, is an expression used by social researcher Kuhn (1962); he argued that a paradigm develops as a result of a number of scientific achievements which include the same standards and rules for research practice. He claimed that a paradigm shift happens when an irregularity noticed inside the present set of standards and rules, and an enhanced and extraordinary method of carrying on research comes to live. However, the expression “Theoretical Perspective” is more general and does not require the well-defined distinction between various methods for carrying out research, which has motivated countless debates and which has been arguably conducted only for the purpose of weakening educational research.

Cohen et al. (2007) explain that the most important components which embrace a paradigm are ontology, which is the theory of reality, and epistemology, which is the theory of knowledge and how knowledge is obtained. The term ontology has been derived from the Greek expression “existence”, which Crotty (2003) says, in the exact philosophical sense, is the science or study of being. As a result, researchers’ ontological stances reflect both their beliefs regarding the nature of the knowable and about reality. Ontological beliefs offer a foundation for the logic of the research process; while epistemology offers a philosophical foundation for choosing what sort of knowledge is feasible, and how we can obtain that knowledge. Epistemological beliefs are the methods which the researcher ought to employ when searching for knowledge, and consequently, bear direct influence on methodology and methods of the research process (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, pp. 108-109).

There are three broad research paradigms in social research: positivism, interpretive, and critical theory, however, I strongly believe that research paradigms involve axiological positions as well, which was mentioned by Lincoln and Guba (2000, cited in Creswell and Clark, 2007, p. 23) and means the role values play in any research. Each of these
positions places emphasis on various ethical set of values and standards, which means that ethical and moral standards are embedded in research paradigms instead of being external to them. Even though ontological and epistemological beliefs are seldom explicitly defined in published research articles, they spread through the whole research process, starting from the formation of the research questions to the conclusions which are drawn, passing through the perceptions of what its ethics involves. I believe that a philosophical argument about our ontology and epistemology beliefs as researchers should be stated explicitly. A discussion in that manner will reveal our deep knowledge of philosophical and technological aspects of research, which will validate its quality amongst the research community; which will be explained in the next section.

4.3. Research Methodology

In order for the researcher to explore, understand, and give an explanation of causes for a certain situation, an interpretive approach should be utilized (Bryman, 2001 and Troudi, 2010). Therefore, this is an exploratory study taking place within an interpretive research paradigm, and following a naturalistic inquiry procedure for its goal to observe numerous social interactions between individuals or what is known as socio-behavioral inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 & Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Cohen et al. (2007) and Dyer (1995) explain that a naturalistic inquiry is one which is conducted in natural settings, using natural methods, and in natural ways, by individuals who have a natural interest in what they are studying. The researcher using this approach, as they state, greatly believes that the social world can simply be comprehended from the position of the people who are part of the ongoing action under investigation. Consequently, Creswell (2003) states, such incidents should be explored through the eyes of participants instead of the eyes of the researcher. Bryman (2001) argues that the researcher concentrates on the contextual comprehension of historical and cultural settings of the participants, while Cohen et al. (2007) say that since events and behavior develop over time they are deeply affected by context, and are situated activities.
As a result, my study will be conducted in a natural setting, exploring English language teachers’ perception and collecting data from them as a main source, employing qualitative methods, and basing the theory on the data through continually comparing emerging patterns and interpreting them following the naturalistic inquiry’s characteristics listed by Creswell (2003) and Robson (1993). The methodology applied in this research study is guided by the interpretive paradigm which, as Nueman (2003) argues, is aware of the context, uses different methods to explore how others perceive the world, and is more involved with accomplishing an empathic understanding.

The interpretive paradigm consists of different characteristics, and the first and most applicable one to this study is that the researcher following this paradigm goes through a detailed examination of data, in order to discover embedded meanings and interpretations; data which maybe in the form of written words, oral conversations, or even a visual picture (Creswell, 2003 & Creswell et al., 2007). These interpretations are, without doubt, shaped by the researcher’s experience and background. In addition to that, this paradigm allows the researcher to ask open-ended questions, observe and live with the participants in their natural context (Troudi, 2010, p.1). The third characteristic is that the theory should follow the research rather than precede it, in other words, the emerging theory should be grounded on data generated from the research; and it is normal in this paradigm that any situation may generate different interpretations which are accepted and appreciated (Cohen et al., 2007).

It is commonly known to researchers that the research questions, the study’s aims, and objectives are the driving factors when choosing the data collecting methods and approaches. The main objectives for this study are, to explore how English language teachers in secondary government schools define the concepts culture and ICC; to what extent they see ICC as an objective in language classroom; how these teachers teach ICC in their language classrooms; and finally, whether they have a sufficient pre-service or in-service training to teach ICC in their classrooms. This study aims at exploring the
perceptions, and feelings of English language teachers. Comprehending how individuals construct meaning of situations is a necessity in this context. For this reason, I chose a qualitative naturalistic approach since it attempts to understand the individuals’ experiences, feelings and emotions, which are hard to be examined or measured using quantitative methods (Silverman, 2001).

Nueman (2003) argues that this type of methodological approach considers the significance of understanding the participants’ social, cultural, and historical context in order to assist knowledgeable interpretations; and this can be achieved by socially engaging with the participants under study. In this section I give a description of the theoretical perspective and which underlines my research strategies, keeping in mind their weaknesses and strengths.

The naturalistic approach chosen here has its own weakness and strength. Examining the participants in their natural surrounding and concentrating on extracting meaningful information of their situations and interpretations of their world could be accepted as strength; while sinking deeply into the participants’ interpretations and understanding of the world by the researcher could be accepted as a weakness. Therefore, I should not depend entirely on the participants’ interpretations of the situation, but should step back and consider the interpretations within a wider picture.

4.4. Research Methods

In this study, the main concern was to explore English language teachers’ perceptions, feelings, and thoughts about teaching ICC in their language classrooms. Therefore, in order to give more depth to this study, semi-structured interviews are used as a method that will record more interaction with individuals and construct meanings from their conversations. However, interviews as a single method are not enough to draw a wider picture of the situation, which lead me to choose questionnaire as another method to
collect more data. In this case, joining the two methods does not suggest, on the one hand, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, but it suggests integration at a superficial level within a single paradigm which offers the study more breadth; and on the other hand, it does not suggest that the first method is stronger than the second one; rather, they both complement each other and they function on the same level of strength and compatibility (Bryman, 2001).

The data collecting procedures consisted of a preliminary investigation, which influenced the adaptation of my questionnaire. It involved 4 semi-structured interviews with secondary level English language teachers, which aimed to obtain information about their current teaching of ICC in their language classrooms and their perceptions of this competency. Here I gained thorough insight into teachers’ awareness of issues related to teaching ICC in their classrooms and found out what could be achieved, or indeed, what they would like to achieve. Then comes the first stage which exploited the themes emerging from the analysis of the initial 4 interviews to modify some parts of Sercu et al.’s (2005) international questionnaire (See Appendix 4: Sercu et al. (2005) International Questionnaire), copies of which were then distributed amongst English language teachers who were selected through convenience sampling. I guaranteed that no one was excluded intentionally by each English language senior teacher, who was in charge of distributing and collecting the questionnaire, and were in direct contact with me. This stage helped me to collect a larger number of responses to emergent themes, which would lead to more data and deep results. At the second stage semi-structured interviews with Senior English language teachers were conducted, which were then transcribed and analyzed.

4.4.1. The Sampling Procedure

4.4.1.1. First Stage Sampling Procedure (Questionnaire)

At this stage of the data collection, a *convenience sampling* procedure was used with English language teachers. This procedure, which is also known as accidental or opportunity sampling, includes choosing the nearest individuals to function as
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respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained, or those who happen to be available and accessible at the time (Cohen et al., 2007, pp. 113-114). This procedure is used with English language teachers at the secondary level as a type of sampling which is far less complicated to set up, is considerably less expensive, and can prove perfectly adequate where I, as a researcher, do not intend to generalize my findings beyond the sample in question (ibid, p. 113). In order to guarantee that a convenience sample was obtained and all participants had an equal chance of participating, I handed out questionnaires to each English language senior teacher in the participating schools according to the number of teachers they have, and asked them to leave it to the teachers to choose, or not, to fill in their responses; 234 questionnaires were distributed in 26 secondary schools, and then 197 questionnaires were collected from English language teachers (102 females and 95 males), which represents 84.1% and is very high rate of return.

4.4.1.2. Second Stage Sampling Procedure (Semi-structured Interviews)
Cohen et al. (2007) and Creswell (2003) argue that the main reason that a qualitative researcher uses a smaller size than a quantitative researcher is that the former aims to reflect the diversity within a given population; while the later seeks statistical generalities and representativeness. They also present different sampling procedures for the qualitative research, however, the one which used in this study, is the purposive sampling procedure. I decided to follow this procedure while interviewing English language senior teachers in order to increase the diversity of the sample and enable me to search for different properties. The 17 English language senior teachers (8 females, and 9 males), who were interviewed in the third stage of the data collection procedure and represented 65.4%, were chosen from both female and male secondary schools participated in this study and from different parts of the country to provide more representative and reached data. Also, those teachers were questionnaire participants' seniors and were in charge of handing out and collecting the questionnaires from them. I did not want to leave interviewees out of the picture because they were experienced and capable of providing this study more deep and wealthy data.
4.4.1.3. School Selection Technique

The study was carried out in 26 secondary schools, 10 boys schools, and 16 girls schools, which are situated in the five governorates (Muharraq, Central, Capital, Southern, and Northern) in order to represent the different parts of the country. These schools represent 81.2% of the total secondary schools in Bahrain. The 10 boys’ and 16 girls’ secondary schools were classified into one main category “The Unification of Academic Secondary Education Tracks Schools”, and were using the same textbook ‘Opportunities’. On the other hand, 6 boys’ technical schools were eliminated from this study because they use ESP English language textbooks and which are different from the other 26 schools. After deciding on the number and the category of participating schools, I decided to collect as much data from different governorates, in order to strengthen my argument after the analysis of data. In the end, all 26 secondary schools chosen for this study took part (Table 4.1. gives detailed information about the schools).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorates</th>
<th>Boys Secondary Schools</th>
<th>Out</th>
<th>In</th>
<th>Girls Secondary Schools</th>
<th>Out</th>
<th>In</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muharraq</td>
<td>Muharraq</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Estaqlal</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al Hedayah</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Muharraq</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>Ahmed Al Omraan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hoora</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shaikh Abdulaziz</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Khawlah</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al Noaim</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Al Manama</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Al Tawon</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Omaima</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East Riffa</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Al Maarefa</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shaikh Isa bin Ali</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Al Noor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isa Town</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sitra</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Al Wafa’a</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Isa Town</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>West Riffa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Hamad Town</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Al Ahad Al Zaher</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Saar</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamad Town</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jid Hafs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>95 (90.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>102 (79.1%)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Total 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No. of questionnaires</td>
<td>Out</td>
<td>234 (58.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>In</td>
<td>197 (84.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Secondary Schools Participated and the Number of Questionnaires Handed out and Received
4.4.1.4. Validity and Reliability of the Sampling Technique

Several authors proposed strategies to ensure the validity and reliability of the sampling process and its adequateness to the research questions (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Curtis et al., 2000). Here I chose the most applicable ones that I used in my study to ensure its sampling technique validity and reliability: the sample should answer the research questions; using participants’ consent forms to ensure confidentiality (See Appendix 9: Interview Questions Sheet); making sure the data is feasible and transferable (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 297); the efficiency and practicality of the sample to make sure that this sample should be able to provide the suitable data I needed to answer my research questions.

4.4.2. Data Collecting Methods

4.4.2.1. First Stage Data Collection Method (Questionnaire)

Cohen et al. (2007), Oppenheim (1992), and Selitz et al. (1976) claim that using questionnaires may help in accomplishing the goals of research studies by offering descriptive data of participants’ attitudes, beliefs, practices, and relationships. In addition, I aimed to use questionnaires to obtain general results, because they can reach a larger population than other methods, however, a questionnaire, such as any other research method, has its limitations and its strengths, which will be discussed in the following sections.

Strengths

Denzin (1999) and Wilson & McLean (1994) list some of its strengths as follows: first of all, questionnaires are capable of producing general results, and are effective in describing a large population’s characteristics. Additionally, questionnaires are stable, consistent, a uniform measure without variation, and are capable of providing greater anonymity to participants encouraging them to express their feelings and explore their perceptions and beliefs. For those reasons they are suitable to be used in this explanatory and descriptive study (Bailey, 1994).
Limitations
On the other hand, Sudman & Bradburn (1982) mentioned that there are some limitations to this method, which can be summarized as follows: a technical problem may appear in the design and the layout of the questionnaire itself. Also, in order to have an attractive layout with a minimal number of pages to retain the participants’ attention, and work within their busy schedules, the researcher may need to eliminate some questions which may affect the content of the questionnaire, minimizing the results of the questions asked in terms of quantity and quality. In addition, some questions may be ambiguous or misunderstood by the participants and cannot be clarified or detected at the time. Finally, there is the threat that some participants do not report their real feelings or perceptions due to lack of time or effort.

Design
The questionnaire used in this study, was inspired by Sercu et al.’s (2005) international survey, and was developed and modified to cover the issues generated from the 4 initial semi-structured interviews with English language teachers at secondary schools. I was inspired by some parts of Sercu et al. (2005) international questionnaire for different reasons; first its topic similarity with this research study; its organization and presentation of each theme in a realistic and systematic way; and the appropriateness of most of the statements used in her questionnaire to answer my research questions. It is worth to mention that I only used some parts of her questionnaire; for example: Section 5 pp.196 &197 was modified for Section A; Section 6 pp.199-201 was modified for Section B; and Section 11 pp. 212-214 was modified for Section C. I added a final section, Section D, in my questionnaire concerning pre-service and in-service English language teachers training, which was not mentioned in Sercu’s questionnaire.

The design followed the general guidelines for questionnaire design in order to produce an attractive, simple, standardized data collection tool which will accomplish its purpose, and avoid any drawbacks that would reduce its effectiveness. In other words, it was carefully designed in terms of both style and content (Oppenheim, 1992 & Black, 1999).
Content

The questionnaire consisted of five parts in order to cover the main research issues following Cohen et al. (2007) recommendations, which suggest that the design of the questionnaire should move from objective facts to subjective attitudes and opinions through justifications. The sequence of the parts and the sequence of the research questions followed the recommended pattern.

The focus was on designing the questionnaire with mainly closed questions and short and clear instructions for ease of analysis and to give more responses to each question (Redline et al., 2002). Also, open-ended questions were added to give in depth data regarding what teachers think. There was no need to translate the questionnaire into Arabic, since the participants were English language teachers. Its layout was kept simple and unified throughout bearing in mind its attractiveness to the participants. The font size was large, even though it increased the number of pages, and the instructions were written in bold with adequate space between each question to make the questionnaire more pleasant to the participants’ eyes (Verma & Mallick, 1999; and Dillman et al., 1999) (See Appendix 8: Questionnaire).

The first section (questions 1 to 4) was concerned with the participants’ demographic features; their gender, age, qualifications, and teaching experience. The second section, the subject of which is the themes of interest, consisted of four parts:

- The place of ICC within teaching objectives: four questions, (A1- A4), which explore teachers’ familiarity with the target language culture(s) which they teach in their language classrooms; and how they perceive the objects of English language teaching.
Teachers’ definitions of culture and ICC: (B1 and B2) two questions to enable teachers to define the two terms.

Teachers’ awareness of the importance of teaching ICC: eight questions, (C1-C8) designed to explore how teachers perceive the teaching of culture; if they teach culture or not; if they do not teach it, what reasons they can give for not doing so; what kind of cultural activities they use in their classrooms; if they are creating a multicultural environment in their classes; what are the cultural aspects they present; and finally, how they implement culture teaching in their classrooms.

Teacher training and professional development: two questions (D1 and D2) to explore the pre-service and in-service training the teachers experienced concerning teaching culture. And finally, an adequate space for teachers to add their own comments.

I kept in mind that questionnaire items should be designed in order to answer research questions. Teachers were asked to give answers about their feelings towards teaching ICC in their language classrooms through a list of statements worded for this particular purpose (Redline et al., 2002).

Piloting and Implementation
The piloting and implementation of the questionnaire went as follows: after getting the permission from the MoE’s “Research Department” (See Appendix 5: Permission from MoE), they sent a letter to the secondary schools participating in this study to organize a meeting with the English language teachers, and to assist me in my mission. Head teachers were helpful in organizing the meetings with the senior teachers who also were cooperative due to the topic of the study. Before the distribution of the questionnaire a piloting stage was essential to check its validity and reliability by distributing it to 6 teachers comprising both genders, who also had been contacted by me and received a consent form agreeing to participate in this piloting stage. As a result of the piloting,
corrections including typing errors, clarification of wordings, deletion of some overlapping questions, and changes in some question sequences and content were implemented. In addition, pilot study participants were asked to compare the old version and the new one and comment on the changes. After that, a full implementation stage followed when the questionnaires were distributed to participating schools. Senior teachers in each school were asked to hand out the questionnaires to their language teachers. They were happy to distribute, and collect the questionnaires and return them to me. The distribution, completion and collecting period took almost three weeks (Wilson & McLean, 1994; Morrison, 1993; and Oppenheim, 1992).

**Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire**

Cohen et al. (2007) and Belson (1986) argue that for a research instrument to be reliable, it should demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on similar group of respondents in a similar context, then similar results would be found. Therefore, in order for me to test the questionnaire’s validity I aimed to find whether I could draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on the instrument, as well as ascertain whether the questions were understandable and caused no confusion to participants when answering them. On the other hand, testing the questionnaire’s reliability assesses the internal consistency of items, which is the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (Creswell, 2003).

The questionnaire’s content and face validity were confirmed in different stages, the first of which was the literature review. A first version of the questionnaire was piloted on 6 teachers, and their remarks were addressed and taken into account to produce the final version. A final copy of the questionnaire was revised by my supervisor who provided valuable comments to enhance the questionnaire’s effectiveness. All the above stages led to the production of the final version of the questionnaire implemented in this study (Belson, 1986).
4.4.2.2. Second Stage Data Collection Method (Semi-structured Interviews)

Interviews, as Kvale (1996) and (Walford, 2001) claim, are an interchange of views between two or more individuals on a topic of mutual interest; it is an *inter-view* of humans. The main purpose of conducting interviews was to collect primary data on research issues. Furthermore, the interviewing stage was important in providing me with detailed information to help in this study as a first study in Bahrain dealing with teaching ICC in the English language classroom.

**Strengths**

The strengths of using interviews evolves from the fact that by using their own words, participants are able to express what they see as important instead of being constrained to fixed categories, which as a result, makes them more relaxed and at ease while expressing themselves. Interviewing offers face validity and high credibility, and the results make intuitive sense to a lay audience. Interviews permit the interviewer to search for more information and guarantee that participants understand the questions being asked; at the same time, they allow the researcher to have some flexibility in showing his or her interpersonal skills to examine the participants’ unexpected ideas. Moreover, interviewing offers the interviewer the possibility to monitor the participants’ non-verbal actions, and the possibility to correct and clarify misunderstandings which may occur between the interviewer and the participants. Also, the presence of the interviewer and face to face interviewing offers a better chance to discuss the complexity of some issues should they arise as a problem (Cohen et al., 2007; Mason, 2007; Dyer, 1995; Cicourel, 1964; and Borg, 1963).

**Limitations**

On the other hand, there are also some limitations to interviewing. For example, interviewing may seem undesirable by participants because it does not offer them
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anonymity, and it can be time consuming to be incorporated into their busy schedules. Also, it should be reconsidered according to the participants’ personalities, nationalities, moods, and the interpersonal dynamics between them and the interviewer. Finally and most importantly, scripting, analyzing and interpreting interviews is time consuming (Mason, 2007 & Cicourel, 1964).

Design
The interviews were designed as semi-structured with open-ended questions, to offer both myself and my interviewees, more freedom and flexibility in delivering questions and providing information respectively (Kvale, 1996; Tuckman, 1972; and Kerlinger, 1970). The interviews were divided into five sections: the first was an introduction to put both parties at ease and at the same time to obtain information about the participants’ educational background, as well as their teaching experiences as English Language teachers. After that the study’s four research themes, which were derived from the research questions, were introduced:

1. The participants’ personal objectives in teaching the EL and its culture.
2. Their definitions of ‘culture’ and ICC.
3. Their awareness of the importance of teaching ICC in their classrooms.
4. Their preparation (pre-service) and training (in-service) to deal with the ICC in their classrooms (See Appendix 9: Interview Questions Sheet).

Implementation
The implementation of the interviews went efficiently, due to careful scheduling of the interviews, preparation of the recording device which was used, and the cooperation of the participants. The head teachers of each school had been introduced to the research study by both the MoE and me. Each of the participants each signed a consent form, after having the reasons and goals behind the research study explained to them, and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in both male and female secondary schools. Participants were given time to look
through the interview prompt sheet in order to put them at their ease and to provide them with a better and clearer idea of what to expect from the interview (Tuckman, 1972 & Kvale, 1996).

I decided to collect data from English language senior teachers from the 26 secondary schools participated in this study for several reasons; first, they were more experienced in their teaching career and had spent longer in teaching the language than other teachers; they were aware of the topic due to their encounter with it closely in their classrooms; they were more articulate in presenting their views; and finally, they were more easily available for interview due to their flexible timetable. As a result, they provided me with more extensive and deeper data to work with. Even though some of them felt motivated and wanted to volunteer other valuable information which was not related to the focus of the study, they were encouraged to focus on the main themes to make it possible for me to limit the timing of the interview to between 35 and 40 minutes.

Validity and Reliability of the Interviews
Hammersley (1990, cited in Silverman, 2001, p.232) states that by validity he means truth, which is interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers. In other words, validity is an important key to effective research, and if a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 133). While reliability, which is replaced by Guba and Lincoln (1994) with credibility among other terms, allows the researcher to replicate research results over time and across different investigators or investigations (Marvasti, 2004, p. 115).

In my study inferences about the interviews validity were made on the basis of face validity, which means whether the questions asked in the interviews look as if they are measuring what they claim to measure (Cannell & Kahn, 1968, p.150; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p.581). This was achieved by piloting the interviews with four volunteers:
2 of them were my colleagues from the DoT and 2 were English language teachers at secondary level. This piloting was aimed at minimizing the amount of bias as much as possible (Cohen et al., 2007, p.150). On the other hand, to ensure the interviews reliability, I had to bear in mind the structure of the interview, using the same format and sequence of words and questions for each interviewee, and also using open-ended questions to enable them to demonstrate their own perception of the situation (Silverman, 1993, p. 150; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p.581).

In addition to that, I had to equip myself with useful skills, such as: knowledge of the subject matter; a well structured and clear sections of the interview; clear and understandable terminologies; allowing enough time for each interviewee to think and answer the questions; being a good listener without unnecessary interruptions; paying attention to important pieces of information; keeping control of the interview and steering it to useful directions; well-placing questioning; being able to recall or refer to earlier statement made by the interviewee; and being able to confirm, clarify and modify the interviewees comments (Kvale, 1996, pp. 148-149).

4.4.3. Study Population and Participants
4.4.3.1. First Stage Participants (Questionnaire)
The study population in the second stage of this study utilizing a questionnaire comprised teachers working in the 26 participating schools. Teachers on duty at any of the 26 schools during the three weeks period of the study were eligible for inclusion in this research (See Table 4.1 gives a full description of the sample).

4.4.3.2. Second Stage Participants (Interviews)
17 English language senior teachers participated in this study (8 female and 9 male). All interviews took place in their schools. Table 4.2 presents details of interviewees’ characteristics:
Table (4.2) Interviewees Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>F4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>F5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>F6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>M6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>M7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>M8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>M9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>F7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>F8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>BA in English + Ed. Diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5. Data Analysis

This section is going to describe the data analysis stage for this study tools: questionnaire and interviews. It is organized by the instrument, which is an approach often used in conjunction with another approach, e.g. by issue or by people. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews are presented and organized, respectively.

4.5.1. Questionnaire Analysis

4.5.1.1. Data Coding and Entry

This stage involves potential steps to insure that its design accomplish its validity and reliability; therefore, before analyzing the data:

- Data was checked for completeness: to ensure there was an answer to most questions,
Data was checked for accuracy: questions were checked to ensure they had been understood correctly by respondents.

Answers which were not in any way related to the question were considered void.

Data from completed questionnaires was entered into the computer using SPSS15 (Statistical Package for Social Science Software).

The entered data was saved and thorough data analysis subsequently undertaken.

4.5.1.2. Analysis

A descriptive analysis of the data gained from the questionnaire’s closed questions was carried out using frequencies and percentages. There were five open-ended questions which necessitated another data analysis approach to fulfill the purpose of this questionnaire. The process started by noting down responses and categorizing similar ones together. Performing counts and ranking responses according to the most frequently mentioned ones were followed by the categorization steps.

4.5.2. Interviews Analysis

Cohen et al. (2007) explain that qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in other words, making sense of data in terms of noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (p.461). In addition, Creswell (2003), among others, argues that data analysis starts from the moment the researcher listens to, reads, and transcribes the interviews; that is why qualitative data analysis is an iterative procedure (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), and there is no one single or correct way to analyze and present it (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 461). However, among the elements that may influence the way that the analysis is written up, are the following: principle of fitness for purpose will determine the kind of analysis that is undertaken or performed on the data; the kind of qualitative study that is being undertaken; and the number of data sets and people from whom the data have been collected.
Cohen et al. (2007) argue that there is a huge tension in data analysis, which is between maintaining a sense of the whole of the text, and the tendency for analysis to separate it into constituent elements, thereby losing the synergy of the whole, and usually the whole is greater than the sum of the parts (p. 470). In this study I had the opportunity to become well-acquainted with the data, as I conducted and transcribed all the interviews myself. I had to read and listen to the tapes several times to make sure I was familiar with the material. Even though I had a prior categories indicated by the questions I asked, I had to identify sub-categories emerging from them using the content analysis method (Brenner et al, 1985, pp. 470-471). I had to develop; using teachers’ own views on teaching culture and ICC in their language classrooms, a holistic perspective of the current situation and use these views to identify emerging patterns (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

The first stage of the analysis procedure was comparing incidents applicable to each category, and was conducted using manual techniques. First of all, after completing the transcription of the interviews, I used highlighters to manually identify broad units of meaning, then classifying, categorizing and ordering these units. By using the highlighters and written notes in the margins of the hard copy I identified differences and contradictory views among participants. This method enabled me to compare new emerging sub-categories within existing categories and establish a conceptual link between them. The next chapter will have a full discussion of these categories.

4.5.3. Validity and Reliability of the Data Analysis

Here validity was ensured through performing the content analysis method, which is one of several techniques that aim to look critically at data in order to come up with more valid findings (Brenner et al., 1985). Hammersley (1992) clarifies that reliability is the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different researchers or by the same researcher on different occasions. In this study, reliability was maintained by pre-testing the standardized interview schedule to ensure that all participants would understand the questions similarly and answers elicited would be
analyzed on the basis that they did not have any kind of uncertainty or ambiguity. This study’s reliability was further confirmed by comparing the researcher’s analysis of some chunks of the interview transcripts with another qualified researcher’s analysis of them.

4.6. Ethical Issues
As a researcher, I carefully considered and compiled the ethical issues related to this study with the standard advised by Exeter University and BERA, because any action regarded as unethical could have jeopardized the study’s reliability and consistency. In order to make my principles of procedures binding and known, all of the people involved in my research study had to agree to the principles before the work begins; others had to be aware of their rights in the process (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1981, cited in Hopkins, 1985, pp. 134-136). Initially, the permission for this study was sought from the University of Exeter Ethics Committee. My proposal contained full details of the research methods and emphasized my awareness of the need to carefully consider ethical issues in relation to the study. My stated endeavour to comply with the standards advised by the university led to the study being approved by the University’s Ethical Committee (See Appendix 6).

Before commencing the empirical work, I had to send a letter to the “Research Department” at the MoE to seek their approval, after which they sent a letter to the head teachers of the 26 participating schools and gave me a copy. The next stage was to seek approval from English language senior teachers, which was done by giving an introductory talk about the aims and procedures of the research study, and was followed by signing a consent form by each one participating in the interviews (See Appendix 12: The Consent Form), as well as explaining to them that participating in the interview stage is not obligatory. However, Bahraini society is an open minded one and is used to having various studies being conducted in different areas. The participants showed their interest by their help and cooperation with my study, and their desire to know the final results and recommendations. This stage was followed by explaining how the English language
senior teachers would hand out, and collects the questionnaires from their teachers in order to involve participants in the process of data collection (ibid). 17 senior teachers agreed to be interviewed while the other 9 teachers, due to different reasons, volunteered only to hand out the questionnaires to their subordinate teachers. The English language teachers were informed about the study’s aim by two methods; the first was verbally when their senior teachers explained to them the aim of the study and the second one was in a written form in the covering letter accompanying the questionnaire (Verma & Mallick, 1999) (See Appendix 7: The Covering Letter) and assured them that the researcher accept responsibility for maintaining confidentiality (ibid). The covering letter assured participants of their right to withhold their identities, sought their approval for recording the interviews, explained their rights to withdraw from the research at any time, and reminded them of the importance of answering interview questions honestly to ensure the research validity. Following the Exeter University ethical requirements, I assured the participants that the data collected from them would be treated in the strictest confidence and any information gathered would be used for research purposes only.

The notion of power was considered at this stage, as well. As mentioned earlier, I am a training specialist and may have caused English language teachers participating in the study some feeling of subordinancy to me, especially the inexperienced ones. Therefore, choosing to hand out the questionnaires to their senior teachers provided a comfortable atmosphere and familiarity between the participants and their senior teachers. Another reason for doing so is that I needed to share the responsibility of distributing the questionnaires with other people who are also experienced and helpful; to gain transferability of the data collected (Phillips, 1998; Thapar-Bjorket & Henry, 2004).

4.7. Trustworthiness and Authenticity of the Study

Issues related to both validity and reliability were thoroughly thought of regarding the whole process of the research study, starting from the methodology and ending with the conclusions and recommendations, encompassing all of the process of the study (Bryman, 2003). However, different writers (Altheide & Johnson, 1998; Leininguer, 1985)
argued that it is necessary to specify terms of establishing and assessing the quality of qualitative research that provide an alternative to reliability and validity, and proposed *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 &1989; Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Guba and Lincoln (1981) stated that while all research must have ‘truth value’, ‘applicability’, ‘consistency’, and ‘neutrality’ in order to be considered worthwhile, the nature of knowledge within the rationalistic (or quantitative) paradigm is different from the knowledge in naturalistic (qualitative) paradigm. Consequently, each paradigm requires paradigm-specific criteria for addressing ‘rigor’ or ‘trustworthiness’, Guba and Lincoln (ibid) parallel containing four aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Within these were specific methodological strategies for demonstrating qualitative rigor, such as the audit trail, member checks when coding, categorizing, or confirming results with participants, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, structural corroboration, and referential material adequacy. Also important were the characteristics of the investigators, who must be responsive and adaptable to changing circumstances, holistic, having processional immediacy, sensitivity, and ability for clarification and summarizations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 and Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Later, Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed authenticity criteria which were unique to the constructivist assumptions and which could be used to evaluate the quality of the research beyond the methodological dimensions. While Guba warned that their criteria were “primitive” (p. 90), and should be used as a set of guidelines rather than another orthodoxy, aspects of their criteria have, in fact, been fundamental to development of standards used to evaluate the quality of the inquiry; consequently, I am going to take into account these considerations and explaining the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of this study.
4.7.1. Credibility
Lincoln & Guba (1989) argue that in qualitative research, credibility is established when the researcher makes the constructed realities in the interpretation of the data match the constructed realities of the research participants. Robson (2002), as well, states that the information the researcher provides on the methods used for collecting the data and their justification support the credibility of the results. Accordingly, these steps were followed to ensure the credibility of the findings: being an insider and experiencing the participants’ situation ‘prolonged involvement’ (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998 & Lincoln and Guba, 1985); seeking advice from colleagues and supervisors, and reviewing the literature to comprehend the theoretical background of my concerns; using ‘peer debriefing’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) with two of my colleagues; and finally, using ‘member checking’ or ‘respondent validation’ (Holliday, 2002) to check the data collected with participants and its analysis with colleagues from the same field.

4.7.2. Transferability
Transferability is a process that involves determining whether our conclusions may be extrapolated beyond the particular conditions of the research study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, pp.37-38). In other words, transferring the results from the sending context (Bahrain), to the receiving context (other Arabian Gulf countries) (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I think it will be critical to do so, because it is not easy to find a neighboring country with a multicultural society similar to Bahrain. Even though, Bahrain shares language, religion, and social statues with them, its openness to other cultures and nationalities is wider than of any other country in the Gulf region.

4.7.3. Dependability
Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that in order to ensure the dependability of any research study, researchers should keep a complete record of all the phases of the research process such as selection of the participants, problem formulation, field notes, interview transcripts, data analysis, and so on, in an accessible manner. Therefore, I had to keep all
the above mentioned items in both a written form and electronic form, in a safe place with more than one copy of each.

4.7.4. Conformability
I had to admit that being completely objective is impossible; therefore, I had to act in good faith by not overtly allowing my personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it (Bryman, 2003, p. 379). Thus, I asked one of my colleagues, who has an interest in the same topic, to reread, evaluate, and feedback my analysis of the data from both methods.

4.7.5. Authenticity
Lincoln and Guba (1985) added authenticity to trustworthiness and its sub-categories to raise a wider set of issues concerning the wider political impact of research. Thus, in my research and because of me being funded by the MoE to conduct a study concerning our English Language teachers, and trying to improve their pre-service and in-service training, I had to be aware of a number of issues. For example, being fair in representing different viewpoints among English Language teachers; making sure that the participants arriving at a better understanding of their situation by providing them with the results of the study; helping participants to appreciate other members in their context; providing them with ideas and recommendations to change their own situations within their context, and to engage them in the change of this context to the better; and finally, providing stakeholders with recommendations to improve the pre-service and the in-service programs.

4.8. Limitations of the Study
Any research study is subject to certain constraints or limitations, and this study included the following points which are acknowledged as its limitations:
Glense and Pesken (1992) claim that in interpretive research, subjectivity is accepted as a unique, useful, and personal quality of a research, which marks interaction between researcher and research participants. Therefore, it is expected that not all readers will agree with my interpretations, which may not be free of subjectivity but at the same time this is different from bias. Even though, the literature was used to analyze and revise these interpretations, they were analyzed on the basis of my own beliefs, values and concepts; and I am sure that I used my best knowledge to interpret the data.

Using closed-ended questions in the questionnaires also had its limitations. This type of questions proved its usefulness by asking for fixed responses, which caused the need to select the answer from a given multiple choice; however, it prevented the participants from providing elaboration or justification for their choice. As Cohen et al. (2007) emphasize many participants who did not have the chance to take part in the interviewing stage, might wish to add deep insights about the issues under investigations.

The timing of distributing the questionnaire represents a limitation to this study. Participants were busy with the first semester final exams, which included finalizing their students’ grades and taking turns in monitoring the students taking exams, in addition to the work that had to be completed before their midterm break.

4.9. Overview of the Study’s Objectives, Design and Methods

In this study a great effort was made to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness. The research questions were linked carefully to the most appropriate research design, and the most suitable methods to achieve the objectives of this study and provide answers to the research questions were selected. My study’s objectives were addressed in two ways. First, by using semi-structured interviews with English language senior teachers, which were used to develop the questionnaire; and second, using a questionnaire distributed amongst English language teachers. The aims of the study led to both developing the
research questions, and the objectives mentioned above. The research questions were a result of both the literature review, and the theoretical frame work. On the other hand, the theoretical framework and the objectives of the study led me to build my methodology and choose the suitable methods, and instruments. The appropriate decision of using interviews and a questionnaire was helpful in collecting rich data for analysis, which in turn helped to ensure accurate end results and conclusions.

4.10. Conclusion
In this chapter I presented methods, design, rationale, and a detailed account of how this empirical research was carried out. I included the two stages of data collections (a questionnaire and interviews), their advantages and disadvantages; their piloting phases; their implementation; and their reliability and validity. I also explained the data analysis methods, which in the next chapter will provide the basis for a detailed discussion of the findings from both research instruments. And finally, the trustworthiness, the authenticity and limitations of this research study were discussed.
Chapter 5

Data Analysis and Discussion

The main focus of the present study is to explore secondary teachers’ perception towards teaching ICC in ELC. In chapter 4 I focused on the methodological framework of my study, where I discussed its methods, instruments, and data analysis techniques. This chapter presents the findings from the interviews and questionnaires, in order to answer my research questions:

1. How do English language teachers understand and define the concepts ‘Culture’ and ICC in ELT?
2. To what extent do the teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom?
3. How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms?
4. What preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?

As was outlined in section 4.4 of Chapter 4, the data collecting procedures consisted of a preliminary investigation, which influenced my questionnaire adaptation. It involved 4 semi-structured interviews with secondary level English language teachers, which aimed to obtain information about their current teaching of ICC in their language classrooms, and their perception of this competency (See Appendix 11: Interview Sample of the Preliminary Investigation Themes). Here I gained thorough insights into teachers’ awareness of issues related to teaching ICC in their classrooms and found out what the teachers perceived as achievable, or indeed, what they would like to achieve. From this investigation I successfully obtained five main themes and sub-themes that were used to modify Sercu et al.’s (2005) questionnaire, which was distributed amongst English language teachers. This was followed by semi-structured interviews, which were conducted with English language senior teachers. The following table shows the themes obtained from the preliminary investigation, and sub-themes obtained from the study’s participants (Table 5.1).
The findings of both data collection tools have been organized in a number of sections: Section 5.1 is an introduction to explore the teachers’ familiarity and contact with English speaking culture(s). Then section 5.2 concerns teachers’ perception of culture, ICU, and ICC, which is relevant to RQ1; section 5.3 is related to RQ2 and discusses to what extent teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom. Section 5.4, which is relevant to RQ3, discusses teachers’ practice of teaching ICC. Then section 5.5 concerns teachers’ training and professional development, which is relevant to RQ4.

First, I will introduce a description of the interviewees (English language Senior Teachers Participated in the Study: See Table 4.2), and questionnaire respondents (English language Teachers Participated in the Study: See Table 4.1). The study sample for the questionnaire’ consisted of 197 participants, 95 male, and 102 female. The following table 5.2 shows the distribution of the sample according to the variables of the study:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Questionnaire's Frequency and Percentage</th>
<th>Interviews' Frequency and Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>95 (48.2%)</td>
<td>9 (52.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>102 (51.8%)</td>
<td>8 (47.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30</td>
<td>36 (18.3%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>121 (61.4%)</td>
<td>8 (47.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 40</td>
<td>40 (20.3%)</td>
<td>9 (52.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>197 (100%)</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA(Ed. Included)</td>
<td>132 (67.0%)</td>
<td>5 (29.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Ed. Diploma</td>
<td>55 (27.9%)</td>
<td>12 (70.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>10 (5.1%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>197 (100%)</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>59 (29.9%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>73 (37.1%)</td>
<td>7 (41.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 15</td>
<td>65 (33.0%)</td>
<td>10 (58.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>197 (100%)</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.2) Distribution of the Sample According to the Study’s Variables: Gender, Age, Qualifications and Experience for both Questionnaire and Interviews.

Table 5.2 shows that males and females are equally represented in both the first and the second stage of data collection. Responses to the questionnaires represented 84.1% of the total number of questionnaires distributed amongst English language teachers; this is a significant indication of how important this topic is to them, and their willingness to discuss it. In addition, 60.1% of the participants have a teaching experience of more than 8 years and 61.4% of the total sample is between 31-40 years old, which suggests a level of maturity and awareness of the teaching matters in their classrooms, as well as their understanding of the implications of teaching ICC.
Interviewees in Table 4.2 represented 65.3% of the total number of English language senior teachers in the 26 Bahraini secondary schools participating in this study (see chapter 4.4.1.3). 52.9% of them were more than 40 years old, while the rest were more than 30 years old; 58.8% of the participants have more than 15 years of experience, and none of them had less than 8 years of experience in teaching the language. This is important as it indicates that the senior teachers are experienced, as is required by the MoE (2010) that they have a minimum of a higher diploma to qualify for the position, and not less than 7 years of experience.

5.1. Exploring Teachers’ Familiarity and Contact with English Culture(s)

This section, explores the English language teachers’ and senior teachers’ familiarity with the English culture(s) they are teaching, and their contacts with representatives of those cultures inside or outside of Bahrain. First, I set the scene for both questionnaire respondents and interviewees by asking the questionnaire respondents about the countries mentioned in their textbooks, and the interviewees about their personal motives for being English language teachers (See 5.3 for theme 1 and sub-themes emerging from both research tools):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 1: Exploring Senior Teachers Familiarity and Contact with English Culture(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) I love the English language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) My English language teacher had a good influence on me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Becoming an English language teacher was just chance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Outside Bahrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourists stays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Inside Bahrain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.3) Rationale for English language Teachers Familiarity and Contact with English Culture(s)
5.1.1. Setting the Scene

5.1.1.1. Cultures in the Textbooks

Respondents were asked which countries are mentioned in the textbook; most of them named two or more countries. In order to answer this question I calculated frequency and percentage for the responses of sample (See Table 5.4):

Table 5.4 shows that, significantly, UK and USA are most frequently mentioned with percentages of 79.7% and 68% respectively, followed by Bahrain with 44.2%. What is interesting is the considerable range of countries mentioned by teachers and the textbook, which gives an indication that the textbook is trying to present different cultures from the five continents in order to build a cultural awareness among students, as well as their teachers.

5.1.1.2. Teachers’ Personal Motives for becoming Language Teachers

The majority of the interviewees (14) stated that their love of the English language and interest in teaching it, were strong motives to choose it as a career; as one said:
“First of all, I was interested in the English language, and I was doing well at it; besides my interest in its poetry, novels, and its vocabulary made me love it as a language. When I entered the university I had different choices according to my good grades at high school. But I chose English because I love it, even though, I could’ve taken other tracks which I would benefit from financially better than being an English language teacher.” M1

While five interviewees mentioned that their English language teachers had a considerable influence in their loving the language, and they were trying to imitate how they have been taught when they were students:

“Actually, since I was a young child I liked English language and liked my English language teacher as well. She was very kind, which made me like the language more. I tried to improve myself in the language; it was personal reason, I wanted to be an English language teacher.” F6

However, only three interviewees said that they chose teaching English as a career by chance. Even though they liked the language itself, they wished to have another job other than being teachers:

“It was a coincidence. I loved the English language since I was young, but I couldn’t finish my studies in English major for some reasons.” F3

All interviewees said that their use of the internet, either as a part of their job or as an interest, encouraged them to improve their language and their communication with other people around the world.

5.1.1.3. Teachers’ Contact with English Speaking People/Countries/Cultures

(i) Outside Bahrain

Questionnaire respondents were asked to answer Q.A.2 about frequency of travelling to English speaking countries to explore how familiar they were with English speaking culture(s), and their answers were as follow (see Table 5.5):
Exploring English Language Teachers’ Perception

Q.A.2 How frequently do you travel to any English speaking countries?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How frequently do you travel to any English speaking countries?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Means (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Participation in teacher training programs or language courses.</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>1.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Tourist stays (lasting longer than two days) in the English speaking country.</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>1.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Visits to relatives or friends.</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>1.347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Work visits, e.g. within the framework of an exchange project.</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>1.328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>School trips (one or two weeks).</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>1.223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.5) Responses about the Frequency of Traveling to English Speaking Countries

What is interesting in the above information is the fact that the main motive for travel was participation in courses; this may mean that teachers had less contact with locals than with their colleagues on the trip; however, they still have had some contact with locals on their tourist trips.

Out of the seventeen interviewees nine mentioned travelling to English speaking countries, mainly Britain (6), India (2), and USA (1), as well as shorter tourist stays. The other eight interviewees said that they did not get the chance to travel abroad, although they were aware that it could have helped them in acquiring the accent and the language teaching methodologies of those countries:

“Maybe the methods they are using might be different than what we are using. Even the learning styles are different and I may get an idea of how they do it there, and how I will deal with students.” F2

(ii) Inside Bahrain

Questionnaire respondents were asked about their contact with English speaking countries and people within Bahrain. They answered as follows:
Table 5.6 shows that the highest contact comes through the media (via newspapers, television, or radio) with a mean of 2.548 and standard deviation of 0.673. This indicates that the main contact with English speaking culture(s) is limited to secondary sources. It is an artificial contact with the target culture(s) and lacks real life situations or contact with real representatives of those cultures. The other source of contact with English culture(s) is with people originating from English speaking countries who live in Bahrain, which is a limited source of contact, because those people may not represent the whole society that they came from.

During the interviews, participants also mentioned that they also had direct contact with native speakers inside Bahrain. For example 2 male interviewees mentioned that they used to work for years in the private sector, where most teachers and students are from English speaking countries:

“I worked in Bahrain school for 16 years as a teacher of Arabic as a foreign language and my communication was with Americans, because it is an American private school. During my work there I had a direct contact with Americans and other teachers from different nationalities.”
M7

5.1.1.4. Discussion

It is important to note that this section is not directly relevant to my RQs as much as it is setting the scene for my study participants, by exploring their familiarity with English language culture(s) they are teaching, and which will have some bearing on the results
that follow. Regarding teachers’ knowledge, English language teachers expected to be sufficiently familiar with the culture(s) of the language they teach. It is also important that the contacts they have with such cultures expected to be both varied and frequent. Moreover, they are expected to know their own culture and hold culture- general knowledge, which could help them in explaining the similarities and differences between their own culture and the culture they are teaching to their own students (Sercu, 2006, pp. 61-62 & Kramsch, 2004, p.42).

When asked about the countries they associate the English language with, the participants viewed themselves as being mostly familiar with the UK and the USA. They said that their textbooks mentioned different cultures from all over the world to build their students’ cultural awareness (Sercu, 2006). They also talked about their motives of being English language teachers, and luckily, most of them had contact with speakers of the target language, either outside, or inside Bahrain with other representatives of the language. It is significant that almost all of the teachers often have culture contact through the media (ibid, 2003, p.116). This indicates that teachers are aware of, and familiar with, TC they are presenting to students, and that the textbooks do not ignore such awareness or familiarity in their content. This familiarity with TC suggests that teachers are equipped with the knowledge listed by Edelhoff (1987, cited in Sercu, 1988) for intercultural FLT, and with Byram’s (2003) saviors (See chapter 3.5.2).

5.2. Teachers’ Perception of Culture, Intercultural Understanding, and Intercultural Competency

Data elicited from preliminary interviews provided me with a list of themes which were then used to formulate the relevant items in the questionnaire. I will emerge data from interviews with data from the questionnaire. Thus the interview data provided richer results, but the questionnaire data gave support in numbers (See table 5.7 for theme 2 and sub-themes emerging from both research tools):
### 5.2.1. Teachers’ Definition of Culture

I made it clear in my interviews that I was not interested in general dictionary definitions of culture, but how they personally perceive it in the context of ELT. The majority of interviewees (N=17) asked me whether culture in ELT is something different from culture in general, whereas the others did not seem to reflect on this to any great extent. This lack of reflection can be traced in many answers, which indicates that they do not see a clear difference between culture in ELT and culture in general.

It was hardly surprising, in view of the discussion in Chapter 3, that the majority of the interviewees perceived culture as something not complex and definable with two or three words only. Few interviewees were of the firm view that culture is something all-embracing that should be experienced. One interviewee put it like this:

> “Culture is a wide concept that we have to embrace different things within it. As a term, I think it is to know something of everything and in my specialty is to know everything about one thing” M2

However, most of the participants made serious attempts to come to terms with the multifaceted concept of culture by listing element that they consider to be embedded in it, such as this interviewee’s response:
A variety of aspects are included in these responses, meaning that the same informant often contributed several different views. Although, as indicated earlier, the main emphasis in this study is not on individual variation but on variations of a more general nature, it is still possible to discern a general orientation within each respondent towards different perspectives. The first and predominate perspective involves perceiving culture as measurable products that can be transmitted to students, such as viewing culture as knowledge (factual) and skills. A further category emerges as a view of culture entailing a change in perspective. These will be illustrated below.

5.2.1.1. Culture as a Factual Knowledge

(i) Knowledge of the World

Among the 17 interviewees, ten described culture in terms of facts about history, geography, religion and political conditions of the English-speaking countries, while another seven interviewees regarded folkloristic features as traditions and ways of life as an essential part of culture. In fact, this behavioral view of culture appears to predominate among my interviewees, who tend to describe it from two different perspectives. Firstly, they talk about the ways in which festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Halloween are celebrated:

“Well, culture to me is a set of rules and traditions, and ways of life in different countries; how they live, how they act in different situations, how they celebrate their festivals, and so on. This what it means to me, and every country may differ from the other or maybe some of them will share the same culture; regulations, how they organize their lives, festivals, and celebrations, something about their beliefs, traditions, their ways of life. This is for me what culture is.” M9

Secondly, they refer to daily life with all its special habits and routines as far as school, work, leisure-time activities and family life are concerned:
“Culture to me means the civilization of a nation which includes for example, their clothes, their eating habits, how they deal with people, all these factors combined could be accepted as the culture of a nation.” M1

(ii) Cultural Products

Two interviewees referred to the art, film and music associated with the English-speaking countries. This sub-category thus involves the so-called capital-C culture or ‘cultural culture’. However, seven teachers strongly stress that these cultural expressions are just part of the wider concept of culture. Works of art are concrete, tangible things as opposed to many other aspects of culture, and teenage students’ interest in film and music can hardly be underestimated. This clearly shows that interviewees’ perception of culture is influenced by their readiness to include certain aspects of it into their own teaching. If teachers know that using films or music with their students pays off, it is easy to prefer to look at culture as just that, rather than as something they do not normally include in their classroom work and perhaps do not even know how to address in a teaching context.

(iii) Modes of Thought

This category is related to the inner, mental processes of people sharing the same culture, unlike the previous two categories which denoted outer, visible aspects of culture. Here the view can be described in terms of the values, norms and beliefs underlying the way people live and act. One interviewee described culture as:

“... a thought, it is the society or a community, it is an opinion, and it is values. Culture carries and represents all these definitions together.” F5

Interestingly, only four participants talked about ways of thinking and ways of looking at and interpreting the world as components of culture. This I take as an indication that interviewees seem to prefer views of culture as something that can be empirically observed, to views focusing on the fundamental attitudes, conceptions and beliefs that form the breeding ground for observable cultural feature. One teacher said:

“From the way a person is wearing his clothes I can see from which country he is; Europeans are different than Arabs, who are different than Asians, who are also different than Africans. How they eat or what they eat also identify each nation than the other; how they deal with
Modes of thought represent small-c culture, as defined in Chapter 3 (section 3.4), which is also known as sociocultural knowledge. All cognitions within ‘knowledge of the world’ are based on the assumption that ‘culture’ involves facts that constitute general knowledge. This category contains perceptions of culture as something that you learn as matter-of-fact truths, which is something that students should know simply for its own sake.

Data from the questionnaire revealed similarities in responses, with many respondents defining culture as a conglomeration of three aspects: the social aspects of a nation, behavioural patterns of people, and the artistic dimension of any culture (see Table 5.8):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.B.1</th>
<th>Culture is</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Means (g)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>All three of the above.</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>4.570</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The geo-political aspects of a nation (e.g. history, geography, economics and political developments)</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>4.419</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Behavioural patterns of people (e.g. Customs, daily life, standard of living, religion, etc.).</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>4.364</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The artistic dimension (e.g. literature, music, art, etc.).</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>4.045</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.8 shows that the respondents think that the definition of culture includes all of the three points given (mean of 4.570). The other rankings indicate that teachers seem to give more credit to the geo-political aspect (mean 4.419) and behavioural aspects of culture (mean 4.364), which is hoped to be introduced to their students. Even though some of the participants added their own definitions of the term “culture” in the space provided, and showed a deep reflection of what this term means to them, their definitions still indicate an understanding of culture as factual knowledge:
5.2.1.2. Culture as Skills

This category includes perceptions of culture as skills to be obtained by students to help them in their future. Furthermore, it is described as the knowledge of being familiar with how the people of TCs act in certain situations, either verbally or non-verbally. It is characterized as a procedural knowledge, where the focus is on learning how to act in an appropriate manner, not breaking the rules and conventions of the target language culture and thus inadvertently offending people. Here we have to distinguish between skills which are related to social conventions, and the skills which are related to socio-linguistic conventions. The first concerns how people sharing the same culture tend to act in certain situations, whereas the second concerns which language forms they tend to use, depending on such conditions as setting, relationship between communication partners, communicative intention, and so forth. The line between the two skills is not clear in the sense that behavioural patterns in certain social contexts very often contain linguistic elements, and the use of language is always determined by the social context. However, to illustrate the diverse views among my interviewees, the distinction to be elaborated on below, appears adequate.

(i) Social Practices

Nine interviewees (N=17) referred to behavioural habits related to specific social situations. For example, teachers have vast experience of living in the countries they mentioned. They pointed out that these are examples of behavioural patterns that are taken for granted by the target language people who may show surprised amusement at the outsider who draws attention to the behaviour. Questions of etiquette are aspects of behaviour one gradually picks up through trial and error, unless these have been informed
about or brought to attention beforehand. In the interviewees’ opinion, this type of cultural clash is often associated with situations that could be perceived as funny by both parties, and that detecting cultural differences at this behavioural level is an adventure in itself:

“I couldn’t bear seeing their cat, I mean the family I used to live with, sitting on their chair, the chair they offered me to set on. But I had to accept that and offered to feed it with my hand; even though I will never does that back home. Also the landlady explained that to me, I mean that I don’t have to be nice to her cat if I don’t want to.” M8

Another teacher mentioned that her students enjoy hearing anecdotes about her making a fool of herself in culture clash situations in England, and that they tend to remember the aspect of British culture involved in these situations extremely well thanks to their teacher’s personal experience of them:

“I’ve learned a good lesson of how to pronounce letters correctly, especially the letters b and p. As you know, in Bahrain we have a difficulty in distinguishing between those two letters, and when I was in London with my husband, he told the policeman if he can bark his car, and the policeman said you can bark anywhere. My husband nearly lost his mind when he saw the parking ticket on our car. After discussing the incident with the policeman and how he told him that he can bark anywhere. The policeman said: yes sir you said you are going to bark, but you didn’t say I will park my car! Now my students learned how to pronounce these two letters correctly, so do I!” F1

Embedded in the utterances of the above interviewees is the idea that representative of different cultures behave differently, and that intercultural encounters are facilitated once TC behaviour is acknowledged and acquired.

(ii) Socio-linguistic Practices

Twelve interviewees mentioned culture in terms of socio-linguistic conventions in TC. Their views illustrate a clear awareness of language as a sociocultural phenomenon. Perceptions within this category concern register differences, related to how and in what contexts certain expressions are used, as well as phrases of politeness and conventionalized linguistic responses in general. Three teachers stressed the importance of using *please* and *thank you* appropriately, and pointed out that since politeness
conventions differ from one culture to another, they are frequent sources of misunderstanding, as this teacher explains:

“Most of our students are not using the words please and thank you, not because they are not polite, it is because in the Arabic language the tone of your voice could say the word without pronouncing it. I try to teach my students that they should say the words literally, because it is the right way to ask someone.” M2

5.2.1.3. Culture as a Bi-directional Belief

Six interviewees (N=17) see culture as more than knowledge and know-how related to TCs. The necessity of learning about and knowing the students’ own culture is stressed and seen as a prerequisite for relating the two to each other on equal terms. In other words, awareness of their own cultural background is considered a necessary basis for more or less conscious comparisons which the students will make when encountering other cultures. Knowing why representatives of familiar culture and the foreign culture(s) act the way they do is seen as enabling a deeper understanding of similarities and differences, which is clear in the quote from this interviewee:

“We try to teach them how to distinguish between bad and good examples of the target culture personalities and compare with their own culture. Also they should learn how to be tolerant with others to understand why they are acting in that or this way.” F5

The cultural content of ELT is, hence, described not only in terms of the English-speaking culture(s) and other cultures from the perceptions of the students’ culture, but also trying to observe their own culture from the beliefs of the English-speaking culture(s) and any other cultures. Both are explicitly present and taken into consideration in the teaching situation:

“It is very important for me to teach it in my classroom for different reasons, for example, a person may face a certain situation which is in his culture is inappropriate, but for someone else it is ok. Sometime it will lead to a misunderstanding, this person wonders why the other one treated me in that way or why did this happen, it is what we call culture clash! That’s why the student should understand that this kind of action maybe not acceptable to me but it is acceptable to the other person. Learning about culture will lead the two persons to deal with each other in a civilized way, and understand the circumstances that lead each one to act in this way. For me it is very important to raise my students’ awareness about such situation to spare them any cultural shocks that may happen to them when they interact with native speakers.” M1
Consequently, this perception differs from the perceptions in ‘social practices’ and ‘socio-linguistic practice’ in two respects: firstly, it represents more deliberate attention to the student’s own culture, and secondly, it requires putting oneself in somebody else’s shoes and taking the viewpoint of the other. This is challenging, especially as it requires putting emotions and attitudes at stake. The following excerpt may serve as an illustration:

“I believe that I should not, as a teacher who respects his career, classroom, and his students, to go deep in some cultural aspects, because students at this age are very curious to know everything, but the English language classroom is not the suitable place to raise or answer all their inquiries about the native speaker culture and their religious differences. I prefer to concentrate on our own culture and let them work out the differences and the barriers between their culture and the native speaker’s culture. However, I give them some good examples of the native speakers’ culture, such as how to be organized, taking more care about the scientific research, how to respect time instead of presenting sides that do not agree with their own culture.” M7

5.2.2. Teachers’ Definition of the Intercultural Understanding

During the interviews, respondents were asked their views as to what ICU means. Their answers covered a range of themes, as outlined below. It should be indicated that this item was not included in the questionnaire.

1. Universality of Humanity

Eight interviewees (N=17) mentioned that the main thing that ICU represents to them was that we, as humans, should understand others and know their culture(s):

“I believe that we are humans, and come from one source; we are all brothers, even though we are different in culture, in our political stances, in our religions, but at the end we should treat each others as humans. My main aim when I teach English is to show my students that you have to deal with others on human basis, and never let your cultural or religious back ground affect this way of dealing. The others are human even if he or she is affected by different political issues we are still humans.” M1

2. A way of Communication

Two other interviewees stated that ICU is the way we communicate with other people from another culture and how this could affect our perceptions towards each other:
“I will define it as cross culture? Yes I will define it as this. People in different countries have their own cultures, and people usually exchange these good things. If it is a good practice in any country why don’t we have it here? If we have good practices why don’t we share it with others? Showing other people that we have a good culture, and so on; this is, I think, normal for humanity, sharing good experiences.” M6

3. Building Respect and Appreciation

Two other interviewees mentioned how important is to understand the other cultures in building respect and appreciation between the two cultures, theirs and the TCs, as these female interviewee said:

“For me I think is to appreciate the others; to know that we are not right all the time; I’m not talking about the religion because when it come to religion I’m pretty sure that we are right so I don’t discuss that with my students, but when it come to their traditions or other things, I think I want my students to appreciate and to know that they think differently from us. It is their culture, maybe it is odd for us or unacceptable in our society but it is their culture.” F7

5.2.3. Teachers’ Definition of Intercultural Competence

I asked interviewees to define ICC in order to explore their understanding of the term and their usage of it in their classroom. Out of seventeen interviewees nine showed their concern of how their students are exposed to blurred image of the target culture(s), either through media, or foreigners they meet in their daily life, and they wanted to be the trustworthy source of those culture(s) to their students. They wanted to present culture the way they understood it, and appreciated, as teachers of the target language, such as this teacher:

“I tried hard to show them (students) that it is their culture (target culture), and that doesn’t mean that they are not good people. No, it’s their culture and this how they live, and we have our own culture that we have to keep it that way. I think they need more; if it only in the school, it will be guided, but they are exposed to it on the internet and TV which not safe in my opinion. I’d rather give them aspects of culture and show them the bright side of what they see on TV.” M4

Another seven interviewees mentioned their understanding of ICC as a way of preparing their students to meet other culture(s), to build good relationships and ability to communicate with representatives of those cultures, like these teachers here:
“ICC, I think it is the ability to communicate between cultures, especially now, because of the changes in the political system, the people, the culture, there are changes every day. So many new things are coming to our countries, to our culture; therefore we should know that and work with it. Students need to be aware of it and build good relationships with different people, which will help them later on in their future life.” M8

Two other interviewees explained that their understanding of ICC is a tool which makes you strong and able to explain and justify yourself to others:

“I always concentrate on things related to social or religious background, as you know I’m a tour guide in a mosque, so it is important to me to do so. For example if a students studying abroad and been asked what can you tell us about Islam? And he said that we don’t eat pork and we don’t drink alcohol. Is that it? Is that what he knows about Islam? Maybe he doesn’t know about Islam, or he doesn’t know how to express his beliefs in the language itself. So, we have been asked lots of times about terrorism and women’s rights, what are going to say? Why Islam? Why we are called Muslims? Why we aren’t called Muhammadans? So, sometime I try to raise their awareness about such a thing.” M3

Additionally, the questionnaire respondents’ were asked about ICC and their responses were as follow (See Table 5.9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.B.2</th>
<th>Intercultural Competence is</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Means (6)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>How to communicate interculturally with others.</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.304</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>It is how two different cultures relate to each other in terms of differences and similarities.</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.964</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A field of research that studies how people understand each other across group boundaries.</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.895</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Analyzing and adapting ones behaviour when interacting with others.</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.806</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Non-judgmental communication with other cultures.</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.647</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9 shows that the most important aspect for respondents is to teach their students how to communicate with others (mean 4.304). However, understanding the students’ own culture was not ranked highly (mean of 3.806), which was the same as the senior teachers’ opinion. A space was left in this question intentionally, so the respondents could express their views about how they define ICC. Respondents stressed understanding and being familiar with other cultures’ beliefs and attitudes, and how the
individuals of those cultures behave in their daily lives, which will help teachers teaching their students how to express their own culture. ICC to most of them is a way of how two or more cultures work together alongside each other, and try to live peacefully by mutual understanding.

“It is healthy to know about other cultures to avoid misunderstanding probably, and also to compare and contrast and deduce things about ourselves.”

5.2.4. Discussion

RQ1 is exploring how the English language teachers understand and define the concepts ‘Culture’ and ICC in ELT. Most teachers concentrated on defining culture as a surface culture and as a tool to build their students’ cultural awareness. They mentioned that the most important aspect in dealing with culture as skills is how to keep in their students’ minds the validity of social and socio-linguistic practices that may help them in the encounters with TCs (Hubernere, 1965). They identified culture as factual knowledge being transmitted either from the teacher, or the textbook, to the student, where the English culture(s) only is in focus and the cultural content of teaching is considered to be on a par with the information (Byram & Risager, 1999). This image partly represents what Porto (2009) described about the surface of the cultural iceberg, and relates to the definition of culture mentioned also by Hubernere (1965) anthropological dimension; Chastain (1976) and Doyé (1999) small c culture; Robinson’s (1985) behaviorist definition; and Triandis’s (1989) objective culture; where culture is defined as the behavioural patterns, customs, daily life, standard of living, and religion.

Some of the teachers appreciated the deep definition of the culture and claimed that so much within culture goes undetected and therefore, it is often ignored within our lives and work (Al Qahtani, 2004). They welcomed the idea of using this deep knowledge in supporting their students’ understanding of TC, and their own culture. Teachers described culture as skills; where the English culture is still in focus, but now the student’s own culture is also presented. Here teachers are bringing Hubernere (1965) social dimension; Chastain (1976) and Doyé (1999) big C culture; and Triandis (1989) subjective culture
into play; where teachers are getting deeper in explaining culture to their students by presenting TC history, geography, political development, and ideas and values, and explaining how those may affect their own culture and their understanding of TCs.

Only a few teachers pointed how important it is to accept culture as a bi-directional belief, which will help their students’ cultural awareness (Sercu et al., 2005). They described culture as consisting of additional element in the form of awareness of the students’ culture and how this might be perceived from the horizon of other cultures in general and TCs in particular. Teachers here are taking Robinson’s (1985) cognitive dimension of culture into consideration, even though they do not have a theoretical explanation to it. It is a kind of ambition they want to achieve by presenting a deeper explanation of culture in their classrooms, and preparing their students for intercultural encounters. The underlying idea here is that intercultural encounters may be enriched by all cultures taking part. The main differences between the three conceptions are illustrated in Figure 5.1:

![Figure 5.1: The Differences between the three Perceptions of Culture](image)

Significantly, teachers’ definition of ICU and ICC reflect Byram’s (2003) savoirs and savoir être in building their students’ curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about their own culture; and building their students’ knowledge of social groups, their products and their practices, which Kramsch
(2004) described as the go-between mediating role of the language teacher. This reflection may prepare students to be more open to the idea of universality of humanity, being empathetic with others, and being prepared to justify self.

5.3. The Importance of ICC and its Teaching Objectives

By analyzing the data from both instruments, I was able to see the place of ICC within the objectives English language teachers had for teaching it in their classes, and I divided them into three categories. The categories respectively concern general skills objectives; language teaching objectives; and culture teaching objectives. In the next part each of these categories is explained according to data obtained during the interviews, and from the responses to the seven statements in the relevant section of the questionnaire (Q.A.4). But first I will explain the place of culture in ELT from respondents’ perspective, and at the end I will discuss how teachers perceive the teaching of ICC in their classrooms (See Table 5.10 for Theme 3 and sub-themes emerged from both research tools):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 3: The Importance of ICC and its Teaching Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Place of Culture in ELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How Teachers Perceive the Teaching of ICC in their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. The importance of introducing culture in ELT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The relationship between other cultures and Islamic culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>General Teaching Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Language Teaching Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Culture Teaching Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The knowledge dimension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The skills dimension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The attitudinal dimension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.10) Rationale for the Importance of ICC and its Teaching Objectives

5.3.1. The Place of Culture in ELT

With regard to the place of culture in ELT and how they perceive it in their classrooms, interviewees gave different views.

1. The Importance of Introducing Culture in ELT

Six interviewees mentioned how important it is to teach TC to their students because it is impossible to separate a language from its culture, as this teacher said:
“I think it is very important to present the target culture to our students. Whenever I have the chance I do present it. You know that you can’t present a language only as a language, what if they want to understand an idiom? They should know about its origin, which means to know about the culture of this language.” 3M

Moreover, four interviewees mentioned how they present TC indirectly to their students’ only if it contrasts with their own culture and they need to understand what this aspect means to them:

“It is important to introduce culture in our classrooms, even if it is not direct, but our students need to know about the target culture. They should be aware of what is it, especially if it contrasted with their own culture. We should show them the meaning of it and how to deal with it” 6F

2. The Relationship between other Cultures and Islamic Culture

Four interviewees mentioned that it is important for them to present aspects of TC in their classrooms and relate them to their students own culture, in order to show the similarities and differences between both. It might be as an appreciation of the students’ own culture or understanding TC. It is stated in the following excerpt:

“I present it and show my students the differences and similarities between our culture and theirs. It is important not to judge other people from another culture before you understand their life and how they deal with different things.” 4M

Six interviewees stressed the effect of teaching TC on the students’ own Islamic culture and what kind of effect they expect, and prefer, their students to have after being exposed to it, as this interviewee stated:

“Well, for me there is sensitivity in teaching different cultures in Bahrain, especially, because many things in the other cultures are not accepted in our culture….. We are an Islamic country, and anything that affects our Islam is treated as very sensitive, and in this case we have to modify or delete it from the book. So this is very sensitive, but I don’t mind teaching any good practices, or let’s say good reflections of the other cultures.” 6M
5.3.2. Teaching Objectives

5.3.2.1. General Teaching Objectives

All of the interviewees agreed that the English language is an international language which could not be associated with only one or two countries. It is an important language of science and technology, as one pointed out:

“It is an international language and the language of culture and science as well. We use it in our everyday life and to communicate with other nations. It is the language of change and evolution either in us or around us.” 5F

Five interviewees mentioned the importance of English language for academic study, as one teacher said:

“They need to communicate; also it is for their future, to get a job, to study in the university. Most if not all the subjects are in English except the Arabic major or Islamic studies.” 8M

The respondents of the questionnaire also showed that the most important objective to them in this category is how to assist their students to acquire skills which will be useful in other subjects and areas, and also in their daily lives, which scored 4.268 (See Table 5.11 for General Teaching Objectives).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.A.4</th>
<th>General Teaching Objectives</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Mean (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Assist my students to acquire skills that will be useful in other subject areas and in their daily lives.</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>3.839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were keen to promote learning skills that will help their students to learn other FLs. Teachers were interested in developing skills that would help their students in learning other subjects, including other languages, and be useful in their daily lives.
5.3.2.2. Language Teaching Objectives

Two interviewees talked about “traditional teaching” and how they themselves had experienced it, and were determined to give their own students something different, they were hoping to change this way of teaching by improving their own teaching techniques:

“We were taught in the traditional way, teachers used to come to the class to teach and leave, but my vision is actually making a difference, leave something in the minds of my students. When I teach I don’t teach only from the book, there are things beyond the book which could be taught, and a teacher can make there something. Students would leave with the knowledge, but with some questions that would change their personalities, maybe in the future, make them rethink about certain things.”

All interviewees experienced a change in focus during their teaching careers, to become more focused on their students’ and their needs and wants, rather than too focused on their own teaching style. This change was a result of various reasons, such as gaining experience through their teaching years, the rapid changes around the globe, and wanting to help their students to get a good job:

“My aim at the beginning was to raise my self-confidence and to become a good teacher, to come up with great teaching ideas and methods which will attract all the students. But now, once I got older, I’m focusing more on the students and focusing on their weak points, giving them chance to write their own aims and goals for their future; I’m concentrating more on students.”

As can be seen from the questionnaire data illustrated in Table 5.12 below, respondents agreed that the most important objective to them in this category was motivating their students to learn English, which scored 4.633, and assisting them to acquire a level of proficiency in the language itself, which scored 4.349. If their students are not motivated enough in the language, they are not going to be able to learn it or its culture (See Table 5.12 for language teaching objectives).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.A.4</th>
<th>Language Teaching Objectives</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Mean (S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Motivate my students to learn English.</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Assist my students to acquire a level of proficiency in the English language.</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197
Table (5.12) Language Teaching Objectives

5.3.2.3. Culture Teaching Objectives

The majority, 16 of the interviewees, said that the most important objective for them is to teach their students how to communicate within the understanding of English as an international language and with others using it:

“I’m teaching the language to communicate, this is my main objective, the objective that is how to communicate with others using the English language as a tool.” 1M

Six interviewees mentioned that they do their best to improve their students’ ICC skills because this is the main skill students need to either express themselves to others, or comprehend what others are saying and, therefore, enabling them to become aware of other culture(s):

“The first thing is to equip my student with a tool that helps them in their daily life, and make them fluent in the language itself. I would like them to understand that this language is the language of the second part of the world and they have to acquire it. If they knew it they will understand the cultures of other countries, and can express themselves and talk to people about their own culture.” 5F

Another interviewee said that the MoE’s objectives since 2003, which advises teachers to implement teaching culture and concentrates on different values to be taught to students, gave her the opportunity to change her priorities in teaching students to be aware of those objectives:

“It is necessary to understand their own values and to know how to accept their way of thinking and also the others way of thinking, and how to accept others and their rituals. Tolerance is very important in this time, especially when the MoE is concentrating on the values and how to enrich them within students’ personalities.” 5F
One interviewee mentioned that living in a multicultural society is a good opportunity to be aware of how important it is for her students to acquire the English language, which will enable them to communicate with other people from different cultures:

"Because of the technological development, what we call the expansion of business, the multiple communities we have here in Bahrain, and moreover, is just the fact nobody can get a job unless they can speak English." 7M

Questionnaire respondents agreed that the most important objective for them in this category is how they can assist their students in developing a better understanding of their own identity, with a mean of 4.400, before they promote their students’ familiarity with English speaking cultures (mean 4.169) (See Table 5.1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.A.4</th>
<th>Culture Teaching Objectives</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Mean(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Assist my students in developing a better understanding of their own identity and culture.</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Promote my students’ familiarity with English speaking cultures.</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>4.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Promote the acquisition of an open mind and positive disposition towards unfamiliar cultures.</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>4.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.13) Culture Teaching Objectives

From Table 5.13 we can see that the respondents decided that promoting the acquisition of an open mind and positive disposition towards unfamiliar cultures is less important than understanding the students’ own culture and the target culture (mean 4.005). This objective indicates that respondents agreed that students need to understand themselves and their identities before they start to understand other cultures.
5.3.3. How Teachers Perceive the Teaching of ICC in their Classrooms

The interviewees were encouraged to reflect on their aims for including, or not, cultural aspects in their teaching. Those teachers who felt they do not integrate culture in their teaching talked more generally about why cultural issues should be introduced, whereas all others described what they personally think their task is, as far as the teaching of culture is concerned. Some teachers did not address this topic explicitly, in which case I tried to elicit their views by reading between the lines, and drawing upon what they said in relation to their views of culture and their description of their teaching.

As a result, I have distinguished three dimensions:

1. The knowledge dimension of ICC;
2. The skills dimension of ICC; and
3. The attitudinal dimension of ICC.

It should be mentioned that one and the same teacher may represent more than one view, and that my purpose is not to categorize teachers but perceptions and beliefs, regardless of which respondents they happen to stem from. Since the perception throughout this study is that of the teachers, the objectives emerging from the data are formulated in terms of teacher process, rather than student achievements.

5.3.3.1. The Knowledge Dimension

In this dimension teachers are strive to transmit information about the English speaking countries. The students are to acquire factual knowledge in the form of cultural information, (Capital C culture) and ways of living and thinking (Small c culture) (Chastain, 1976, p.338 & Doyé, 1999, p.19). The objectives can be characterized as descriptive. The teachers speak of general background information that all people which have the compulsory education should possess, regardless of whether or not they will ever meet a native speaker of the target culture, or intend to visit the country in question.
They see their task first and foremost as transmitting knowledge to their students. This view of the cultural objectives is reflected in the frustration that eight interviewees said they experience due to the fact that they do not know enough about TCs. Neither have they spent enough or any time in English speaking countries, in order to be able to share their insights with their students. Consequently, they spend a lot of time searching for appropriate material that would help them convey the basic facts. The following excerpt may illustrate the essence of this category:

“*I think as an English language teacher should be competent in the English language, and should be, of course competent in the target culture. I believe that being a part of the target culture is very important; either by being there, or bringing a group of native speakers of the language from different majors and careers to make it possible for teachers to communicate with them and acquire their language and culture.*” M4

With regard to questionnaire data, in Q.C.7 I wanted respondents to indicate how extensively they deal with particular cultural aspects of TCs, because the time they devote to those different aspects can provide insights to the way in which teachers actually shape the teaching of culture and ICC in their classrooms. Therefore, I asked them to rank the statements in table 5.14 according to frequency of use from 1 (never) to 3 (frequently):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.C.7</th>
<th>How extensively do you deal with particular cultural aspects?</th>
<th>Means (3)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Daily life and routines, food and drink etc.</td>
<td>2.393</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Education, professional life.</td>
<td>2.314</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Youth culture.</td>
<td>2.294</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Traditions, folklore, tourist attractions.</td>
<td>2.216</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Values and beliefs.</td>
<td>2.190</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Literature.</td>
<td>2.119</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Other cultural expressions (music, drama, art).</td>
<td>2.097</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>History, geography, political system.</td>
<td>2.057</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>International relations (political, economic and cultural), with students’ own country and other countries.</td>
<td>1.985</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Different ethnic and social groups.</td>
<td>1.933</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.14) Means for the Responses about the Frequency of Dealing with Particular Cultural Aspects
We can indicate from the above table that respondents deal most extensively with ‘daily life and routines’, ‘education and professional life, ‘youth culture’, and ‘traditions, folklore, and tourist attraction’ which scored a mean of 2.393, 2.314, 2.294, and 2.216 respectively. Some of them deal with ‘International relations (political, economic and cultural), with students’ own country and other countries’ and ‘different ethnic and social groups’ which scored a mean of 1.985 and 1.933 respectively. Interestingly, the topics that respondents say they work with most extensively are also the topics which the textbooks stress (See Appendix 1 and 2). Teachers teach by the textbook and the topics covered are the ones dealt with in class. The topics which are not extensively explored in the textbooks, such as international relations and different ethnic and social groups, do not feature extensively in classrooms.

5.3.3.2. The Skills Dimension

Within this dimension interviewees see it as their duty to provide their students with abilities of how to manage in direct contacts with people from the English culture(s). It is an approach which is built on the idea that conflict situations should be predicted in order to be avoided. As a result, their students should learn how to act appropriately and respond adequately in intercultural situations, and therefore, should be made aware of rules of conduct and of the pragmatic aspects of linguistic proficiency. In this case, the teaching objective is seen as making the students aware of the social and socio-linguistic practices of the target culture, implying that they should adapt themselves to TC in order to have better chances of coping and blending in. Consequently, the students will learn a repertoire of behaviour and manners as well as a mass of phrases that are typically used in specific situations. Teachers talked about the necessity of giving students adequate practice in common every-day situations:

“I give my students some back ground information and skills about how a man deals with a woman in UK or USA; how they open the door and let women go inside a room first.” TM
This view of cultural objectives of teaching appears to aim more at providing the students with ‘tools’ for functioning within TCs, than at developing ways of encountering cultures in general.

5.3.3. The Attitudinal Dimension

Here the culture-teaching objectives are described in terms of reducing ethnocentricity by working against stereotypes and prejudiced views of other cultures. Two interviewees referred to racist expressions from students, and suggested that context that these often stem from the homes. Since teenagers are at a stage of development where they tend to be receptive to different kinds of influence, fostering tolerance is seen as especially important at the secondary level. At the same time, interviewees warned against allowing the teaching process to become too colored by the teacher’s own views, and stress the necessity of letting the students form their own views. Interviewees said that students should learn to respect others, and still not be told explicitly. One interviewee mentioned that there is no use of telling the students to be tolerant without ensuring that some intermediate goals are set and achieved first:

“I think I’m doing it in class exactly the way I believe. Especially in my school we’ve got people from different societies, I mean Arabs and non Arabs, like from Pakistan or India, I do respect them, I never do something that they might feel different. I always teach them equally to other students.............People have different beliefs, different concepts, and minds. So we should all live in peace and accept the others. Sometimes students won’t accept a new comer to the classroom, probably not from their same culture, so, I try my best to have them live peacefully, to accept that person.” F8

It is a fundamental task to make students aware of why people of other cultures act the way they do, since intolerance is often caused by pure ignorance. Six interviewees mentioned the importance of making their students realize that there are many different ways of doing things, and that people with a different background cannot be considered strange simply because they happen to do things differently from us. Eleven interviewees said that they might not be able always to accept certain features related to a specific culture, but an awareness of the value systems underlying its operation will enable respect and ICU:
“I think I want my students to appreciate and to know that they think differently from us. It is their culture, maybe it is odd for us or unacceptable in our society but it is their culture.” F7

Four interviewees reported that if they have been able to arouse interest in English language culture(s) and perhaps even create positive attitudes, they have already gone a long way towards tolerance and an ‘open mind’.

Additionally, questionnaire respondents were also presented with a question to explore how they understand culture teaching in ELT context. They were asked to rank nine possible culture teaching objectives in order to see which is the most important. I asked the respondents to mark the statements from 5(most) to 1(least). The statements address the knowledge dimension, the skills dimension, and the attitudinal dimensions of ICC, (Sercu et al., 2005, pp. 25-29); see Table 5.15 for the means of responses in each dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.C.1</th>
<th>Learning Dimensions</th>
<th>What do you understand by “culture teaching” in English language context?</th>
<th>Means (5)</th>
<th>Average mean</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The attitudinal dimension of ICC</td>
<td>Developing attitudes of openness and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures.</td>
<td>4.238</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The knowledge dimension of ICC</td>
<td>Providing information about the history, geography and political conditions of the English speaking countries’ culture(s).</td>
<td>4.222</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Providing information about daily life and routines.</td>
<td>4.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Providing information about shared values and beliefs.</td>
<td>4.313</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Providing students with a rich variety of cultural expressions (literature, music, theatre, films, etc.).</td>
<td>4.223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>The skills dimension of ICC</td>
<td>Promoting reflection on cultural differences.</td>
<td>4.052</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Promoting increased understanding of students’ own culture.</td>
<td>4.234</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Promoting the ability to be empathetic with people living in other cultures.</td>
<td>3.958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Promoting the ability to handle intercultural contact situations.</td>
<td>4.165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.15) Learning Dimensions and Means of the Responses of how Teachers Understand Culture Teaching in ELT Context
Table 5.15 shows that responses ranked higher with the attitudinal dimension (mean 4.24), than the knowledge dimension, or the skills dimensions; respondents gave more weight to developing attitudes of opennness and tolerance towards other people and cultures to their students. It shows that teachers are of the view that building good attitudes towards others is an important step in providing students with knowledge in order to comprehend and appreciate others. In relation to the knowledge dimension, information about shared values and beliefs ranked most highly (mean 4.21). One explanation for this may be that preparing Muslim students for an understanding of other cultures should be a first step before presenting more factual information about culture with capital C and daily life, which may be less acceptable to some students. This is a form of setting the scene.

The skills dimension ranked less than the other two previous dimensions (mean 4.10). It concerned how teachers promote students understanding of their own culture, and how to be able to handle intercultural contact situations. Respondents were concerned about these skills aspects, but to a lesser degree with promoting their students’ reflection on cultural differences, which could play a role in making their students aware of the differences and similarities between their own culture and the other cultures, and appreciating it in comparison to other cultures.

5.3.4. Discussion

RQ2 is exploring to what extent English language teachers see ICC as an objective in language classroom. Regarding the place of culture in ELT, most teachers agreed that they have to present TC in their classrooms; because they cannot separate it from the language they are teaching (Byram et al., 1994 & Kramsch, 2004). They believe that the understanding of TC will make their students empathetic and more open to others, and will make them relate it to their own Islamic culture, which as a result, leads students to justify their own Islamic and Arabic culture to others (Al Qahtani, 2004).
Regarding the teaching objectives, I managed to categorize them into general teaching objectives, language teaching objectives, and culture teaching objectives. Both interviewees and questionnaire respondents agreed that their main aim is presenting the English language within the understanding of it as an international language, and the importance of presenting its culture(s) to their students. Teachers realized this importance, and therefore, they are willing to provide their students with general teaching objectives to help them acquire knowledge in order to succeed in their academic studies (Johnson, 1992). Most teachers affirmed their interest in changing their teaching methods in order to motivate their students to be more aware of the importance of the language and its culture (Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997). Furthermore, as a result of the changing world and its present cultural needs and down to the multicultural society we are living in, teachers try to present culture teaching objectives as a priority in their classroom, even though some of them lack time or cultural preparation (Borg, 1998).

Regarding how teachers perceive the teaching of ICC in their classroom; teachers’ cultural objectives were categorized into three dimensions, the knowledge dimension: the attitudinal dimension, and the skills dimension. Each one has its own definition:

1. The knowledge dimension; where teachers provide their students with general background information which should be learnt and memorized. This dimension represents in its widest definition what Moore (1996) called “4-F Approach”, which focuses on folk-dances, festivals, fairs, and food. Also it represents in its narrowest definition what Byram (2003) calls the knowledge savoirs (See Table 3.1 chapter 3.5.2) and how teachers provide their students with knowledge of social groups and their products.

2. The skills dimension; where teachers prepare students for future intercultural encounters by giving them social and sociolinguistic skills. It represents Byram’s (2003) skills of discovery and interaction savoir apprendre/faire (See Table 3.1, chapter 3.5.2), which is the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and
cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under constrains of real-time communication and interaction.

3. The attitudinal dimension; which develops positive attitudes towards other cultures in general and TCs in particular, with the ultimate goal of promoting tolerance and empathy, and in the long run, creating conditions for peaceful coexistence. It is called *savoir être* (Byram, 2003; See Table 3.1, chapter 3.5.2), where students are being taught curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbeliefs about other cultures and beliefs about one’s own.

Within the attitudinal dimension the objectives can be seen as developing the students’ intellect, whereas in the skills dimension the objective concerns influencing the students’ behaviour as a preparation for a variety of possible situations in the future. However, within the attitudinal dimension the objectives cares for the entire individual by also taking into account the students’ attitudes and feelings here and now, and bringing in personal development as an ultimate aim.

The approach taken to culture and teaching of it can be described as holistic for three reasons: firstly, it integrates both external and internal aspects of culture or what we can call observable facts, as well as underlying value systems. Secondly, it takes both the student’s own culture and the English speaking culture(s) into consideration, and thirdly, it aims at personal growth of the whole learner. Both interviewees and questionnaire respondents agreed that the most important dimension is the attitudinal, which is followed by the knowledge; while at the end the skills dimension comes last. Teachers were interested in promoting their students’ ability to be empathetic with people living in other cultures.
The three types of cultural objectives mentioned above can be seen as stages in a cumulative process that teachers are trying to achieve, within the time constraints. It is important to note, however, that the progression along the continuum to a higher level may become increasingly difficult. It might explain why it is often a much easier undertaking for a teacher to provide the students with factual bits and pieces, than promoting genuinely positive and empathetic attitudes towards people with different backgrounds. Tolerance and empathy should be the ultimate goal, which requires that the previous objectives had been achieved. Knowledge and skills can be seen as the foundation on which deeper ICU could be fostered (Sercu et al., 2005) (See Figure 5.2).

![Figure 5.2 The Escalating Character of Three Cultural Objectives](image)

Applying the above explanations to my study results, it can be suggested that the objectives in the knowledge dimension resemble the second component in Byram’s model of ICC, sharing with it the notion of savoir concern knowledge of social groups and their products and practices, both in students’ culture and TC. Furthermore, my interviewees did refer to the students’ own culture when discussing the transmission of information about cultures. What Byram calls “knowledge of the general process of societal and individual interaction” (2003, p.147) would in my model be attributed to the third dimension.
Regarding the attitudinal dimension, a final look at Byram’s model of ICC suggests that his *savoir être*, involving the ability to understand another viewpoint and to relinquish ethnocentric attitudes, bears close resemblance to the thoughts put forward above. Most teachers spoke about their wish to bring about curiosity and openness towards otherness, as well as readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures (Castro et al., 2004). While regarding the skills dimension, most teachers stated within this category an explicit reference to UK and USA. Byram’s skills of interaction, *savoir-faire*, are related as well to certain situations in bi-cultural contact, such as, between the learner’s culture and of his/her interlocutor. Similarly, Byram, in his (2003) model, discusses the student’s ability to operate knowledge, skills and attitudes in interactions with people of other cultures.

### 5.4. Teachers’ Practice of Teaching ICC

In this section, teachers’ practice of teaching ICC in their classrooms is discussed within the different pedagogies they used to teach it and their willingness for teaching it, their students’ interest in learning it, and the way this competence may be assessed (See table 5.16 for theme 4 and sub-themes emerging from both research tools):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 4: Teachers’ Practice of Teaching ICC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Teachers and their Classroom’s Practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pedagogy of Information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) teachers- centered transmission of facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) students-centred search for facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pedagogy of Preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Anecdotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Dialogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor made dialogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students made dialogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Simulated encounters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Authentic encounters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Discussions and reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Teachers’ willingness to teach culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teachers with awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Perceived Students’ Interest in Learning ICC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Assessment of ICC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The question of whether culture should be assessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Lack of curriculum guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Suggestions for possible ways of assessing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table (5.16) Rationale for Teachers’ Practice of Teaching ICC**
5.4.1. Teachers and their Classroom Practices

The questionnaire respondents were asked whether they had time to present cultural aspects in their classrooms and 63.9% said that sometimes they had time, 21.8% said that they did not have time, and 14.2% said that they made time to present culture to their students. This was followed by another question about whether the teachers would like to devote more time in teaching culture to their students; 47.2% said that sometimes they felt that they had to devote more time to this kind of teaching and preparing students culturally, but due to different reasons, such as lack of time and preparing their students to the final exam, they were not able to do so. 10.1% said that they did not have the feeling of devoting more time to teach culture, while 42.6% agreed that they were always concerned about teaching culture and thinking about it all the time.

Interviewees were encouraged to discuss the methods they use in their classrooms to achieve knowledge about other cultures’ skills for intercultural encounters, and how they implement tolerance and empathy in their cultural objectives. Additionally, I invited them to reflect upon their students’ prior cultural insights, and to what extent these are explored in their classrooms. The steps taken varied considerably among my interviewees; 12 interviewees emphasized that culture is an integral part of their teaching, and therefore, it is impossible to describe what particular methods they use to teach culture as opposed to other curricular objectives. This in itself is an interesting finding, implying that culture to them is not a separate component which requires a specific methodology, but something that spread through all classroom activity. However, their stories also reveal an interpretation of culture as primarily related to the socio-linguistic features of language learning. As an example, vocabulary teaching was mentioned where cultural issues are addressed. Words related to a particular topic are taught with reference to its cultural context, and comparisons are made to the corresponding words in their mother tongue. The interviewees who felt that they do not include culture teaching in their classroom practice to any great extent chose to describe what a typical lesson might look like, and what methodology they generally apply when teaching English language to their students. Moreover, some teachers gave detailed descriptions of methods, which
illustrate their attempts to achieve their cultural objectives. Their stories are closely anchored in practical classroom situations, providing useful insights into the diverse ways in which culture can be taught.

I adopted terms used by Kaikkonen (2001) to indicate different categories of classroom activities related to culture: ‘Pedagogy of Information’ for those classroom activities which are aimed at providing students with factual knowledge related to the English speaking countries; ‘Pedagogy of Preparation’ to denote activities aimed at preparing students for future intercultural meetings; and ‘Pedagogy of Encounter’ for forms of practice where students meet TCs in a dialogue process. The same teacher or more than one may discuss methods which can be attributed to more than one type of practices.

5.4.1.1. Pedagogy of Information

This term is used when the main purpose is to convey facts about the culture of the English-speaking countries. Providing students with information has traditionally been the main task of school education, where the teachers have possessed the knowledge and transmitted it to their students. As working methods have become increasingly less teacher-centered, more responsibilities has been passed on to the students, who are encouraged to be explorers actively looking for that information themselves under the guidance of their teachers, and analyzing it, rather than being passive recipients of information. Even though there are many modes of acquiring factual knowledge, the underlying aim is still that students should be informed, therefore, the term ‘Pedagogy of Information’ is used here. The participants discussed both teacher-centered and more learner-centered activities.
(i) Teacher-centered Transmission of Facts

Five interviewees (N=17) stated that they rely heavily on the textbook as a primary source of cultural information, while nine interviewees said they are happy with the amount of cultural information they have in their textbooks about English speaking countries. On the other hand, two interviewees felt an urgent need for supplementary information, and are constantly on the lookout for suitable texts which would add depth and interest to the topic. Authentic materials such as newspaper articles, TV documentaries and internet texts are mentioned as examples of other sources of information which widens their students’ general knowledge about what is happening in the world, and also provide them with the vocabulary for the topics of current affairs:

“I won’t prepare a lesson about a culture, but I will use the cultural parts in the book and elaborate on them and ask my students different questions. I make comparison between the two cultures, and they are eager to know about the target culture and they ask questions about it. Because our book is not the only source for them to deal with culture, they also have the internet and the media around them.” M9

(ii) Student-centered Search for Facts

Focusing on different forms of problem solving, and discovery oriented project work, could be accepted as a popular working method which increases students’ knowledge about TCs. Here students are asked to find out as much as possible about a specific cultural theme which is either presented by the teachers, or the students:

“I remember last semester I gave my students a project were they have to search for a country and everything related to it, such as sports, currency, people, traditions, sightings and everything related to it. I only thought about the project and asked my students to do it, nobody told me to, but it is my choice.” F1

I also asked the questionnaire respondents to respond to a number of possible culture teaching activities and indicate how often they applied them (Q C.5). I was also interested in finding out whether, and to what extent, they preferred a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher was the one who decided on the cultural topics dealt with in the classroom, or a student-centered approach, where the students themselves chose what
topics they wanted to explore. Another aim was to find out whether teachers practiced only teaching activities which targeted cognitive objectives, or whether they also used activities that addressed the attitudinal or skills dimension of ICC. The focus was on establishing whether they seemed to identify ICC teaching with passing on the information, or trying to enhance their learners’ ability to explore cultures independently, compare cultures, or explain aspects of their own (Sercu et al., 2005, pp. 76-84).

The list below in Table 5.19 indicates activities with some of them termed as both teacher-centered and student-centered, according to the way they were used by teachers. I put the crosses in the boxes depending on my own interpretations. Other activities may address the cognitive dimension of ICC learning, which at the same time may be accepted as attitudinal or skills learning aspects (see Table 5.17).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.5</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>What kind(s) of culture teaching activities do you practice during classroom teaching time?</th>
<th>Means (3)</th>
<th>Cognitive dimension</th>
<th>Skills learning aspects</th>
<th>Attitudinal Learning aspects</th>
<th>Teacher centred activities</th>
<th>Student centred activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I tell my students why I find something fascinating or strange about the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>2.459</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I tell my students what I heard (or read) about the English speaking countries or their culture(s).</td>
<td>2.410</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I ask my students to describe an aspect of their own culture in the English language.</td>
<td>2.396</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I ask my students to compare an aspect of their own culture with that aspect in the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>2.299</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I ask my students to think about what it would be like to live in the English speaking countries.</td>
<td>2.186</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I ask my students about their experiences in English speaking countries.</td>
<td>2.182</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I comment on the way in which the English speaking culture(s) are represented in the English language materials I am using in a particular class.</td>
<td>2.144</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I ask my students to think about the image which the media promote of the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>2.123</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I ask my students to independently explore an aspect of the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>2.088</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I talk with my students about stereotypes regarding English speaking countries’ people.</td>
<td>2.072</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I ask my students to participate in role-play situations in which they meet people from English speaking countries.</td>
<td>2.026</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I touch upon an aspect of the English speaking culture(s) regarding which I feel negatively disposed.</td>
<td>1.906</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>I talk to my students about my own experiences in the English speaking countries.</td>
<td>1.861</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.17) Responses about the Culture Teaching Activities the Teachers Practice during Classroom Teaching Time

Firstly, from the above table we can see that teachers employ teacher-centered activities more than student-centered activities. The most frequently used teacher-centered
activities are represented by the activities in statements c, b, h, and k and ranked higher than others (mean 2.459, 2.410, 2.396, and 2.299 respectively). Statement h, which says “I ask my students to describe an aspect of their own culture in the English language”, was ranked as the first student-centered activity, while it ranked third for teacher-centered activities. Despite the fact that some of the activities ranked higher could also, in some cases, be implemented as student-centered activities, they are really activities in which teachers take the initiative. In other words, it is the teacher who talks about what interests him/her in the first place then he might ask his students to talk about what interest them. Secondly, teachers seem to use teaching activities that foremost address the cognitive and attitudinal dimension of ICC, which represent the acquisition of knowledge and positive attitudes.

Additionally, questionnaire respondents’ answered Q.C.6, to show how teachers can create a multicultural environment in their classrooms, where the four statements follow the cognitive, and attitudinal learning aspects, and are all teacher-centered. Statements are ranked often, occasionally, and never (See Table 5.18):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.C.6</th>
<th>Do you have the chance to create a multicultural environment in your language classroom?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Means (3)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>I use videos, CD-ROMs or the internet to illustrate an aspect of a multicultural environment.</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>2.020</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>I decorate my classroom with posters illustrating particular aspects of the English speaking culture (s).</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>1.847</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>I bring objects originating from an English speaking country to my classroom.</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>1.802</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>I invite a person(s) originating from an English speaking country (ies) to my classroom.</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>1.241</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

Table (5.18) Responses about having the chance to Create a Multicultural Environment in the Language Classroom

Table 5.18 shows that respondents ranked higher in the usage of the internet or CD-ROMs to illustrate aspects of multicultural environment in their classrooms (mean 2.020), which shows that nowadays teachers are doing their best to be up to date with modern technologies in presenting their lessons. Decorating their classrooms with posters
illustrating particular aspect of the target culture, or bringing objects from other cultures, was less frequent. The least frequent activity that the teachers mentioned was inviting a native speaker to their classroom.

5.4.1.2. Pedagogy of Preparation

This term is used in relation to the methods aimed at preparing students for acting appropriately in future intercultural situations. Interviewees referring to this approach can be divided into two groups: the first includes those teachers who tell stories about incidents where intercultural meetings have gone wrong due to lack of skills, while the second are those who are using dialogues to highlight and practice specific social and socio-linguistic patterns. The dialogues could be derived from either the textbook itself or from the students to prove that they comprehended and are able to use specific features which have been discussed in the classroom.

(i) Anecdotes

Here, anecdotes can be described as stories of a personal nature, which illustrate culturally determined divergences in thinking, acting and communicating. Usually these stories are true about episodes or incidents where the person involved had made a mistake or caused an embarrassing scene due to lack of insights into the culturally appropriate way of behaving in a particular situation. Differences in etiquette are well-situated for anecdotes, and they can explain prescribed rules of behaviour in a way that students can use in future encounters with members of an English speaking country. It may provide students with a sense of security about how they should behave. Furthermore, anecdotes may encourage students to reflect on and talk about their own experiences, which is also useful in practicing oral skills.
Five interviewees pointed out that their students tend to be much more interested in hearing stories about what has happened to their teachers rather than reading about it in the textbook about a similar situation, because this is an authentic situation which will stick in their minds:

"My students should learn about how to greet other people from the target culture. For example, a man in UK will never kiss a man when they meet, but he may kiss a woman, which is totally different in our country. So I told my students about this Arabic guy who met his English friend and shook his hands then kissed him on his cheeks. Luckily that the English man spent some years in Dubai, so he laughed and advised the Arabic guy not to do this to other men." F7

(ii) Tailor-made Dialogues

Six interviewees referred to model dialogues in the textbook as the material they use to demonstrate both social and socio-linguistic features. Everyday activities are mentioned as examples of situations which the students are familiarized with through tailor-made dialogues. Culturally appropriate phrases are emphasized and practiced.

(iii) Student-made Dialogues

Two interviewees mentioned that students are expected to do something with the knowledge, i.e. put it in practice rather than just memorize it. For example, students may produce some dialogues to show their understanding or role play some cultural issues.

5.4.1.3. Pedagogy of Encounter

This term is used to refer to methods aimed at reducing ethnocentric attitudes and nurturing tolerance and empathy towards members of foreign cultures in general and TCs in particular. Culture teaching is seen as a reciprocal, dialogic process where the student’s own culture and the English culture(s) are taken into consideration. Both cultures interact either in simulated or authentic encounters, where changes in perspective are made possible. The interlocutors become aware of their own points of view at the same time
they gain insight into the viewpoints of the other. This enables the relativisation of one’s own taken-for-granted ways of looking at the world, which in turn may form the conditions for respect and tolerance for others. In this respect, subsequent reflection and discussion play a vital role, since it encourages students to express their experiences verbally and sharing them with others in the class. Teachers also referred to reflection and discussion as a working method which is important in raising their students’ intercultural awareness:

“Sometimes students ask questions like why is this. Or why is that? They sometimes, may give more information about other cultures. They also might express their feelings and opinions and telling me about different things I might not have an idea about.” F8

(i) Simulated Encounters

This term was used for cultural meetings which do not take place in reality, but which are either a mental construct or role-play initiated by the teacher with a purpose of giving students the possibility to experience what it might be like to meet members of another culture. Four interviewees’ description of a simulation exercise was particularly vivid. But since this exercise had the primary function of stimulating reflection and discussion, it will be dealt with under that heading below.

(ii) Authentic Encounters

Here, authentic encounter refers to genuine meetings in real life between students and representatives of TCs taking place in the classroom. To my surprise, none of the teachers talked about foreign students as resources in this respect, although there are hardly any government schools in Bahrain that would not have at least one student with a foreign background. Also, virtual contacts have their place within this category, as these were mentioned by two interviewees as a possible way of promoting ICU. Internet chatting with people from other cultures is seen as a possible way of reducing mental barriers.
(iii) Discussion and Reflection

Seven interviewees emphasized reflection as a method for raising their students’ intercultural awareness. In their classroom practice, reflection is encouraged as a means of de-centering, which is stepping out of that taken-for-granted perspective to gain new insights. Asking students to reflect upon what they would do in a similar situation, forces them to put themselves into the shoes of others, realizing that there might be several different reasons why people behave the way they do, and that things may not be as black and white as they appear from our familiar Bahraini horizon:

“Sometimes we have activities in the classroom. For example, I will raise a topic, let’s say, about young people in USA or UK, and ask my students to tell me what they think about it, and if they are thinking of leaving their homes after 18. Some of them will act as those young people and say they want to leave their homes, but others will always remember that they are Arabs and Muslims, so they have to take care of their families like they did to them when they were young.” F1

Positive attitudes and tolerance cannot be taught the way that vocabulary and grammar structures are taught. They should be seen as the desired outcome of the students’ own personal development, and therefore, should come naturally as a result of increased knowledge and interest:

“Sometimes students won’t accept a newcomer to the classroom, probably not from their same culture, so, I try my best to have them live peacefully, to accept that person.” F8

Five interviewees stated that intercultural issues were sometimes raised in their classrooms through more or less improvised discussions, which were initiated by their students as a result of a text they have studied or a program they had seen on TV, and which seemed to be lively due to the students’ age and interests. Nine interviewees said that they gave their students time to elaborate on these issues. What the students lost in terms of prepared lesson content, as the teachers pointed out, they gained in terms of argumentation skills, oral practice and an increased awareness of the complexity of intercultural issues.
Within the three types of classroom practice described by the teachers, namely, pedagogy of information, pedagogy of preparation, and pedagogy of encounter, efforts were made to take students’ prior insights into consideration. According to my interviewees, some students appeared quite ignorant of cultural aspects and even of the fact that they could be seen as an essential part of English language studies. On the other hand, other students thought that they knew quite a lot about cultures, which was attributed to increasing travel and media-input, because students who experienced living or travelling abroad were always encouraged to share their experiences and observations with other students.

5.4.2. Teachers’ Willingness to Teach Culture

Q.C.8 concerns how willing teachers are to present cultural aspects in their classrooms. In the literature regarding teachers’ cognition, a relatively direct relationship between teachers’ motivation and willingness to do something and their actual teaching practice is assumed. Previously, we saw that most teachers appear to be very willing to implement culture within English language education. Here, I will attempt to draw teachers’ mental map. I will first consider which variables appear to show teachers’ degree of willingness to implement culture within English language education.

My data revealed that there were two distinct teacher profiles: the teachers with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC, and the teachers with awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC. Teachers have their own distinct views and opinions regarding the preconditions that need to be met before one can start teaching ICC and the way in which ICC should be taught. Here I asked respondents to express their agreement with each statement from 5(most) to 1(least). Statements related to both profiles, which were priori categorized and presented randomly, are demonstrated in the table below (See Table 5.19 and 5.20).
### Exploring English Language Teachers’ Perception

#### Table 5.19 Mean of Teachers with Beliefs Supporting the Teaching of ICC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.C.8</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean (S)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Teachers with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>Language teaching should enhance students’ understanding of their own cultural identity.</td>
<td>4.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>Language teaching should not only touch upon English culture(s). It should also deepen students’ understanding of their own culture.</td>
<td>4.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
<td>A language teacher should present a realistic image of the culture(s), and therefore, should also touch upon negative sides of this culture and the society.</td>
<td>4.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>In the language classroom, teaching culture is as important as teaching the language.</td>
<td>3.985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td>Every subject, not only language teaching, should promote the acquisition of intercultural skills.</td>
<td>3.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>g</td>
<td>The more students know about the target language culture(s), the more tolerant they are.</td>
<td>3.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c</td>
<td>A language teacher should present a positive image of the culture(s) and society.</td>
<td>3.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Intercultural education is best undertaken within the curriculum.</td>
<td>3.740</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i</td>
<td>All students should acquire intercultural competence.</td>
<td>3.475</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p</td>
<td>Intercultural education reinforces students’ already existing stereotypes of other people and culture(s).</td>
<td>3.397</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>If one wants to be able to achieve anything at all as regards intercultural understanding, one should use texts written in the mother tongue (Arabic) and discuss these texts in the mother tongue, even when in a language classroom.</td>
<td>2.917</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e</td>
<td>Intercultural skills cannot be acquired at school.</td>
<td>2.646</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>Intercultural education has no affect whatsoever on students’ attitudes.</td>
<td>2.527</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Language and culture cannot be taught in an integrated way. You have to separate the two.</td>
<td>2.304</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=197

In table 5.19 we can see that the most important statements are the ones related to the relative importance for the students to understand their own identity and culture before they head to learn about TCs. Teachers stated that their role in presenting a positive image of TC is crucial in attracting students’ attention to it by integrating culture in the language classroom. Additionally, teachers stated that it should be integrated in all subjects students take in school, which will make them more tolerant towards people from different cultures. The agreement of teachers to those first four statements was enforced in their disagreement with the statements e, f, and o, which were stating that ICC cannot be acquired at school that intercultural education has no effect whatsoever on students’ attitudes, and language and culture cannot be taught in an integrated way.
Statement p came at sort 12 (mean 3.397), which is stating the teachers’ disagreement with the fact that intercultural education reinforces students’ already existing stereotypes of other people and culture(s). This disagreement indicates that teachers believe that they have the ability to change such attitudes towards TCs. In addition to that, the respondents largely did not agree with statement m (mean 2.917), and they showed that they could use the EL to present cultural issues or ICC in their classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.C.8</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean (S)</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Teachers with awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC</td>
<td>Before you can teach culture(s) or do anything about intercultural dimension of language teaching, students have to possess a sufficiently high level of proficiency in the language itself.</td>
<td>3.629</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>When you have a limited number of teaching periods, culture teaching has to give way to language teaching.</td>
<td>3.589</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>Language problems lie at the heart of misunderstandings in international contacts, not cultural differences.</td>
<td>3.304</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>Teaching intercultural competence is important only if it is necessary for the students (e.g. travelling).</td>
<td>2.938</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.20) Means of Teachers with Awareness of Contextual Constrains of Teaching ICC

Additionally, in table 5.20 the teachers with awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC stated that they believe that their students should not possess a sufficiently high level of proficiency in the language itself, or constrained by a limited number of periods, to comprehend ICC. Additionally, they believed that language problems lie at the heart of misunderstanding in cultural differences rather than in international contacts; therefore, their students should be equipped with tools helping them dealing with cultural encounters either in or outside their countries.

5.4.3. Perceived Students’ Interest in Learning ICC

According to the teachers, there is not always an interest in ICC in the classroom. 11 interviewees mentioned that they believe that their students might be interested in learning about culture. This interest came from the students’ both direct and non-direct contact with other cultures. One interviewee said that most of her students had a chance to travel abroad, and another one said that her students and their parents had open minds
and let them use the internet freely and build friendships on line under their parents’ supervision; while another said that his students came from wealthy families who could afford to take their children to the cinema to watch movies and read English story books, etc.:

"Some of are interested and discuss it with the others and also bring some extra activities and information using the internet or magazines and newspapers. You know why? Some of the families encourage their kids to get familiar with other cultures, through the internet or travelling and some, no"

The other 6 interviewees mentioned that their students are not interested in learning about other cultures either because of their weak level in the language where they want to concentrate on language to improve this level, or they come from villages, where their parents are not allowing them to be open to other cultures and are afraid of what those cultures might offer to their children, as this teacher stated:

"Our students come from certain area in Bahrain (Sanad; a village) and many cultural things are not accepted easily; they just try to criticize. So it is our role now to discuss it with them and showing them why we think it is good; they say it is bad without having a criteria of how saying that is bad, but we as teachers are aware of it and we know that this is the influence of their parents or families."

5.4.4. Assessment of ICC

Interviewees were encouraged to reflect on the extent they believe they succeed in reaching their cultural objectives. Most of them believed that their students are learning something; however, as teachers they always had the feeling that it was inadequate regardless of the subject matter. Teachers believe that this feeling may occur because of the question of whether culture should be assessed, or because of the lack of curricular guidelines. Some of them even gave suggestions for possible ways for assessment.

As far as the ICD is concerned, evaluating the effects of teaching was generally considered difficult. Fifteen interviewees (N=17) do not pay any significant attention to
this dimension when testing their students. Their tests tend to be traditional checks of vocabulary and grammar structures. Another interviewee said that it is not relevant to test such knowledge, since every teacher might have different opinion concerning what factual bits and pieces are significant enough to be checked, if not presented, in their classes.

Interviewees said that culture in the sense of factual knowledge is possible to check only in informal tests, because there is not a certain criteria from the MoE telling them how to do it. As one said:

“The criteria that we use are tests, which are mainly concern with the students’ linguistics competencies which measures only three skills of the language; reading, listening, and writing. How can I measure the student’s cultural awareness? So, when I get him a paragraph he will answer the questions because it is there in the paragraph, but he is not answering because his cultural background is good. There are no specific criteria to measure his cultural knowledge of the language.” M1

The ELC provides insufficient guidelines in this respect. Thirteen interviewees said that while meeting with their supervisors at the DoC, they discuss how to teach culture in their classroom, but whenever they go back to school, they find that there are no specific guidelines of how to do it. So, it becomes contradictory to ask their teachers to do something, without telling them how to assess it. It is worth noting at this stage that although the cultural objectives of the 2003 ELC also include more culture related aspects, described as “learning to communicate and act in normal day-to-day situations in a manner acceptable in the subject culture”, these do not re-occur in the passage on assessment. What adds to confusion is that the concept ‘cultural skills’ is used throughout the document, both what is referred to as pure knowledge of the target culture (ABTL, 2005).

Thirteen interviewees concluded that cultural aspects are best evaluated through practical exercises, such as project assignments, role-plays, simulations and portfolios. They saw a risk that the teaching content which was not followed up by formal tests would not be considered as important by the students.
5.4.5. Discussion

RQ3 is exploring how English language teachers approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms, and what their practices are in doing so. The types of classroom practice described by teachers here can be divided into three categories: pedagogy of information; pedagogy of preparation; and pedagogy of encounter. The first includes providing students with factual information about the English speaking countries. These facts are either transmitted in a traditional way through teachers-centered activities, where students are passive recipients, or acquired as a result of students’ own research-based inquiries (Breen, 1991). This is the type of cultural studies that ELT has traditionally included, even though most theorists find insufficient today. The majority of the participants can be attributed to pedagogy of information, which is hardly surprising, considering that most of them also represent conceptions of culture as factual knowledge.

Moreover, pedagogy of preparation aims at preparing students for behaving appropriately when meeting people from English speaking countries. Here the focus tends to be on ritualized social behaviour or conventionalized linguistic responses. Anecdotes and ready-made dialogues serve as instructional activities, often highlighting differences between the students’ own culture and TC. Even though most teachers described culture in terms of skills which should be acquired, few of them talked about methods intended to provide these skills (Borg, 1998).

The third category, pedagogy of encounter, aims at reducing ethnocentric views by fostering positive attitudes towards, and respect for, representatives of both TCs and other cultures in general. Students are given the opportunities to experience both simulated and authentic encounters, whereupon they are encouraged to reflect upon the thoughts and feelings evoked through these intercultural meetings. Subsequent discussions with other students in the class are considered important. Every student has the possibility to come to terms with his or her own experience and to evaluate them, but it is only within the group that new perspectives may open up. Therefore, the group acts as a reflector
(Kaikkonen, 2001). Reflection may give students tools which could be used in a wide range of situations, both inside and outside the classroom. In this case the teachers try to create systematic opportunities for guided reflection, as well as recognize the spontaneous possibilities for this type of classroom work as they arise (Sercu, 1988).

Even though many teachers stated that their main cultural objective was to foster tolerance and empathy, few of them applied teaching strategies beyond the level of transmission of facts. Pedagogy of encounter, which represents a truly intercultural approach to language teaching, in fact, can be found primarily in the accounts of some interviews. Apparently, teachers who themselves had first-hand experience of other cultures were more inclined to have both motivation and the initiative to create intercultural awareness (Sercu et al., 2005).

Regarding teacher classroom practice, teachers see themselves as volunteering cultural information about what they have read, learned or heard about TC and often asking their students to make comparisons between their own culture and TCs. It is essential to note that the majority of teachers say that they never invite visitors from the English culture to their classroom or decorate their classrooms with posters illustrating cultural aspects. They indicate that they use mostly their textbooks, even though some of them said they needed to provide their students with more cultural aspects in their learning.

In terms of the aims guiding my study, it may seem early to draw conclusions about teaching practice expressly being characterized as directed towards the attainment of ICC rather than CC, as ICC is new to Bahrain, especially at the level of being discussed and introduced into the educational community and its structuring (MoE, 2010). Additionally, teachers’ cognition reveal concepts held about intercultural education and their cognitions which call for exploring in future research what ICC means to them before an understanding of their cognitions can be attained (Sercu, 2006). Teaching activities
practiced frequently are mainly teacher-centered, rather than being student-centered, though some teachers also ask their students to explore aspects of TC, to compare cultures or to reflect on cultural differences. Importantly, teachers indicate that they devote more time to language teaching and have less time to teach culture or ICC. Those who believe that language and culture can be integrated are the ones with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC, while the ones who believe that culture teaching and language teaching cannot be integrated are the ones who have awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC (Borg, 2003; Richards, 1998; Sercu et al. 2005 & Nunan, 1992).

Regarding how respondents describe their students, they frequently mention their students watching movies and the use of the internet. Some of them revealed that a few of their students have not travelled to TC countries or hardly had an association with such countries. Most respondents wondered what they are going to assess, rather than how they are going to. While this difficulty of assessment was mentioned by different authors, Seelye (1984) suggested a post-test and a pre-test to explore whether the students had changed their attitudes throughout the course (pp. 164-189). Byram (1997) proposed in a very detailed way several modes of assessment for knowledge, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness; saying that teachers need imaginative ways of testing rather than using traditional exams; while Sercu (2004) introduced a systematic framework for the operationalisation of assessment of ICC. However, respondents insisted that in the language classroom they are only able to assess their students’ progress in the language itself, because it is very hard for them to assess their cultural awareness for different reasons, such as, the lack of guide from the MoE or in their textbooks, time limit, and preparing their students for the final exam.
5.5. English Language Teachers Training and Professional Development

In this section I explore teachers’ views regarding their pre- and in-service training and the extent to which they were prepared for dealing in the classroom with intercultural issues (See Table 5.21 for Theme 5 and sub-themes emerging from both research tools):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 5: Teachers’ Training and Professional Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Teachers’ Pre-service and In-service Preparation to Teach ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Pre- and in-service training concerned how to teach language only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Pre- and in-service training concerned teaching the language and its culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Teachers’ Reflection on the Intercultural Dimension of ELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Teachers’ Suggestions on the need for a Cultural Component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Preparing teachers culturally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Novice teachers should read and exploring target culture(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) A native speaker as a tutor to novice teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Teachers spend time abroad in target language countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Organising future workshops based on cultural issues and how to teach them in classrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Teachers’ Ambitions Regarding Culture Teaching.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.21) Rationale for Teachers’ Training and Professional Development

5.5.1. Teachers’ Pre- and In-service Preparation to Teach ICC

With regard to the responses during the interview, twelve teachers stated that their pre-service and in-service training prepared them to be good language teachers. Another five interviewees said that they were prepared both linguistically and culturally during their pre-service and in-service training. Those five teachers had either graduated from universities other than the UoB, or had training courses abroad. As one of them stated about his pre-service preparation:

“I was taught by American and British tutors, and I had the chance to visit Britain and spend some time there; I realized that the world is big and wide and you need to learn the English language to travel this world and know about the differences between people. I’m sure that my studies prepare me in a good way to teach culture to my students, and giving the right tool to accept others.” M5

While another said about his in-service training:

“When I first came to Bahrain I was amazed to see so much training courses which prepares teachers in different aspects of their career, even though it is not enough to teach culture but it is good. Once we had a training course for the new book when our trainer gathered us with the authors of the textbooks, and they were advising us on how to use the cultural parts in each book in the class and how to connect between both the target language culture and our own culture. It was a very good idea to be aware of how to teach culture.” M4
5.5.2. Teachers’ Reflection on the Intercultural Dimension of ELT

In order to explore teachers’ reflection on the ICD of the language they teach, I raised the issue of reflecting on, and discussing, this matter with their colleagues. Most of them agreed that they did, indeed, reflect on what the cultural dimension of the language is and how they could present it without offending their students or the society. Six interviewees discussed it with their fellow teachers in order to present it in an appropriate way:

“Usually I discuss with my fellow teachers what culture is? And how I present it in my class without having problems? You know sometimes we have difficulties with parents coming to the school and complaining about what sort of things I’m teaching their kids.” M9

5.5.3. Teachers’ Comments on the need for a Cultural Component

Considering the fact that for many respondents pre- and in-service training/development fails to adequately prepare them for the demands of IC work in the classroom, I asked the teachers about some of their comments on the need for a cultural component in their pre- and in-service training programs.

Fourteen interviewees stated that it is not enough to prepare language teachers linguistically; but also, there is a strong need to prepare them culturally because novice teachers are going to deal with a culture which is inseparable from the language they are teaching:

“It is very important to prepare a teacher of how to teach culture. During his learning at the university he should be prepared how to be a teacher, but he needs also to be prepared to become an English language teacher who himself acquired the culture of the language which he is teaching and to make sure that he is also understanding the cultural aspect of this culture, and how he can transfer it to his students in his classroom.” M1

Also, two interviewees suggested that novice teachers needed to work on their knowledge and build their own awareness of the EL culture(s) by reading and exploring:

“Nowadays teachers are using the language in written form, using dictionaries, they have a limited amount of vocabulary, but being in the target language is different; you have to use the language on a daily basis. That’s something for real you have to try, communicating with
Eleven interviewees suggested the role of having a native speaker as a tutor to those novice teachers and how this kind of exposure may help in raising their awareness and teaching them how to deal with the others, an experience which they can transfer to their own students when they become teachers.

“…Or brings to them British or American tutors? Or Australian teachers so they speak with them about their culture and become culturally prepared. I’m sure it will help.” M5

Four interviewees suggested that novice teachers need to spend some time abroad so they get the real picture of what they are going to teach in their classrooms as one of them stated:

“I was always dreaming to go outside and couldn’t do it myself, I mean going abroad. So, I think there should be more visits to those countries. I don’t mean as tourists, but having a week or two abroad as an in-service training will be helpful.” F8

Fourteen interviewees offered suggestion for the in-service training courses by organizing and presenting workshops based on teaching culture in their classrooms:

“There should be courses or seminars, whatever you call them, workshops about the importance of ICC and the relationship between language and culture.” M9

Questionnaire respondents were asked about their agreement with statements concerning their pre-service training as language teachers regarding teaching culture from 5 (most) to 1(least). Statements a, b, and d concerned their in-service training while statements c, e, and f concerned their suggestions for future pre-service training courses (see Table 5.22):
Table 5.22 Responses about the Teachers' Pre-Service Training

Table 5.22 shows that overall the respondents did not appear to find their pre-service training adequate in the area of culture. Most of them suggested visiting the target language countries during their pre-service training and being taught by a native speaker as methods of raising their awareness towards TCs they intend to teach, which agreed with the suggestions from the interviewees above.

Respondents were asked the same question about their in-service training and their suggestions to improve future training courses. Statements a and b concerned their pre-service training, while statements c, d, e, and f concerned their suggestion for future in-service training courses (see Table 5.23):
Once again, as Table 5.23 shows, overall the respondents did not appear to find their in-service training adequate in the area of culture. Most of them felt that it was important to receive training in approaching aspects of culture as well as integrating those aspects in their teaching. They also stressed that English language teachers should be trained in how to share meanings, and experiences of the culture they teach. Yet again, the respondents have suggested that visiting the target language countries was an adequate method for raising their cultural awareness.

### 5.5.4. Teachers’ Ambitions Regarding Culture Teaching

Most teachers, either during interviews or in the space left at the end of the questionnaire, talked about their ambitions about how they may approach teaching culture or ICC in their classrooms. Most of these ambitions were not addressed directly, but rather emerged from the conversations mainly with interviewees. For example, some teachers talked about implementing literature in their lessons and how this could help their students...
understand not only English speaking culture(s), but other cultures as well. One female teacher talked about presenting books and novels to students who were interested in reading to give them the opportunity to learn more about the wider world:

“I always say that you will never understand the poetry of certain people without understanding their culture. Sometimes there are some information about the community, the society, and people in those communities, and time affects culture. Therefore, I sometimes offer my students some books to know about those cultures and open their minds.” F4

It is obvious here that the ambitions described by teachers reflect their perceptions about culture and about the cultural objectives of their teaching. The participants discussed a wide range of constraints or difficulties when asked about why they consider themselves unable to realize their ambitions. The list below is ordered by the number of respondents referring to a particular obstacle. These obstacles are interrelated and can be divided into categories related to: obstacles related to the teachers, to MoE, to students, and other minor obstacles (see Table 5.24):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Related to teachers</th>
<th>Obstacles</th>
<th>Repetitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Related to teachers</td>
<td>Lack of time and short periods.</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing students for the final exam.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate teachers’ preparation and training programs.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers’ workload</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers’ lack of interest in teaching ICC in their classrooms.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Related to MoE</td>
<td>Prioritising teaching linguistics skills.</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MoE’s unclear learning objectives concerning teaching ICC.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing students for the final exam.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The lack of cultural teaching assessment criterion.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Related to students</td>
<td>Prioritising passing exam requirements.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unmotivated students.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students’ weak level in the language itself.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heterogeneous groups.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Religious barrier (inappropriate to the Islamic culture).</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political barrier (inappropriate to the current political situations).</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (5.24) Obstacles Affecting Teaching ICC in English Language Classrooms

Table 5.24 shows that the most mentioned obstacle is “lack of time” and “short periods”; furthermore, teachers prioritized teaching linguistics skills, and preparing their students for the final exam. They referred to the inadequacy of teachers’ preparation and training programs and the MoE’s unclear learning objectives as the main reasons for leaving teaching culture out of their lessons.
5.5.5. Discussion

RQ4 is exploring what preparation teachers have had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching. One of the main reasons for exploring teachers’ perception regarding teaching ICC in ELT was to be able to provide teachers with professional development opportunities which build on their existing perceptions and teaching practices (Borg, 2003). Research on teachers’ cognition indicates that teachers’ perceptions affect their cognition of specific teaching situations and their teaching practice (Carter & Doyle, 1995). Therefore, departing from teachers’ cognition and trying to alter them seems to hold the best promise for changing the teaching practice. In Bahrain, professional training needs to be offered that can provide the teachers with opportunities to develop their perceptions so that they could be more compatible with teaching ICC. They need to be exposed to alternatives for current teaching approaches, to change their cognition regarding culture teaching.

The majority of the participants agreed that their preparation programs lacked the focus on culture as a main component of the teaching process, and ignored its importance in creating a ‘good teacher’. It is the same situation with the in-service training courses, where participants agreed that those courses were adequate in number, but, not in content. Most of the respondents stated that the MoE provided them with different training courses to guide and help them in how to manage their teaching without stressing the cultural side of the language. However, the teachers realize that the world at the present time is in a constant change, and therefore, they are hoping to receive more preparation in the cultural field, in order to be able to prepare their students for this change.

The most spontaneous comment from the teachers was that they wished they could spend some time in an English speaking country to be acquainted with English culture(s) in an authentic environment. Some of them said that this could help them to explain thoroughly to their students about these cultures and how the others deal in everyday situations (Byram, 1997). I found this interesting that respondents always seem to be associating
culture with that of the English-speaking world. However, most of those who referred to the trips abroad realized that these were fairly unrealistic ambitions, and quickly moved on to talk about other ambitions with respect to classroom activities.

5.6. English Language Teacher’s Model

In chapter 3.5.2 I described, according to Byram’s (2003) model, what knowledge, attitudes, and skills, English language teachers should hold in order to be able to promote the acquisition of ICC in the ELT. As a result, in this section I want to consider the research findings I obtained in the light of the proposed conceptual model.

5.6.1. Teachers’ Knowledge

I mentioned earlier that English language teachers should be adequately acquainted with TCs associated with the language they teach, and that the connections they hold with these cultures should be both various and frequent. Moreover, they should know their own culture well and possess culture general knowledge which can help to explain similarities and differences between cultures to learners (Sercu, 2006).

My findings show that teachers believed themselves adequately familiar with TCs, that they had frequent media contacts with these cultures and some of them travelled to the foreign countries, mostly to UK, and felt they may deal significantly with general information about TCs. Additional data regarding teachers’ knowledge and the use they make of it in the English language classroom, presented in the next section, will reveal whether this conclusion is acceptable. Today’s English language teachers may certainly be sufficiently knowledgeable when teaching within the context of the traditional foreign culture approach (Risager, 2005). However, the teachers’ knowledge might fail expectations if they were to teach towards the achievement of ICC.
5.6.2. Teachers’ Skills

As regards skills, I assumed that teachers should be capable of employing teaching techniques, which promote the acquisition of savoirs, savoir-apprendre, savoir-comprendre, savoir-faire and savoir-être (Byram, 2003 & 1997). Teachers should be capable of helping students relate their own culture to TCs; compare cultures and empathize with the TCs points of view. Teachers should be capable of using their textbooks and to adjust their content and pedagogical approaches to achieve the aims of ICC. However, having experience and being skilful practitioners should enable the teachers to use experiential approaches to language and culture teaching (Sercu, 2006).

The various elements identified as indications of a teacher’s teaching practice in this research study were: the frequency with which teachers touched upon particular cultural topics during classroom teaching; the frequency with which they practiced particular kinds of culture teaching activities; and the way in which they distributed their teaching time over language teaching, and culture teaching. With regard to the claim that language teachers should be able to use the cultural content in their textbooks for ICC teaching, my data suggests that teachers were definitely capable of commenting critically on the cultural content of these textbooks, pointing out both good and less satisfactory features. However, care has been taken not to associate this ability with the ability to assess textbooks with respect to their potential for teaching ICC. The teachers who commented on the cultural dimension of their textbooks did so from the perspective of the traditional foreign cultural approach, pointing out where the information regarding the English culture had been incorrectly selected or represented. It can be concluded, therefore, that teachers appeared sufficiently skilled to teach within the foreign culture approach, but may have lacked the skills necessary to teach towards the full achievement of ICC.
5.6.3. Teachers’ Attitudes

Regarding attitudes, English Language and culture teachers should be favorably disposed towards the integration of ICC teaching in language education and enthusiastic to work towards achieving that goal. They should define the objectives of ELT in terms of both language learning and ICC acquisition. Teachers should be willing to embrace their students’ beliefs and attitudes when designing the learning process.

At different stages in the study, questions were included which inquired into the degree of teachers’ overall support for the teaching of ICC in ELT. For example, questionnaire respondents were offered statements which probed into the different features of ICC teaching in ELT. The results indicate the existence of two teachers’ profiles: the teachers with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC and the teachers with awareness of contextual constrains of teaching ICC. The teachers within the second profile believe that it is impossible to integrate language and culture. In addition, they believe that ICC skills cannot be acquired at school, let alone in the ELT classroom. Generally speaking, these teachers do not believe in the positive effect of ICC teaching on students’ attitudes and cognition. The only effect they see is a negative one: ICC teaching reinforces students’ already existing stereotypes.

Conversely, the teachers who believe in supporting the teaching of ICC also share a number of beliefs. They believe that teaching culture is as important as teaching the language, and that it is possible to integrate the two. In their view, ICC makes students more tolerant towards other cultures. These teachers prefer an approach that is cross-curricular and are convinced that not only English language teachers, but the teachers of every subject should teach ICC. Furthermore, and importantly, they do think ICC should be taught to all students. Consequently, I can conclude that the basic attitude of the majority of all questionnaire respondents, if not all the interviewees, can be said to be the attitude desired of the language and culture teacher, but that this attitude is largely
dependent on the teachers’ certainty that language and culture can be taught in an integrated way.

5.7. Further Discussion in the Light of the Four RQs

The Bahraini English language teachers currently are facing the challenging task of specifying the cultural aspects discussed in ELC, and trying to implement them in their teaching process. Therefore, in consideration of teacher training and the development of related teaching aids in future, it is essential to increase the knowledge of how teachers think and how they talk about teaching culture. Throughout my study, my focus was on English language teachers at the secondary level exploring their perception of teaching ICC in language classrooms. I have found that the majority of them are moving towards becoming language-and-culture teachers, but their teaching profile does not meet all the expectations of the profile mentioned by Byram & Risager (1999).

Several studies on teachers’ cognition focused on the areas of science, Math education, or reading, which have frequently been concerned with understanding how this cognition impacts on practice (Bell et al., 2000; Prosser & Trigwell, 1997). My study differs from those studies in two ways: Firstly, my focus has been on English language teachers, and more specifically on their perception regarding teaching ICC. Though some studies have investigated language teachers’ cognition (Borg, 2003), far fewer have focused on language teachers’ cognition of the ICD of FLT, with the notable exceptions of Byram and Risager (1999); Ryan (1997; 1998); Sercu (2001 & 2006); Sercu et al. (2005); and Dooly (2010 & 2011). Secondly, my study is concerned with teachers’ perception in the Bahraini context, which has never been studied for such area. This will contribute to the improvement of the current teachers’ education programmes by enabling teacher educators understand teachers’ perception and the reasons why they embrace or reject ICC, and develop programmes which can clarify and exemplify to English language teachers how they can promote the acquisition of ICC in their classrooms. The most important findings will be discussed in the light of the four RQs.
5.7.1. How do English Language Teachers Understand and Define the Concept “Culture” and ICC in ELT?

Culture is a set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next (Matsumoto, 1996, p.16). In other words, culture is manifested through different types of regularities, some of which are more explicit than others; it is associated with social groups, but arguably no two individuals within a group share exactly the same cultural characteristics; it affects people’s behavior and interpretations of behavior; and it is acquired and/or constructed through interaction with others (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, p.15).

All teachers in this study agreed that culture could be defined as the geo-political aspects of a nation, behavioural patterns of people, and the artistic dimension. However, within this definition, most of them preferred to specify and concentrate that culture is a factual knowledge which builds their students’ cultural awareness; and that the most important aspect to them is how to keep in their students’ minds the validity of social and socio-linguistic practices which may help them in the encounters with TCs (Byram & Risager, 1999). Some of the teachers defined it as skills of how to bring together the students’ own culture and the TCs; and they appreciated the deep definition of culture while claiming that so much within goes undetected and ignored (Hubernere, 1965). Only few teachers pointed out how important it is to accept culture as a bi-directional belief, which consists of an additional element in the form of awareness of the students’ own culture and how it might be perceived from the horizon of other cultures in general, and the TCs in particular (Robinson, 1985 & Borg, 2010b). Additionally, they defined ICD and ICC as tools that enable their students to be ready to build their own knowledge of social groups, their products and practices, and, as a result, it develops their cultural awareness, which reflects Byram’s (2003) *savoirs* and *savoir être* (See chapter 5.2.4).
By answering this question teachers are aiming to present different elements to their students; elements such as the ones related to others and TCs; elements related to the textbooks; and elements related to the students’ identities and culture, etc. For example, in relation to others and TCs, teachers provide abundant cultural information and realistic positive images about those cultures; and identifying and using different manifestations of a culture in the classroom, particularly, in relation to the four Fs: “Food, Fashion, Festivals, and Folklore”. In relation to elements related to the textbooks, teachers aim to eliminate and foreground stereotypes from the textbooks, while avoiding references to the tensions and conflicts within societies. It could be argued that teachers make a good use of their textbooks which are based on the principles of critical pedagogy and multicultural education (ELC, 2005), introduce characters with multiple cultural identities within the textbooks, using multicultural literature, and finally, use materials that stress what unites human beings with a focus on commonalities and bonds (See Appendix 1: A Textbook Content Sample and Appendix 2: A Lesson Sample). Finally, in relation to the students’ identities, teachers are encouraging them to deepen their understanding of their own culture, and helping them retain their own heritage culture and language.

Teachers showed that the main aim of language education surpasses the acquisition of superficial linguistic, non-linguistic, cultural, etc., knowledge towards an essential transformation of the students’ actions and thoughts at a personal and social level. An educational view of language teaching should focus on the development of students as individuals; a process which occurs when persons reconcile new and challenging ideas with their pre-existing beliefs and values through diverse learning experiences in the language, which leads to the multifaceted development of the self (Bean and Moni, 2003, cited in Porto, 2010, p.46). Consequently, language education, at its best, encourages learners to create, maintain, and/or develop their unique identities (Chen, 2005, cited in Porto, 2010, p. 46).
5.7.2. To What Extent do English Language Teachers see ICC as an Objective in the Language Classroom?

Objectives are the purposes which one plans to attain by the end of a task; and by defining our objectives we can operationalize the aims, and question the presentation of contents of a course. However, the role of objectives in learning and teaching a language is greater than this: it is formalizing, describing, and identifying the objects from one another, which also means being able to determine what it means to have attained them. Teaching by objectives gives the teacher constantly the indications by intermediate objectives, of measuring the distance between actual and expected behaviour, and also the means of measuring the lasting and non-arbitrary change, which appears in learners being taught, using appropriate procedures and in a given time or space. There is an inseparable relationship between objectives and needs. Every objective is in fact a learning objective; its role is to help learning; therefore, contemporary language teaching has to adhere to a process of defining objects by the needs of learners (Page, 2008, p. 247 & Brindley, 2008, p.438). The analysis of needs includes what the learner wishes, what s/he is required to be able to do, and what s/he has to learn (Besse and Galisson, 1983, cited in Dautry, 2008, p.453). For the learner it is, or ought to be, an excellent tool for regulating their own learning process (Dautry, 2008, pp. 452-453).

Teachers in my study categorized their objectives into general teaching objectives; language teaching objectives; and culture teaching objectives. They realized that English language should be treated, and presented, as a language of different countries and does not belong to one nation. They realized that their students’ needs are changing according to the multicultural society they are living in; therefore, culture teaching objectives were a priority to most teachers to present in their classrooms, even though they lacked time or professional training regarding this type of teaching. Teachers also aim to provide their students with general teaching objectives to help them acquire knowledge in order to succeed in their academic studies as well as encountering individuals from other nations. Additionally, regarding how teachers perceive the teaching of ICC in their classroom,
their cultural objectives were categorized into three dimensions: the knowledge dimension; the attitudinal dimension; and the skills dimension.

However, judging from teachers’ distribution of their teaching time, either on language teaching or culture teaching, it is clear that culture teaching at present plays no more than a subsidiary role. They defined the objectives of ELT mainly in linguistic terms for the reason they taught English language with the view to the acquisition of CC, or perhaps only grammatical competence, not ICC. They tended to perceive culture teaching mainly in terms of passing on information regarding the TCs, because maybe, it is the approach to culture teaching they have experienced themselves as language learners. It is not surprising that most teachers are using the CC approach to teach the language, because it was and still is the most used approach since the 1980’s to help students acquire a foreign language (Savignon, 2008, 128). Therefore, the conception of teaching FLT affects the way teachers teach English language and approach culture teaching, and based on that teachers assist suggestions for improvement. Currently, it is proposed that ICC teaching may become an important impetus for improvement in schools, but it is also viewed as marginal to the commonly accepted linguistic goals of ELT (Byram, 1997 & 2003).

The recent textbook teachers are using, “Opportunities”, was modified in terms of teaching ICC to secondary level students, and as a result, learning was no longer defined in terms of the linguistic material presented by the teacher, the book, or the MoE, but in terms of the ICC to be achieved. The fact that most teachers are willing to interculturitize English language is derived from their willingness to prepare their students for life in an increasingly multicultural world, in which they have been acquainted with the language; and become interculturally competent (Byram, 2003 & Borg, 2009). However, for teachers the issue changed from the way they are presenting the language from cultural teaching to LC, while what it was expected from them is to focus on sociocultural competence, which depends on factual knowledge and social competence. The assumption is made that the learners would be able to engage in interactions with others,
which are parts of the specific objectives of language learning in contemporary approaches. Taking these into account, decisions have to be made about how the content should be used, and what order should be preferred. However, what language teachers should keep in mind that CC teaching is not exclusively concerned with face-to-face oral communication. Its goals depend on learners’ needs in a given context as a way of providing increased opportunity and motivation for communication. It is an approach which if used properly might be employed to engage the learners in communication to allow them to develop their ICC (Savignon, 2008, p. 128).

What links communicative objectives, linguistic objectives, and sociolinguistic objectives in any textbook is that, first, every language teaching and learning teacher uses it as a function of the negotiation between operational objectives and institutional progression, giving the maximum attention to the learning strategies at work. Second, teacher asks about the three following questions: what CC dose this document allows my students to attain; what parts of the language does it allow them to acquire; what information on the culture in question dose it allow them to discover? In other words, what are the three objectives for the class, and how are they related? (Savignon, 2008, p.129). The search for the relationship between these three objectives is only an obligatory transition, one among many parameters in the pedagogical act. However, because this search is a concrete realization of the learning process, it has the advantage of asking the teachers good questions, those concerned with guiding and with autonomy, those focusing on progression and content, and those involving mediation and cognitive instruments. Teaching by objectives, in so far as it is concerned with a focus on the learner, has a promising future (Dautry, 2008, p. 454).

As mentioned earlier, the majority of teachers are keen on integrating ICC in their teaching but still define the objectives of ELT in terms of CC, not ICC. Teachers perhaps think it is important that their students become interculturally competent, but still feel they are responsible to those who think the acquisition of CC should be the main
objective of ELT. This agreement that teaching time must be committed to CC possibly enforced by restrictions associated with the curriculum. Teachers might have to deal with a full language curriculum and only be permitted a limited number of teaching periods. In addition to that, there may also be clashes with beliefs of colleagues, for example, a teacher would like to apply a cross-curricular approach to ICC but his/her colleagues believe in language teaching within the limits of the subject, and that it might clash with students’ beliefs. For example, a teacher might want his/her students to become independent explorers of cultural elements associated with the language, while students prefer teacher-directed instructions.

5.7.3. How do English Language Teachers Approach the Teaching of ICC in their Classrooms?

Teachers’ activities in this study were divided into three pedagogies: pedagogy of information, where teachers are providing their students with factual knowledge about the TCs; pedagogy of preparation, where they are preparing their students how to behave appropriately with TCs representatives; and pedagogy of encounter, where they are reducing students’ ethnocentric views and fostering positive attitudes towards TCs representatives. Even though many of the teachers said that their main cultural aim was to foster tolerance and empathy, few of them applied teaching strategies beyond the level of transmission of facts.

From the kinds of teaching activities reported most frequently in my study, it appears that teachers define ICC primarily in terms of familiarity with the TCs (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, pp. 52-53). Other findings relating to teachers opinions regarding different components of ICC teaching also suggest that they believe that enhancing students’ familiarity with the TCs will result in more tolerant attitudes towards that culture. This is not to say that they do not realize their approach to teaching ICC may not be completely adequate. Some teachers may well realize their perception of ICC is too
limited in view of what is expected of them, but this realization does not yet affect their choice of teaching activities.

Byram and Risager (1999) comment briefly on teachers’ perceptions regarding their culture teaching practices and maintain that teachers report using a range of activities in classroom to work on the ICD of EFL. Teachers are convinced that direct contact is most effective in promoting change in students’ perceptions or attitudes regarding the TCs. Most teachers do not have a systematic plan as how to go about teaching ICC, how to deal with stereotypes and prejudice in the language classroom, or even how to assess it (Sercu, 2004). However, teachers employ a range of teaching activities, which are especially directed towards the acquisition of knowledge regarding the TCs and do not usually include reflection on one’s own cultural identity (Holliday et al., 2010). Although teachers here believe direct contacts have a presumably mainly positive effect on students, they do not usually devote time to preparing or following up on such contacts. Contrary to Byram and Risager (1999), and (Sercu 2001, cited in Sercu et al., 2005), but similar to Sercu et al. (2005) my findings shows that teachers approach culture teaching with a high degree of systematicity and consistency, even if their teaching cannot be characterized as ICC teaching.

Nevertheless, beliefs are likely to endure, which does not mean that the new beliefs cannot be obtained, but rather that newly acquired beliefs are vulnerable to change (Borg, 2003). Teachers, who initially welcome new ideas and believe these developments are promising, may drop them the moment they experience some difficulties or disappointment with implementation. Carter & Doyle (1995) claim that beliefs about what works and does not work act as filters, and are based on teaching expertise; they maintain that teaching experience is a significant reason in the development of context-specific perceptions. For instance, a new teacher should make decisions derived from his or her general perceptions (Carter & Doyle, 1987). However, going through this process initiate the development of context-specific perceptions. While the teacher gets more
experienced, teaching decisions may become more and more mechanized until the point is reached where s/he implicitly knows what to do without having to engage in conscious though (ibid). This does not mean that the teacher always does things in the best possible way, only that his/her thought processes are highly mechanized.

Various features of the teaching context may affect teachers’ perception. These features consist of teachers’ perceptions of student motivation and ability to learn, teachers’ control over teaching methods or the textbook content; self-efficacy; the teaching workload, as well as and the requirements for earning occupancy. All of these features may affect how teachers teach in their classrooms (Borg, 2003 & Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). In my study I found that the reasons which teachers mentioned for not getting round to culture teaching more often were lack of time, curricular overload, lack of students’ motivation, and the negative effect of its TCs on their students’ identity (Holliday et al., 2010). Some teachers also made reference to their own inability to teach culture or ICC, or to the fact that no ICC objectives are mentioned in the ELC.

From the above, I can conclude that English language teachers’ perception of ICC teaching and teaching practices run parallel to a significant degree. Teachers are clearly willing to teach ICC, yet in actual teaching appear not to move beyond traditional information-transfer pedagogy. My data suggest that textbooks play an important role in language classroom and those textbooks adopt foreign cultural approaches, not intercultural approaches.

5.7.4. What Preparation/Training have Teachers had (Pre-service), or wish to have (In-service), for including ICC in their Teaching?

As mentioned in chapter (5.5.5) the main reason for exploring teachers’ perception regarding teaching ICC in ELT was to be able to provide teachers with professional development opportunities, which build on their existing beliefs and teaching practices.
In Bahrain, professional training needs to be provided with opportunities to develop teachers’ perceptions to make them more compatible with teaching culture and ICC in their English language classrooms. Although beliefs tend to be deep-rooted by the time individuals finish their school education, and tend to uphold in his/her cognition of teaching and learning. Furthermore, once those beliefs have formed, they are hard to change (Pajares, 1992 & Calderhead, 1996). The earlier a belief system is incorporated in the cognitive structure, the more difficult it is to alter. While newly acquired beliefs, by contrast, are more amenable to change, especially if those beliefs are closely connected with other ones, they are more difficult to change. Teachers may abandon particular beliefs, but instead, will gradually replace them with more relevant ones (Woods, 1996).

My findings show that I may speak of an average “langue-and-culture teaching” profile, but this profile does not yet match with the one raised by Byram & Risager (1999). It is surprising that this profile may exist taking into account that I have collected data from different parts of the country. Even though Bahrain is a very small country, it still represents different social components in each part of it. In some schools teachers pointed that parents and students seemed more convinced of the need to learn the English language than in others. For teachers and students in some schools it may be easier to travel to the target language countries than in other schools. Additionally, some students may have an easier access to English media, internet, or movies than in other schools, depending on the family’s background and their parents’ willingness to be exposed to such resources. In some schools teachers are encouraged by their senior teachers to use the cultural sections in their textbooks, while in other schools it is partly ignored because, either students are not motivated enough, teachers lack an assessment criteria or clear teaching objectives, or teachers are overloaded with work, which tends to make them concentrate on teaching linguistic aspects instead of cultural ones. It may mean that teaching circumstances are different in each school, but that will not affect teachers’ perceptions regarding ICC teaching. Teachers’ familiarity with the TCs proved to be a factor affecting the extent to which they deal with different aspects of the TCs in their classrooms. The fact that it may be more difficult for teachers in some schools to travel
regularly to the English speaking countries does not mean that they are less familiar with the language they are teaching or its culture. However, they managed, through different resources, such as the internet and media, to get to know the TCs to such a degree that they are able to teach about it (Dooly, 2011).

I managed to highlight important differences and similarities in teachers’ perceptions; which teacher education programmes can build on them and have teachers cooperate, knowing that they all to a certain extent share a common body of knowledge, skills and connections. They can also exploit differences between teachers to enhance their understanding of ICC. Individual teachers may reflect on their own practice and where they stand on the teaching language-and-culture continuum and it might be a starting point for discussion with colleagues for exchange of ideas regarding the integration of ICC in their teaching (Byram, 2003).

Teachers’ professional development engages them in a direct exploration of their own beliefs which may create greater self awareness through reflection and critical questioning as starting points for later adaptation. Teachers can monitor the change of their beliefs and practices through different activities or methods, and opportunities to share experiences of positive change can provide a valuable source of input for in-service training courses or teacher education activities. For instance, my findings suggest that teachers perceive culture teaching foremost in terms of teacher-centered transmission of cultural knowledge (Sercu et al., 2005). As a consequence, one way to attempt to and change teachers’ perceptions and promote reflection is to expose them to beliefs that provide alternatives for this kind of pedagogy, and that may help them perceive ICC not only in terms of acquisition of cultural knowledge, but also in terms of acquisition of ICC skills and attitudes (Byram, 1997).
Some teachers may already be convinced of the importance of assisting learners to acquire ICC and yet there may still be barriers to implementing ICC teaching. These can take the form of conflicts or inconsistencies in a teachers’ perceptive system, but very often, this kind of conflicts in beliefs remains subconscious. The education sessions for teachers will need to provide opportunities to make these conflicting beliefs explicit, to examine and discuss them. In addition to building on teachers’ existing beliefs, teacher development workshops should also expand on their existing teaching practices and their beliefs regarding ICC. My findings indicate that teachers who do not consider the integration of language and culture are also do not integrate ICC in their language classrooms. Thus, offering teachers new ways of how to integrate language and culture might help them search for other methods of culture teaching and consequently, to change their negative disposition. Doing so may help to convince teachers who are still in doubt about the value of adopting such an approach. After all, teachers argue that their training did not provide them with opportunities to reflect on the quality of their teaching materials to promote the acquisition of ICC in their learners, or assist them to adapt existing teaching materials. They recommend that teachers’ development programs should help teachers recognize opportunities to enhance learners’ ICC inherent in experiential learning activities and show ways to avoid possible pitfalls which can lead to reinforcement of already existing stereotypes.

5.7.5. In conclusion

My data indicates that respondents are experienced teachers of CC in English language. Throughout their years of teaching, they gained expertise regarding what does and what does not function effectively concerning teaching grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of the English language, as well as concerning how to support students in integrating these different components to become more skillful readers, speakers, writers and listeners. Teachers, in this case, possibly left out some techniques, which they found to be less successful, and acquired others, which are, to their mind more promising and efficient ones (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p.358). It might be assumed that an
equivalent procedure would take place regarding the teaching of ICC, but I am worried that the developmental process towards better ICC teaching could be easily left out.

A teacher teaching towards CC may well be positively disposed towards the integration of ICC, and welcomes this innovative method as a useful and motivating improvement. Nevertheless, this positive disposition may be reduced the moment a teacher experiences that language and culture cannot be taught in an integrated way, and that, as a result, less time is available for practicing communicative skills in the classroom. My data definitely point to the fact that teachers’ willingness to interculturlize ELT is determined by the extent to which they believe in the integration of language and culture. Key contextual aspects, such as lack of time, lack of preparation, unclear culture learning objectives, lack of culture assessment criteria, and teachers’ overloaded schedules were, among other findings, mentioned as important contextual reasons, which prevent teachers from dedicating more time to ICC teaching.

Teachers’ perceptions have also revealed that their beliefs, to large extent, shape their instructional behaviour. Prosser & Trigwell (1997) listed a logical close relationship between the approaches to teaching taken and teachers’ perceptions of teaching and learning. The six general beliefs of teaching which teachers may hold have been identified as the ones related to teachers, namely: the transmission of the perspectives of the syllabus and teachers’ knowledge to the students; beliefs related to the students in regards to helping the students acquire the perspectives of the syllabus; acquiring the teachers’ knowledge, as well as developing and changing teaching perspectives. These general beliefs of teaching and learning directly initiate shaping the development of context-specific approaches, which directly lead to choice of specific teaching activities (Prosser & Trigwell, 1997; Savignon, 2008).
Accordingly, my findings indicate that respondents understand teaching and learning culture and ICC more in terms of transmission of the teachers’ knowledge than in terms of assisting learners to develop and change beliefs. The kinds of culture teaching activities reported most frequently in their classrooms can be accepted as typical of teacher-directed approaches to teaching. Teachers are likely to pass on the cultural information included in the textbook, irrespective of whether or not this information is of interest to the students or has the possibility of changing blurred students’ images of TC. In this respect, teachers seem to maintain employing the approach to culture teaching commonly used when they themselves were students of the language. It may well be that teachers are good at perceiving students’ linguistics abilities and difficulties, but this appears not yet to be the case with respect to culture learning and the acquisition of ICC (Ryan, 1997).

Lumpe et al. (1998) claim that teachers may have unclear link between their contradictory beliefs and their teaching practices. My respondents seem to have ambivalence between teachers’ willingness to teach ICC and their currently shaped teaching practice. For example, they want their students to become proficient users of the language, while believing that their students should become intercultural individuals. It might be that their understanding of what ICC means and how to teach it in the classroom is still ambiguous as a concept.

In the next chapter implications and recommendations will be presented, in order to build a more coherent view of the secondary school English language teachers’ perception towards teaching ICC in their language classrooms.
Chapter 6

Implications and Recommendations

6.1. Summary of the Research and Main Findings

The main purpose behind this study was to explore English language teachers’ perceptions towards teaching ICC in ELT at the secondary level in the Kingdom of Bahrain. It aimed to investigate the way in which teachers perceive themselves as professionals. How do they understand and define the concepts “culture” and “ICC”? To what extent do they see ICC as an objective in their language classroom? How do they approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms? And what preparation/training have they had (pre-service), or wish to have (in-service), for including ICC in their teaching?

One of the reasons for exploring teachers’ perceptions regarding teaching ICC in FL education was to be able to provide teachers with professional development opportunities which build on their existing beliefs and teaching practices. The research findings on teachers’ beliefs indicate that teachers’ beliefs affect their conceptions of specific teaching situations and, eventually, their teaching practice (Carter & Doyle, 1995). Therefore, taking teachers’ beliefs as the starting point and trying to alter them, seems to hold the best promise for altering teaching practice.

The backbone of the research is a list of questions derived from preliminary interviews with English language teachers and addressed by the study which were designed to meet the research objectives, and which have been mentioned above. The researcher concentrated on shedding light on teaching culture in the Kingdom of Bahrain with the aim of teaching ICC. This focus corresponds with Byram’s work who proposed teaching ICC on the grounds that cultures are the seed-bed for both constancy and change, and that language and culture cannot be separated. It could be argued that fulfilling this strategy necessitates qualifying English language teachers and cementing their cognitive skills.
Moreover, taking into consideration the importance of the English language teachers’ opinions and views as regards the reforming of both English language programs and curricula, this is a vitally critical issue. This is what the present study tries to stress as a highly important problem to be solved.

The main findings of the study regarding teachers’ knowledge indicates that teachers are aware of and familiar with the TCs they are presenting to their students with the help of their textbooks, which do not ignore such awareness or familiarity of the TCs. However most of the teachers identified culture as factual knowledge transmitted through them, or the textbooks, to their students. Some of the teachers appreciated the deep definition of culture and described culture as skills where the English culture(s) are still in focus, but now the students’ own culture is also presented, and explaining to their students how this may affect positively their own culture and their understanding of TCs. Only a few teachers accepted culture as a bi-directional belief, which will help their students’ cultural awareness where they are presenting a deeper explanation of culture in their classrooms, and preparing them for intercultural encounters. The underlying idea here is that intercultural encounters may be enriched by all cultures taking part (See Figure 5.1, p.142). Significantly, teachers’ definitions of ICU and ICC reflect building their students’ curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbeliefs about other cultures and beliefs about their own culture; and building their students’ knowledge of social groups, their products and their practices. This reflection may prepare students to be more open to the idea of universality of humanity, being empathetic with others and being prepared to justify themselves.

When talking about the place of culture in ELT the majority of teachers agreed on presenting TCs in their classroom because they believe that this understanding will give their students the opportunities to be more open to others and make them more empathetic. I categorized the ELT teaching objectives into general teaching objectives; language teaching objectives; and culture teaching objectives. Most teachers were willing
to provide their students with general teaching objectives and language teaching objectives to help them acquire the knowledge in order to succeed in their academic studies. However, because of the changing world and its present cultural needs, and because of the multicultural society we are living in, teachers try to present culture teaching objectives as a priority in their classrooms, even though some of them lack time or cultural preparation.

When teachers were asked about how they perceive the teaching of ICC in their classrooms their cultural teaching objectives could be categorized into three dimensions: the knowledge dimension, where teachers provide their students with general background information; the skills dimension, where teachers prepare students for future intercultural encounters by giving them social and sociolinguistics skills; and finally, the attitudinal dimension, which develops positive attitudes towards other cultures in general and TCs in particular, with the ultimate goal of promoting tolerance and empathy, and in the long run, creating conditions for peaceful coexistence. Teachers were interested in promoting their students’ ability to be empathetic with people living in other cultures. The three types of cultural objectives can be seen as stages in a cumulative process that teachers are trying to achieve, within the time constraints (See Figure 5.2, p. 157).

Regarding how English language teachers approach the teaching of ICC in their classrooms, and what their practices are in doing so these could be divided into three pedagogies: pedagogy of information, which provides students with factual information about the English speaking countries; pedagogy of preparation, which aims at preparing students for behaving appropriately when meeting people from English speaking countries; and pedagogy of encounter, which aims at reducing ethnocentric views by fostering positive attitudes towards, and respect for, representatives of both TCs and other cultures in general. Even though most teachers stated that their main cultural objective was to foster tolerance and empathy, few of them applied teaching strategies beyond the level of transmission of facts. Moreover, regarding teachers’ classroom practice, this
study found that the teaching activities practiced frequently are mainly teacher-centered, rather than being student-centered, though some teachers also ask their students to explore aspects of TCs, to compare cultures or to reflect on cultural differences. Significantly, those teachers who believe that language and culture can be integrated are the ones with beliefs supporting the teaching of ICC, while the ones who believe that culture teaching and language teaching cannot be integrated are the ones who have awareness of contextual constraints of teaching ICC.

In this study the most important aspect was to explore what preparation teachers have had or wish to have for including ICC in their teaching. Most teachers agreed that their preparation programs lacked a focus on culture as a main component of the teaching process, and ignored its importance in creating a ‘good teacher’. It is the same situation with the in-service training courses, where most teachers agreed that those courses were adequate in number, but not in content. Definitely, teachers realized that the world at the present time is in a constant change, and therefore, they are hoping to receive more preparation in the cultural field, in order to be able to prepare their students for this change.

To conclude the findings, we can identify that English language teachers concentrated on the factual knowledge and skills parts of teaching the language most of the time, which could be categorized within the pedagogy of information and the pedagogy of preparation respectively; either when they were presenting culture; when they were representing their teaching objectives; when they perceived the teaching of the ICC; or when they were using activities in their classrooms (See 5.4.5). Less concentration was paid to actual teaching of culture, which could be categorized within the pedagogy of encounter; despite their realization of the importance of it to their students and their openness to other cultures. Figure 6.1 shows how culture in ELT classroom is presented within the three pedagogies mentioned above.
Exploring English Language Teachers’ Perception

Referring to Figure 6.1, it is clear that what makes English language teachers concentrate more on the two first pedagogies are their pre-service and/or in-service training course, which lacks culture teaching preparation. Even though some of the teachers were trained outside of Bahrain in how to integrate culture with language teaching, they lacked time inside their classrooms; which caused them to concentrate more on preparing students for the final exam and how they can be successful in their academic studies later on.
6.2. Contribution of the Study

My study could be justified in the light of the two following inadequacies of earlier research: first, there has been an inclination to disregard the ‘what to teach?’ question in the FL teaching research field, indicated in this study by English language teachers presenting factual knowledge and language skills to their students. The matter itself has frequently been surpassed by methodological “how to teach the language?”, represented in this study within three pedagogies: pedagogy of information; pedagogy of preparation; and pedagogy of encounter. However, the challenging “why to teach the language?” should also be asked more frequently (Byram, 1997 & 2003), where English language teachers should be trained to teach the language and its culture(s), and ask themselves such questions as: why do we provide general background information of TCs in our ELT classrooms? Why do we have to prepare our students for future encounters? And why do we have to promote their empathy and tolerance? Hopefully, this study addresses all three educational questions. Secondly teachers’ cognitions have been mostly overlooked in relation to certain curricular topics in ELT. On a more particular level, there is no research at all in Bahrain if not in the Gulf region, concerning English language teachers’ perception about culture in ELT. Therefore, this study is an attempt to fill this void.

Optimistically, my findings will be useful to any person wanting to find out how ELT teachers in a certain context, view culture teaching and how their views presently influence their teaching. They might also help teachers reflect on their own beliefs and teaching practice, on where they stand on the “favorably disposed-unfavourably disposed” scale presented by Sercu et al. (2005), and which of three types of pedagogies presented in chapter 5 best describe their own methodology. These findings may serve as a starting point for discussions with colleagues, for the exchange of ideas regarding the incorporation of an intercultural dimension in one’s teaching and for proposals to jointly reassess existing teaching practices.
6.3. Implications

The findings presented in my thesis request a changed attitude towards culture teaching. The implications for a variety of professionals who might benefit from the knowledge gained through my empirical study can be summarized in the following points:

6.3.1. Regarding Curriculum Designers

Official policies, as stated in curricular guidelines or other official documents, are likely to play an important role in developing teachers’ implicit theories (Sercu et al., 2005, p.179). Therefore, it is of great importance that curriculum designers in the future establish their principles on national and international research to a greater extent than appears to have been the case concerning the Bahraini 2003 ELC. The lack of dialogue between authority and research discourse could result in the reproduction of traditional views on what ELT is all about. It is frequently suggested that research does not reach the practitioners and the classrooms. The national guidelines could be an effective mediator. However, as a channel it is tremendously slow, since the Bahraini ELC is revised as seldom as almost once a decade. Therefore, it is important to turn the gaze towards other actors in the pedagogical field.

6.3.2. Regarding Textbook Authors and Designers of Teaching Materials

Textbooks continue representing the guiding principle of many ELT courses throughout the world, and Bahrain is no exception. Most of my participants follow their textbooks selected by the MoE more or less strictly, although they also use additional materials (video tapes, newspapers, magazines, internet, etc.). Those materials are used for different reasons, such as, enhancing students’ motivation, responding to the students’ perceived need for authenticity, breaking the dullness of the classroom, and providing the students’ with fresh, up-to-date materials. Additionally, many participants reported that they have an adequate amount of the cultural aspects in their textbook; however, it is not used properly, if at all. The above highlights the need for textbook authors to consider
carefully the knowledge and skills that language learners are expected to develop in today’s post-modern society, by helping the profession develop in a more ICD. Importantly, they should turn to existing research in order to devise materials that will provide the teachers with alternative and assist them in their attempt to teach culture with a view of promoting ICC and understanding. They also have to be familiar with ICC teaching methodology and could benefit greatly from receiving positive and negative comments from teachers regarding the material they currently use.

6.3.3. Regarding Teacher Trainers

Novice teachers are in need of a multifaceted and enriching education, which provides opportunities for learning that are both cognitive and experiential. Nowadays teachers are responsible for introducing their students to intercultural learning with everything it involves in the form of cognitive, action-related, and affective aspects. Therefore, teacher education must provide them with practical and theoretical foundation for those responsibilities, but often it is not organized in a way that helps teachers achieve their goals concerning the teaching of culture in a professional way. It is up to the teacher to introduce elements of culture learning, to develop teaching materials in a pedagogically acceptable way that allows for discussion, reflection and professional development.

Most of my participants revealed that more attention should be paid to the ICD in language teacher education. This applies both to the language studies and the subsequent pedagogical and educational studies. The results recommend that what must be added to the present scheme are methodology courses including introductions of the English Language and culture learning theory, as well as explanations of how the teaching of the language and its culture(s) can be integrated, and which learning environments and teaching approaches have the potential of promoting ICC. It is necessary that future teachers should be trained and provided with tools for teaching culture in their classrooms.
6.3.4. Regarding the Schools and the Directorate of Training

In-service teachers should be given more opportunities to educate themselves further to be able to develop professionally, and keep up the standard of their teaching. In addition, professional development presumes more time for self-reflection and reflective discussions with their colleagues. However, this is often surpassed by practical problems related to classroom management and extra-curricular activities. Collegial co-operation is needed if teachers are to be able to develop teaching strategies which will also take local conditions into consideration.

6.3.5. Regarding the Language Teachers

Eventually, teachers are the ones responsible for what kind of language teaching the students receive. Their perceptions, convictions and beliefs decide which aspects are practically applied in their classrooms. It follows that trying to adjust teachers’ perceptions hold the best promise for changing teaching practice. Teachers can observe how their own perceptions and practices change as a result of such activities through journal writing, case studies and other methods for reflective analysis.

6.4. Recommendations

Derived from the previous research discussed here, and the results of my study, I would like to present the following recommendations as to how ELT could be developed in a more intercultural direction:

1. The role of English as an international language must be stressed and ELT must aim at turning students into cultural mediators and competent intercultural language users, rather than unsuccessful deficient native speakers.
2. There should not be a restricted focus on the traditional English culture(s) while teaching of English. The language should be taught and learnt as a language of wider communication, common to a large number of individuals in many different cultures.

3. Culture must not be considered as a fifth skill, introduced only if there is time. Rather it should permeate everything that is done in the English language classroom, and be thought about from a process perspective, rather than the traditional product perspective.

4. Values and ways of thinking should be discussed rather than pure information of facts, which language education has traditionally encouraged.

5. Classroom activities should be encouraged, which include intercultural encounters, the same as reflection as a method for awakening the students’ empathy and respect for otherness.

6.5. Suggestions for Further Research

Two fields of inquiry were included in this study: culture in ELT teaching, and language teacher cognition. Both fields contain many interesting topics for further research. For example, valuable insights into factors influencing teachers’ pedagogical and practical knowledge could be gained through longitudinal studies. For example, the extent to which teachers’ personal theories are changed or modified in relation to different curricular topics affected, i.e. by increasing experience, in-service training and critical incidents in their own lives.

This study explores culture in ELT from teachers’ perceptions, which is just one among several available perceptions. The language teachers’ views could be explored with the intention of comparing the implemented with the achieved curriculum. As far as I am aware, there are no such studies set at any level of school in Bahrain, neither in the
Arabian Gulf region. I believe that much remains to be done, particularly concerning the affective approach to culture teaching. It is within this orientation that concerted efforts should be made to develop both teaching techniques and appropriate assessment tools. Our common concern should be the development of English language teaching at all levels. This is in order to ensure that our teachers are given the best possible training, not only to cope, but to make a contribution in the intercultural world in which they are living.

6.6. Conclusion

It is apparent that different cultures are increasingly living alongside each other. Therefore, language-and-culture learning has to be more complex and rich than the emphasis on CC in EFL tends to suggest making them understand each other, and not simply communicating information.

In that case, language-and-culture teachers need a more complex and enriching education in both its academic and pedagogical dimension. Teacher education requires providing learning opportunities which are both cognitive and experiential, and accepting that language teachers are the most important mediators where they need to experience the TCs and analyze it. Teachers need to reflect on their experience as well as implement comparative analysis of their own culture and TC. Also, teachers need to appreciate the implications of cultural learning, both knowledge and skills, for their practices in the classroom in addition to their teaching in the field. The responsibilities of language teachers are enormous for introducing learners, at any age to learning, is challenging and thought provoking, and modifies their awareness of the world and their cultural identity, as members of a given social and national group (Holliday et al., 2010). Teacher education has to tackle the implications and provide them with the practical and theoretical support for those responsibilities.
Teachers themselves need to demonstrate ICC to influence teachers’ perceptions and to assist the reshaping of their teaching practice, so they become better able to promote the acquisition of ICC. They should revisit their common notions of what it means to teach and learn an FL in the light of their encounter with a new philosophy, a philosophy that truly recognizes the intercultural nature of all communication between speakers originating from different cultural backgrounds. When teachers believe that teaching and learning an FL is always an intercultural process, and teacher education provides them with a firm basis for reshaping their teaching practice, then they will adequately prepare their students for the intercultural world in which they are living.
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Appendices
### Appendix 1

#### A Textbook Content Sample

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Appendix 2

A Sample of a Chapter

1 Identity

In this module you . . .

- Talk about different kinds of identity and give a short presentation about yourself.
- Listen to monologues, a radio programme, an interview and a presentation.
- Read extracts from a biography and letters. Use listening and reading strategies.
- Write a formal or informal letter.
- Revise the main tenses in English.

Warm-up

1. Look at the photos of Seb and the people in his life. Listen and identify who is speaking about him.

2. Listen again. Which of the Key Words are used to describe Seb?

Key Words: Personality

- ambitious
- careless
- chatty
- cheerful
- childish
- competitive
- considerate
- conventional
- easy-going
- hard-working
- idealistic
- impatient
- individualistic
- kind
- likeable
- moody
- outgoing
- popular
- reckless
- reliable
- reserved
- selfish
- sensible
- sensitive
- sentimental
- shy
- sociable
- sympathetic

What do you think the good and bad sides of Seb’s character are?

Example: good side = cheerful
bad side = impatient with machines

3. Listen and use these words to complete the sentences about Sarah.

- deep down, a bit, tends to, not very, seems, can be, rather

1. But she’s __________ reserved and shy, maybe because she’s too sensitive.
2. Sarah __________ keep to herself a lot and she’s ________ sociable.
3. I think she’s ________ sentimental.
4. She __________ moody, especially when she’s tired.
5. When you first meet Sarah, she __________ a bit unfriendly.
6. But when you get to know her you realise that she’s really good person.

Which of the expressions above do we use to express negative personality traits politely?

4. Choose three different people who know you. Write what they might say about you.

Example. This person thinks that I’m cheerful and kind. She also probably thinks . . .


6. Work in pairs. Read your descriptions to your partner. Guess the people.
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I Biography

Before you start

1. Think about what you hope to achieve in your life. How would you like other people to remember you? Tell your partner.

Example: I would like to spend my lifetime helping children in orphanages. I hope people will remember me as someone who cared about others.

Reading

2. Read the Strategies.

Reading Strategies: Revision

- Before reading, look at the title, pictures and the first couple of lines of the text. Look for clues to help you predict what kind of text it is and what it is about.
- Read the text to get the general idea. Ignore words you don't know.
- Read the text again. Try to work out the meaning of important new words.
- Read any comprehension questions and try to think of possible answers. Then find answers to the questions in the text.

Use the Strategies to answer these questions.

1. Where would you expect to find this kind of text?
2. Why is Al-Abairyedh's work so famous for writing in Arabic?
3. How does Al-Abairyedh use his knowledge of the Arabic language to write his work?
4. Which other writers influenced him?
5. What does his work demonstrate in his writing?
6. What does the introduction mean when it says "people of the arts ... [broaden] the hope of a better tomorrow."

Vocabulary: Synonyms

Try to understand the meanings of words 1-10 from the text. Use the context to help you. Decide whether each one is a noun, adjective or verb. Then match them with their meanings (a-j):

1. turbulent a) practical knowledge, skill
2. praise b) practice, copy
3. expertise c) disorderly, violent
4. renowned d) comparison, precision
5. clarity e) abandon, ignore
6. proficient f) admire
7. bygone g) dream, ambition
8. famous h) prominent
9. emulate i) skillful
10. neglect j) previous, old, past

Use a dictionary to look up any other new words.

Ibrahim

Al-Abairyedh

It is often said that no society achieves progress without the contributions of its poets and people of the arts. In a troubled and turbulent world it is the presence of such people that brightens the hope of a better tomorrow.

Bahraini poet, mathematician, astronomer, educator and diplomat Ibrahim Al-Abairyedh died in 2002, aged 94. Al-Abairyedh was an exceptional man, and poet without parallel, whose literary works have been praised by millions of people throughout the Arab world.

Al-Abairyedh was born in Bahrain in 1908. His mother died soon after his birth but his father stayed in India for many years, working as a pearl trader. He came to Bahrain when he was 14 years old, where he learned Arabic for the first time. He then returned to India to complete his studies, before settling in Bahrain in 1926. Al-Abairyedh then began an intense study of the Arabic language and the growths of well-known poets.

The following year he taught English in Al-Hadaya School, and realised that education had become a priority if the country was to grow and progress. The urge to improve education led him to start his own institution, and in 1933 the famous Al-Abairyedh School opened its gates. He later worked for a number of years in Bahrain and Delhi radio stations.

Many years later he was able to use his experience and expertise to the benefit of the Bahraini government. He was Speaker of the National Assembly in the 1970s and also worked as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Proficient in Arabic, English, Persian and Urdu, Al-Abairyedh worked as a translator for several years. He is particularly renowned for translating the poetry of the Persian writer Omar Khayyam, who was one of the inspirations for his own writing.

Al-Abairyedh used his vast knowledge to distinguish between styles: "I admired Al-Mutanabbi, but did not want to emulate his style because it was not appropriate for our era," he commented. He was also inspired by illustrious poets like Iba Abu Nafthi and Gihan Khalil Ghanem, drawing from their focus on human sentiments and imagination in his own writing.

His own literary works show variety of thought and expression, and are a vital link between a bygone era and modern Bahrain. His plays and poems cover numerous themes, most notably human expressions and romanticism.

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Identity

Vocabulary: Wordbuilding (Revision)

4. Use the endings to make adjectives from the words below (a-k). Some groups can have more than one ending.

-a, -ed, -ing, -ful, -ious, -ish, -(a)ble, -less, -al, -ic, -istic, -(o)n, -ive

a) mood, stuff, happiness, cloud
b) hope, care, help
c) practice, nature, logic
d) ideal, real, individual

e) decision, create, imagination
f) importance, tolerate, difference

- (i) lie, rely, sense

- (j) interest, tire, bore

- (k) self, child

Make adverbs from the adjectives in a, b and c. Then try to add more adjectives and adverbs to each group. Check spellings.

5. Look at the words in Exercise 4. In which of them is there a change in word stress?

Example

ideal → idealistic

Listen and check your answers.

6. Put the underlined words in the correct form.

Shirin Ebadi, the (1) Iran human rights activist, was (2) birth in 1947. She was one of the first female judges in Iran, but was forced to (3) resign after the Revolution of 1979. She is now a (4) law and (5) teach at the University of Tehran. She is known for promoting (6) peace and (7) democracy solutions to serious problems in (8) social. She is (9) admiration by the general public for fighting for rights to (10) free of speech. Her (11) refuse to be silenced has sometimes meant being (12) prison. She also fights for the rights of (13) refuse women and (14) child. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003.

7. Write notes about someone you admire. Include some of these things:

date of birth (and death), why he/she is famous, achievements, type of character, best features, why you admire him/her especially.

8. Work in pairs. Tell your partner about the person you have chosen.

QUOTE... UNQUOTE

"What is the secret of the rose? Is it its colour, scent or shape? The secret is in its spirit, in its life, in the combination of all these elements."

Hisham Al-Arayyedh (1900-2002)
2 Who Are You?

Before you start

1. What do you think your handwriting says about you? Write your opinions on a piece of paper.

Example: My handwriting is quite messy but I'm a very organised person. I think it shows my creative side.

Tell the class.

2. Look at the three pieces of handwriting (1–3). Try to match them with the personality descriptions (a–c).

a) This person is individualistic – someone who likes doing things in their own way. He/She is also a perfectionist who always makes sure that everything is just right.

b) This person is ambitious and idealistic – someone who has strong principles and beliefs. He/She is also very logical.

c) This person is quite conventional – someone who doesn't like to be different. He/She is also rather shy but is a good observer of people.

Check your answers on page 94.

Hi Sue

How (6) are you getting on? (7) Has anything happened at home while (8) I've been away? (9) Have you been doing anything interesting? (10) We're getting the boat to Athens and (11) we've quite late, so (12) we'll probably get home after midnight yesterday, we went to a street market and (13) I bought some really nice things and I (14) I bought some really nice things and I (15) I bought some really nice things and I (16) I'll see you when (17) we get back.

Love,

Emma

3. Work in pairs. Give your partner the piece of paper with your handwriting on it from Exercise 1. Use the information on page 94 to 'analyse' your partner's handwriting. Tell your partner your analysis. Does your partner agree with it? Let your partner tell the class.

Example: Qass says 'I'm very ambitious. I don't think that's true!'

Grammar Focus

Graphology - Handwriting Analysis

I suppose I am quite a sporty person. (1) I play tennis and basketball quite a lot. (2) I'm also learning judo, though I'm still not very good at it. Unfortunately, I haven't got much time to practice as (3) I've been very busy with my exams. Anyway, when (4) I finish school (5) I'm going to do an intensive summer course that they're organising at my local club.

3. One of the worst experiences that (17) has ever happened to me was last year. I was riding my horse, Toby, in the woods. (18) It had rained a lot the night before and the ground was very wet. (19) We were going down a steep path when (20) I saw a huge snake...

Tenses

Revision

4. Look at the underlined verbs in the three texts. What time (past/present/future) do they refer to?

5. Match the examples underlined in the text (1–20) with these tenses and verb forms (a–i).

a) Present Simple
b) Present Continuous
c) Present Perfect
d) Present Perfect Continuous
e) Past Simple
f) Past Continuous
g) Past Perfect
h) 'going to'
i) 'will'
6. Match the tenses and verb forms from Exercise 5 with the uses (1–9).

1. activities going on at the time of speaking/personal arrangements for the future/temporary routines or habits
2. activities that are repeated regularly/future facts
3. intentions for the future
4. actions that happened at a specific time in the past
5. activities that form a background to events in the past
6. events that happened before other past events
7. activities in the past where the time is not important/states that started in the past and are still true
8. activities that started in the past and continue up to now
9. predictions based on opinion, belief or knowledge/decisions about the future taken at the moment of speaking

Grammar Summary 1, page 112.

Practice

7. Underline the contractions in these sentences. What auxiliary verbs do they stand for?

a) He’s been studying a lot recently.
   - He has been
b) We didn’t do it on purpose.
   - We didn’t

c) I’ve had problems with my computer lately.
   - I have had

d) We’re going out tonight.
   - We’re

8. Pronunciation. Listen to the sentences and write down the contractions you hear.

   Example 1 = ’s (has)

9. Match the sentences (1–7) with the situations (a–g).

   1. Have you been playing football in the rain again?
      - I play football every day with the team.
   2. I play football every day with the team.
      - I’m playing a football game on the computer.
   3. I’m playing a football game on the computer.
      - I’m playing in a football match at 10 o’clock.
   4. I’m playing in a football match at 10 o’clock.
      - I’ve already played and won 20 games.
   5. I’ve already played and won 20 games.
      - I was playing football when I fell badly.
   6. I was playing football when I fell badly.
      - I had played 40 games when I was injured for the first time.
   7. I had played 40 games when I was injured for the first time.
      - a professional footballer talking about his job
   a) someone saying how good they are
   b) someone giving an excuse why they can’t help someone now
   c) someone explaining why they can’t go shopping the next day
   d) someone explaining why they can’t go shopping the next day
   e) a retired footballer looking back on his career
   f) a mother to a boy whose clothes are muddy

time expressions below.

Example

I usually play basketball on Tuesday night.

usually, never, now, this weekend, last year, in the future, next year, in 1999, for three weeks, since,
at ten o’clock, twice a week, when, while, recently, for a year now
**Before you start**

1. Put the words below into the correct categories in the Key Words box.

   advanced, democratic, emotional, friendly, liberal, modern, nature lovers, noisy, outgoing, powerful, violent

**Key Words: National Identity**

- **country**: developed, developing, historic, innovative, multicultural, wealthy, well-organised
- **people**: class-conscious, communicative, conservative, excitable, family-orientated, law-abiding, nationalistic, polite, proud, religious, reserved, serious, suspicious of foreigners, tolerant, traditional

2. Look at the photos of Britain. Choose eight adjectives or expressions from Exercise 1 and the Key Words that reflect your view of Britain and the British. Tell the class.

   **Example**: To me the British seem to be quite traditional.

**Listening**

3. Read the Strategies.

**LISTENING STRATEGIES: Revision**

- Before listening, look at the task. Try to guess answers to the questions.
- The first time you listen, answer as many questions as you can.
- The second time, answer the questions you missed.
- Don’t worry if you don’t understand every word.

Listen to a radio phone-in programme. Use the Strategies to decide if these statements are true (T) or false (F). Then listen again and check your answers.

1. Great Britain is made up of four different nations: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
2. In a poll, British people described themselves as tolerant but suspicious of foreigners and reserved.
3. Eighty-seven percent of British people thought that the British were class-conscious.
4. The first caller thinks Britain is an innovative place.
5. She describes herself as English rather than British.
6. The second caller feels European.
7. The third caller is of Indian origin.
8. She thinks Britain is multicultural but there is an intolerant minority.
9. The last caller thinks Britain is a modern country.
10. He is a Scottish nationalist and doesn’t feel British.
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Speaking

7. Make a list of good and bad things about living in your country, town or region.

Example: Good things: rock climbing, sailing, exhibitions

Now in pairs, ask and answer the questions below. Use the expressions from the Function File.

Example: I’m really into the arts.

1. What kind of things do you like about living in ...?
2. What sort of things do you dislike about living in ...?
3. Where else would you like to live? Why?

Tell the class.

Vocabulary: Multi-part Verbs

8. Complete the description with these verbs in the correct form.

get at, ring up, go to, take off, get by, put up with, get on with, look forward to, check in

When I am abroad, I always (1) look forward to getting back home. I start feeling homesick as soon as the plane (2) . When I (3) a new place, the first thing I do after I have (4) at the hotel is to (5) my family and have a chat with them. Unfortunately, I have to travel a lot on business and I often go to the States. I (6) the Americans very well – they are always very friendly. I speak good English too, so I (7) in the States without any problems. I’m not very keen on American food, but I (8) it. The problem is that I’m a stay-at-home. My sister always (9) me – she says I’m boring and unadventurous. But, as the saying goes, ‘home sweet home’.

Comparing Cultures

How would you describe your country or region and the people from it?

QUOTE... UNQUOTE

‘An Englishman is never happy unless he is miserable; a Scotsman is never at home but when he is abroad.’

Anonymous, 19th century
Dear Matthew,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Patrick Murphy and I've just found out I'm a cousin of yours. I'm kind of interested in the history of our family (1) so because I've started doing some research. I've found out that my grandfather, Adam, came over to America in the 1930s (2) when he left Ireland. He was the brother of your grandmother Mary.

(3) Well, however; here's some info about me. I live in Des Moines, Iowa, with my wife (Cheryl) and two kids (Pat, 18, and Kim, 15). There are about fifty of us altogether here! Here's a picture of some of us at a recent wedding. I'm the one on the far right.

(4) Instead of sending a postcard (can I call you Matt?), can you do me a favor? Can you send me a photo of your family? It'd be great if you could (5) also/besides send me any info you have about your folks back in the 'old country'. I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours,
Patrick Murphy

---

Dear Ms Nassif,

Thank you for the interest you have shown in our summer courses at Exmoor English College. I enclose a brochure with information about the courses we offer (6) plus/also the accommodation we provide. It lists the trips and activities we organise (7) as well as such as canoeing and horse-riding.

Exmoor English College is a small school (8) although/however, we have an excellent teaching staff (9) because/in our small number there is a friendly atmosphere at the school and we can offer our students plenty of individual attention.

(10) In addition/Anyway, I enclose a brochure with local course information. (11) Because/Although Dulverton is a small town, there are plenty of things to do here. (12) Despite As well as being in the National Park of Exmoor, Dulverton is an unspoilt part of the coast.

(13) If/When you are still interested in the course, I would be grateful if you could write us a letter in English (14) because so that we can judge your level. Could you please tell us about yourself and your experience as a learner of English?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Dutton
Speaking:  
A Short Presentation

Before you start
1. Listen to Richard's presentation and answer these questions:
   1. What are Richard's interests and hobbies?
   2. Why does he remember the poetry competition so well?
   3. What kind of job would he like to do?
   Was the presentation formal or informal?

Vague Language
2. Listen again. Complete the sentences with these words.
   some kind, fortyish or so, that sort of, what's its name?, something like, sort of, about
   Sometimes I get up at (1) __________ 6.30.
   Next month we'll be discussing a Sherlock Holmes novel ... (2) __________ The Hound of the Baskervilles, that's it.
   The competition was held in (3) __________ of sports centre.
   She was (4) __________ and had a very kind face.
   It was made of (5) __________ wood ...
   I felt (6) __________ relaxed but excited at the same time.
   I think I'd like to be (7) __________ the manager of a sports centre.

Chatroom

Linking
3. Classify the sentences below (1–7) into the following categories:
   a) starting the talk  b) introducing topics  
   c) adding information  d) ending the talk
   1. I'm also a keen basketball player.
   2. So, to finish off, my ambitions and plans for the future.
   3. OK, now something else about me.
   4. I've been asked to tell you all about myself.
   5. Another thing I'm really interested in is books.
   6. Well, that's it. Thanks for listening to me.
   7. First, something about my interests and lifestyle.

Give a short presentation about yourself. Follow the stages.

Stage 1
Make notes about these things:
- family
- your lifestyle (interests, hobbies etc.)
- one of the most important experiences in your life
- your ambitions, plans for the future
Think of one or two false things to add.

Stage 2
Read the Strategies.

Speaking Strategies: Revision
- When you don't know a word or expression, try not to stop completely.
- Use vague language to explain more or less what you want to say, e.g. it's a sort of ...
- Describe things, e.g. it's a thing you use to ...

Work in groups. Use your notes and the Strategies to give a short presentation about yourself.

Talkback
Try to guess the false information in the presentation.

Example
I don't think it's true that ...
Exploring English Language Teachers’ Perception

**Culture Corner 1**

**The History of English**

**Caxton introduces the printing press**

1. Try to put these events in order.
   a) Caxton introduces the printing press.
   b) Norman Invasion of England.
   c) Samuel Johnson’s dictionary.
   d) Germanic invasions of Roman Britain.
   e) Viking raids and Danish invasions.
   f) English is used at court again.

2. **Listen to the lecture and check your answers.**
   Write down the dates.
   Example: Germanic invasions – around 449 AD

3. **Listen again and choose the best answer.**
   1. Why are there so few Celtic words in English?
      a) the Saxon invasion took a long time
      b) the Celts and Saxons did not mix
      c) the two languages were too similar
   2. Why is it difficult to understand old Anglo-Saxon?
      a) most of the words were different
      b) the spelling was different
      c) the grammar was unusual
   3. Why did the Danish invasions influence English grammar?
      a) Danish grammar was different from Angle-Saxon
      b) the two languages were similar so they mixed and simplified
      c) new Danish endings appeared on some words
   4. What happened after the Norman Conquest?
      a) English disappeared for a long time
      b) French became the most important language
      c) English was the language of culture
   5. Why did English become the official language again in the 15th century?
      a) because of great writers like Chaucer
      b) because of the printing press
      c) because it was used by their ruling classes
   6. What changed in the 16th and 17th centuries?
      a) English pronunciation
      b) English grammar
      c) English written style
   7. In which way is English different from other European languages?
      a) it was standardised a lot later
      b) it has a lot of scientific words
      c) it does not have an official academy
   8. What has been the most important influence on English in the last few years?
      a) the old empire (e.g. India/Australia)
      b) the United States
      c) Europe (e.g. France)

4. **Listen to eight people talking. Try to identify their accents. Use the clues in the text to help you.**


5. **Work in pairs. Answer these questions.**
   1. How has your language changed in the last few years?
   2. What differences are there between the dialects of different cities and regions?
   3. How do you think your language will change in the future?

   Discuss your answers with the class.
## Appendix 3

### Observation Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Behaviour</th>
<th>Management of Self</th>
<th>Management of Learning</th>
<th>Working with Others</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students’ Names</td>
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<td>prepared</td>
<td>attractive</td>
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<td>Self controlled</td>
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<td>Complete tasks</td>
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<td>participates</td>
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<td>Works independently</td>
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<td>cooperates</td>
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<td>Open to ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thinks critically</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Appreciate team work</td>
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**Key:**

- **H**: High = most of the time (3 Marks)
- **G**: Good = quite often (2 Marks)
- **M**: Minimal = very few (1 Mark)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>45+45</th>
<th>Total 90</th>
<th>30%</th>
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240
Appendix 1

Questionnaire

1. Survey

Section 1: Personal data

The first section of the questionnaire asks you to provide some personal data.

1. Are you male or a female?
   Please tick the correct answer.
   - Male
   - Female

2. What year were you born?
   Please enter your year of birth. You can only use numbers, not letters.

3. What degree(s) did you obtain after you finished secondary education?
   Please list the degrees you obtained. You can type in the names in your native tongue.

1.4. What is your native tongue? Or if you consider yourself bilingual: what are your native tongues?

1.5. What is your nationality? Or, if you have more than one nationality: what are your nationalities?

1.6. What foreign language do you teach?
   Or if you teach more than one foreign language: What is your main language? Of which foreign language do you teach most hours?
   - German as a foreign language
   - French as a foreign language
   - English as a foreign language
   - Spanish as a foreign language
   - My native tongue as a second language
   - Still other languages, namely

1.7. If you teach more than one language: What language(s) apart from your main language do you teach?
   Please tick the language(s) you teach. Should you teach any other language(s) which have not been listed, please type them in the area below.
   - I teach only one language
   - Apart from my main language I teach German as a foreign language
   - Apart from my main language I teach French as a foreign language
   - Apart from my main language I teach English as a foreign language
   - Apart from my main language I teach Spanish as a foreign language
1. How long have you been teaching foreign languages?
I have been teaching foreign languages for ________ years

2. Survey

Section 2: Your current teaching job

The questions in this section concern your current teaching job.

2.1. How many hours do you teach per week?

2.2. What percentage of your school’s population are ethnic minority community children?
Should you be teaching in more than one school, please answer this question and the following questions with respect to the school where you have most hours. Please tick the percentage that best matches your school.

- 0%
- less than 1%
- 1% - 10%
- 10% - 30%
- 30% - 50%
- more than 50%

2.3. What kind of education does your school offer?
Please tick the option(s) that match your school. Should your school offer other kinds of education, please specify them in the typing area below.

- general secondary education
- artistic secondary education
- vocational secondary education
- other kinds of education, namely:
2.4. What foreign languages are taught in your school?
Please tick all foreign languages taught in your school.
- Classical Latin
- Classical Greek
- French as a foreign language
- English as a foreign language
- German as a foreign language
- Spanish as a foreign language
- Others, namely:

2.5. Any other characteristics of your school you would like to mention
Any additional information pertinent to your school you might like to add:

---

Section 3: You as a teacher

You have now accessed the third section of the questionnaire. The questions in this section concern your perceptions of what it is that you try to achieve with your pupils.

3.1. What do you try to do as a teacher?
The following four questions ask you to choose a forced choice. For every pair of statements please tick the statement that best matches your view regarding your teaching. Knowledge will often be difficult for you to choose, that one choice may only have a slight edge over the other.

(1)  ☐ I want to be on good terms with my pupils.
     ☐ I want to fulfill the curricular requirements for my subject.

(2)  ☐ I try to impart to my pupils the skills, knowledge and attitudes they will need in life.
     ☐ I try to enthuse my pupils for my subject.

(3)  ☐ I try to impart to my pupils the skills, knowledge and attitudes they will need to further their proficiency in the foreign language they are learning.
     ☐ I try to coach my pupils on their way to adulthood.

(4)  ☐ I want to pass on expert knowledge regarding my subject to my pupils.
     ☐ I want to support my pupils when they have personal problems.

3.2. How do you perceive the objectives of foreign language teaching?
Below, eight possible objectives of foreign language teaching have been listed. Please rank them in order of importance through assigning each objective a number between 1 and 8. You assign the number "1" to the objective which you consider most important, "2" to the objective which you consider second in importance, and so on. You have to assign a number to each objective, and you can only assign each number once.

(1) Enthuse my pupils for learning foreign languages.
    1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

(2) Promote my pupils’ familiarity with the culture, the civilization of the countries where the language which they are learning is spoken.
    1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8
3.3. What do you understand by ‘culture teaching’ in a foreign language teaching context?

Below, nine possible objectives of culture teaching have been listed. Please rank them in order of importance through assigning each objective a number between 1 and 9. You assign the number “1” to the objective which you consider most important, “2” to the objective which you consider second in importance, and so on. As with the previous question, you have to assign a number to each objective, and you can only assign each number once.

1. Provide information about the history, geography and political conditions of the foreign culture(s).  
2. Provide information about daily life and routines.  
3. Provide information about shared values and beliefs.  
4. Provide experiences with a rich variety of cultural expressions (literature, music, theatre, film, etc.).  
5. Develop attitudes of openness and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures.

(6) Promote reflection on cultural differences.  
(7) Promote increased understanding of students’ own culture.  
(8) Promote the ability to empathise with people living in other cultures.  
(9) Promote the ability to handle intercultural contact situations.

3.4. How is your teaching time distributed over ‘language teaching’ and ‘culture teaching’?

Please tick the option that best corresponds with the average distribution of teaching time over ‘language teaching’ and ‘culture teaching’:

- 100% language teaching-0% culture teaching
- 80% language teaching-20% culture teaching
- 60% language teaching-40% culture teaching
- 40% language teaching-60% culture teaching
- 20% language teaching-80% culture teaching
- 100% integration of language-and-culture teaching

3.5. Do you have the feeling that you would like to devote more time to ‘culture teaching’ during your foreign language teaching classes, but that somehow you never get round to it?

Please tick the answer that best matches your opinion.
- Yes, very much so
- Yes, up to a certain extent
- No, not particularly
- No, not at all
- No opinion

3.6. If you have the feeling you would like to devote more time to ‘culture teaching’ but do not get round to it, what may be the reasons for that?

Please type in any reasons you see in the area below.
### Questionnaire

#### 4.3. Of the countries, cultures and peoples mentioned above, which one is primarily associated with the foreign language of which you have most hours?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Culture</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</table>

#### 4.4. How would you describe your pupils' perceptions of and ideas regarding the countries and culture(s) usually associated with the foreign language you teach? Please use key words to describe the area below what you think your pupils associate with the country/culture and people(s) that are usually associated with the foreign language you teach. Please distinguish between countries, cultures and peoples when needed.

```plaintext

```

#### 4.5. How frequently do you think your pupils are in contact with the foreign country primarily associated with the language you teach most hours?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

#### 5.2. How frequently do you travel to the foreign country primarily associated with the foreign language of which you have most hours?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
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</table>

#### 5.3. How often do you get into contact with the foreign cultural/people/country primarily associated with the foreign language of which you have most hours while you are at home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media contacts</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</table>

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(1) Literature
    - Very familiar
    - Sufficiently
    - Not sufficiently
    - Not familiar at all

(2) Other cultural expressions (music, drama, art)
    - Very familiar
    - Sufficiently
    - Not sufficiently
    - Not familiar at all

(3) Values and beliefs
    - Very familiar
    - Sufficiently
    - Not sufficiently
    - Not familiar at all

(4) International relations (political, economic and cultural), with students' own country and other countries
    - Very familiar
    - Sufficiently
    - Not sufficiently
    - Not familiar at all
Section 6: Culture in foreign language teaching

The questions in this section concern your culture teaching practice.

6.1. What kind(s) of culture teaching activities do you practise during classroom teaching time?
Below a number of possible culture teaching activities have been listed. Please indicate for each activity how often you practise it during classroom teaching time.

(1) I ask my pupils to think about the image which the media promote of the foreign country.
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(2) I tell my pupils what I heard (or read) about the foreign country or culture.
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(3) I tell my pupils why I find something fascinating or strange about the foreign culture(s).
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(4) I ask my pupils to independently explore an aspect of the foreign culture.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

(5) I use videos, CD-ROMs or the Internet to illustrate an aspect of the foreign culture.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

(6) I ask my pupils to think about what it would be like to live in the foreign country.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

(7) I talk to my pupils about my own experiences in the foreign country.
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(8) I ask my pupils about their experiences in the foreign country.
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(9) I invite a person originating from the foreign country to my classroom.
   Often     Once in a while    Never

(10) I ask my pupils to describe an aspect of their own culture in the foreign language.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

(11) I bring objects originating from the foreign culture to my classroom.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

(12) I ask my pupils to participate in role-play situations in which people from different cultures meet.
    Often     Once in a while    Never

5.4. Please specify any other contacts you have in the area below.
200 Foreign Language Teachers and Intercultural Competence

(13) I decorate my classroom with posters illustrating particular aspects of the foreign culture.
    Often Once in a while Never

(14) I comment on the way in which the foreign culture is represented in the foreign language materials I am using in a particular class.
    Often Once in a while Never

(15) I ask my pupils to compare an aspect of their own culture with that aspect in the foreign culture.
    Often Once in a while Never

(16) I touch upon an aspect of the foreign culture regarding which I feel negatively disposed.
    Often Once in a while Never

(17) I talk with my pupils about stereotypes regarding particular cultures and countries or regarding the inhabitants of particular countries.
    Often Once in a while Never

6.2. Please specify any other activities you practise in the area below.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

6.3. How extensively do you deal with particular cultural aspects?
Below a number of cultural aspects have been listed. Please indicate for each aspect how extensively you touch upon it in class.

(1) History, geography, political system
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(2) Different ethnic and social groups
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(3) Daily life and routines, living conditions, food and drink etc.
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(4) Youth culture
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(5) Education, professional life
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(6) Traditions, folklore, tourist attractions
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(7) Literature
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(8) Other cultural expressions (music, drama, art)
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(9) Values and beliefs
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it

(10) International relations (political, economic and cultural) with students’ own country and other countries
    I deal with it extensively I touch upon it once in a while I never touch upon it
Section 7: Foreign language teaching materials
The questions in this section concern foreign language teaching materials.

7.1. Do you use textbooks and/or additional teaching materials? Please select the option(s) that best match(es) your teaching practice.
- [ ] I do use textbooks. I use mainly one book per class. Please go to QUESTION 7 now.
- [ ] I do use textbooks. I use materials from different textbooks. Please go to QUESTION 7 now.
- [ ] I do not use textbooks. I use other materials. Please go to QUESTION 7 now.

7.2. If you indicated that you use other materials instead of textbooks, which are those materials?

7.3. If you indicated that you do not use textbooks, please explain why this is so. After you answered this question you can skip the remaining questions of this section and submit your answers right away.

7.4. If you indicated that together with textbooks, you also use the additional materials, please indicate which other materials you use:

- Video materials
- Audio materials
- Other materials

7.5. namely:

7.6. The reasons why you use additional materials together with textbooks are:

7.7. If you indicated that you use textbooks, which books do you use? Please list the title(s) of the book(s) you use and the country where each book is published in the typing area below. Please quote the book you use most often first, then the one you use somewhat less often, and so on.

7.8. Can teachers choose their own textbooks at your school?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
7.8. If you can choose your own textbook, what criteria do you observe when selecting a textbook?
Below a number of textbook characteristics that may affect your choice against or in favour of a particular textbook have been listed. Please tick the six criteria that appear most important to you:

- The fact that additional materials come with the book (workbook, listening materials, tests, video, etc.)
- The layout
- The price
- The quality of the teacher's manual
- The degree to which the textbook meets the curricular requirements
- The degree to which the book is attuned to the level and the age of my pupils.
- The pace of the book, the speed with which the book progresses
- The amount of cultural information the book offers
- The degree to which the book can motivate my pupils
- The textbook authors' nationality
- The degree of matching between the amount of materials offered and the number of teaching periods assigned to my subject

7.10. Please indicate in the area below any additional criteria you use when deciding on whether or not to use a particular textbook.

---

7.11. Do the cultural contents of the textbook(s) you use meet your expectations?
Please tick the answer that best matches your opinion.

- Yes, very much so.
- Yes, up to a certain extent.
- No, not really.
- No, not at all.

7.12. Please explain your choice in the typing area below.
8.4. Please provide any other reasons you see for organising school trips in the area below.

8.5. Do you consider it part of your teaching role to prepare a school trip during foreign language classes?
☐ Yes
☐ No

8.6. If your answer to the previous question was ‘yes’, please specify in the area below
• how much time (how many hours) on average you spend on preparing a school trip during your foreign language classes;
• what kind of preparation you offer

8.7. Do you consider it part of your teaching role to follow-up on a school trip during your foreign language classes?
☐ Yes
☐ No

8.8. If your answer to the previous question was ‘yes’, please specify in the area below
• how much time on average (how many hours) you spend on following-up on a school trip during your foreign language classes;
• how you follow up on a school trip

8.9. Do you believe school trips have a positive or a negative effect on the attitudes and perceptions of pupils regarding foreign country/ies, foreign culture(s), foreign people?
☐ Yes
☐ No

8.10. Please explain your answer in the area below.
Section 9: Exchanges

9.1. Does your school participate in international exchange projects?
- Yes
- No

9.2. If so, please specify the names of the countries involved in the exchange programme(s) in which your school participates in the area below.

9.3. What are the main reasons for participating in exchange projects?
Below some possible reasons for organizing exchange projects have been listed. Please rank them in order of importance, through assigning each reason a number between 1 and 5. You assign the number "1" to the reason you consider most important and 5 to the reason you consider least important. You have to assign a number to each objective, and you can only assign each number once.

(1) Create an opportunity for pupils to practise their foreign language skills
   1 2 3 4 5

(2) Enhance pupils' motivation to learn the foreign language
   1 2 3 4 5

(3) Increase pupils' interest in the foreign culture
   1 2 3 4 5

(4) Foster pupils' independence
   1 2 3 4 5

(5) Increase pupils' familiarity with the foreign culture
   1 2 3 4 5

9.4. Please provide any other reasons you see for organizing exchange projects in the area below.

9.5. Do you consider it part of your teaching role to prepare an exchange project during foreign language classes?
- Yes
- No

9.6. If your answer to the previous question was 'yes', please specify in the area below
- how much time (how many hours) on average you spend on preparing an exchange project during your foreign language classes;
- what kind of preparation you offer

9.7. Do you consider it part of your teaching role to follow-up on an exchange project during your foreign language classes?
- Yes
- No

9.8. If your answer to the previous question was 'yes', please specify in the area below
- how much time on average (how many hours) you spend on following-up on an exchange project during your foreign language classes;
- how you follow up on an exchange project
9.5. Do you believe exchange projects have a positive or a negative effect on the attitudes and perceptions of pupils regarding foreign country/ies, foreign culture(s), foreign people?

☐ Yes
☐ No

9.10. Please explain your answer in the area below.

___________________________________________________________________________

Section 10: (Cross-curricular) intercultural activities and projects

The questions in this section concern cross-curricular intercultural activities and projects, other than school trips or exchange projects.

10.1. Does your school organise (cross-curricular) intercultural/multicultural/international activities?

☐ Yes
☐ No

10.2. If your answer is 'yes', please specify what other activities your school mounts in the area below.

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

10.3. Do you believe these activities have a positive effect on the attitudes and perceptions of pupils regarding foreign country/ies, foreign culture(s), foreign people?

☐ Yes
☐ No

10.4. Please explain your answer in the area below.

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
Section 11: Intercultural foreign language teaching: Your opinion

In this section, we would like you to score a number of statements on a five-point-scale, ranging from '1 agree completely' to '5 do not agree at all'. The statements concern intercultural foreign language teaching. Each time select the option that best matches your opinion.

(1) In a foreign language classroom, teaching culture is as important as teaching the foreign language.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(2) Intercultural education is best undertaken cross-curricularly.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(3) A foreign language teacher should present a positive image of the foreign culture and society.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(4) Before you can teach culture or do anything about the intercultural dimension of foreign language teaching, pupils have to possess a sufficiently high level of proficiency in the foreign language.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(5) Intercultural skills cannot be acquired at school.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(6) It is impossible to teach the foreign language and the foreign culture in an integrated way.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(7) I would like to promote the acquisition of intercultural skills through my teaching.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(8) Intercultural education has no effect whatsoever on pupils' attitudes.
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

Please score the statements below in the same way as you did in the first part of this section:

(9) The more pupils know about the foreign culture, the more tolerant they are:
   Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(10) In international contacts misunderstandings arise equally often from linguistic as from cultural differences.
    Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(11) Foreign language teaching should enhance pupils' understanding of their own cultural identity.
    Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely

(12) All pupils should acquire intercultural competence, not only pupils in classrooms with ethnic minority community children.
    Agree completely Agree to a certain extent Undecided Disagree to a certain extent Disagree completely
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>Language and culture cannot be taught in an integrated way. You have to separate the two. Agree</th>
<th>Agree completely</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree to a certain extent</th>
<th>Disagree completely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>I would like to teach intercultural competence through my foreign language teaching. Agree</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree to a certain extent</td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>Intercultural education reinforces pupils' already existing stereotypes of other peoples and cultures. Agree</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree to a certain extent</td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>Providing additional cultural information makes pupils more tolerant towards other cultures and peoples. Agree</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree to a certain extent</td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>Language problems lie at the heart of misunderstandings in international contacts, not cultural differences. Agree</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree to a certain extent</td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>Foreign language teaching should not only touch upon foreign cultures. It should also deepen pupils' understanding of their own culture. Agree</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree to a certain extent</td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5

Permission from Ministry of Education

Research Department

[Image of the permission letter]
Appendix 6

Ethical Committee Approval

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the HERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/category/publications/guidelines/ and view the School’s statement on the ‘Student Documents’ web site.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: Kawther Rashed A. Al Mawoda
Your student no: 580035579
Return address for this certificate:

Degree/Programme of Study: EdD TESOL
Project Supervisor(s): Dr. Jill Cadarath and Dr. Li Li
Your email address: kra201@exeter.ac.uk
Tel: 00973-36614641

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation/thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: Kawther Rashed A. Al Mawoda. date: 1st March 2010

NB For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must not be included in your work. It can be kept for your records.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009
Certificate of ethical research approval

Your student no: 580035579

Title of your project:

"Examining English Teachers’ Perceptions towards Teaching Intercultural Competence in ESL Classroom"

Brief description of your research project:

This study aims at exploring English language teachers’ (as the most reliable source of information) perceptions, and what they have to say about implementing an intercultural competence in secondary level schools. A competence that is a helpful tool in acquiring a better understanding of the English language, and its culture; and as a way of acceptance of the others and tolerance with different cultures than the students’ own culture.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The participants are English language teachers in government secondary schools in Bahrain. They were chosen because they are the main professionals who are teaching the language, and are able to provide the researcher with sufficient data to examine teachers’ perceptions towards teaching intercultural competence in their ESL classrooms.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

The permission needs to be sought from the Ministry of Education in Bahrain, and then the head teacher of each school will be contacted for permission in the first instance before every stage. Similarly, informed consent will be sought from each participant, also before every stage. Assurances will be given to all participants that they and the school will remain anonymous, and that all the materials, recordings, check lists, questionnaire content, and the results, will be confidential and used only for the purpose of thesis of the EdD TESOL program.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

Stage One:

A questionnaire was designed with focused questions as to whether teaching intercultural competence is suitable for the English language curriculum in Bahrain secondary schools. It is going to be distributed in 24 government secondary schools around Bahrain, 8 boys’ schools and 16 girls’ schools. The supposed number of English language teachers is (397) teachers in 2008/2009, therefore, a number 150 and 200 respondents will be suitable. Quantitative data is going to be analyzed by using SPSS. Stage Two: A semi-structured interview is going to be conducted with a number of teachers, after distributing the questionnaire, and a preliminary

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009
analysis of its data. **Stage Three:** Then there are going to be classroom observations to examine how English language teachers are dealing with teaching cultural issues in their classrooms. Quantitative data elicited from the semi-structured interviews and the classroom observations are going to be transcribed and uploaded to, and analyzed by using the NVivo program.

**Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):**

Data collected either through questionnaires, conducting semi-structured interviews, and classroom observation will be stored in a secure cabinet in a secured building and only the researcher has an access to it. Data will be destroyed when the work has finished on this study and submission of the final version of the thesis.

**Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):**

---

**This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School’s Research Support Office for the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.**

**N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor.**

**This project has been approved for the period:** March 2010 until: September 2012

By (above mentioned supervisor’s signature): [Signature] 3/3/10

**N.B. To Supervisor:** Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

**SELL unique approval reference:** 01.03.10.14

**Signed:** [Signature] 16/3/10

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee

**This form is available from:** http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee

last updated: August 2009
Dear English Language Teachers

I would like to thank you for your kindness, your precious time, and willingness in participating in this study “Exploring English language teachers’ perception towards teaching intercultural competence in the secondary level in the Kingdom of Bahrain”. My study aims to gain more understanding of the current situation of teaching English in your classrooms, and what are your perception following the MoE’s policy in implementing culture in your teaching process. I believe that by giving me your opinions in this questionnaire I might build a better understanding of your perception, and utilize this information in structuring pre-service and in-service training programs in future.

Kawther R. A. Al Mawoda

University of Exeter
Appendix 8
(Questionnaire)

“Exploring Secondary Teachers’ Perceptions towards Teaching Intercultural Competence in English Language Classroom”

Background Information

Can you give me some information about yourself?

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age: less than 30 ☐ 31 – 40 ☐ more than 40 ☐

3. What is your highest degree?

   BA ☐ Ed. Diploma ☐ MA ☐ PhD ☐

   Other (Please specify)? _________________________________________________

4. How long have you been teaching English language?

   1 - 7 years ☐

   8 - 15 ☐

   More than 15 ☐
Themes of Interest

A. Language Teaching Objectives

1. Which countries are mentioned in your textbook?
   a. __________________________
   b. __________________________
   c. __________________________
   d. __________________________
   e. __________________________
   f. __________________________

More:

In the next question, please choose “often”, “occasionally” or “never” for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How frequently do you travel to any English speaking countries?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Tourist stays (lasting longer than two days) in the English speaking country.</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Visits to relatives or friends.</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Participation in teacher training programs or language courses.</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>School trips (one or two weeks).</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Work visits, e.g. within the framework of an exchange project.</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you travel to English speaking countries for other reasons, please specify why and how often you visit those countries: ________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
3. How often do you have contact with the English speaking culture(s)/people/country (ies)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Media contacts (via newspapers, television, or radio).</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Visits to the cultural institute representing the English speaking countries in my country.</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Contacts with people originating from the English speaking countries who live in my country.</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Contacts with English speaking language assistants in my school.</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any other contacts, will you please specify? ______________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

In the next question, choose one answer for each statement from 5 to 1; 5 is “most important” and 1 is “less important”.

4. How do you perceive the objectives of English language teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Motivate my students to learn English.</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Promote my students’ familiarity with English speaking cultures.</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Assist my students to acquire a level of proficiency in the English language.</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Assist my students to acquire skills that will be useful in other subject areas and in their daily lives.</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Promote the acquisition of an open mind and positive disposition towards unfamiliar cultures.</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages.</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Assist my students in developing a better understanding of their own identity and culture.</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Teachers’ Definitions of Culture and Intercultural Competence

In the next two questions, choose one answer for each statement from 5 to 1; 5 is “most agree with” and 1 is “least agree with”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Culture is:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>The geo-political aspects of a nation (e.g. history, geography, economics and political developments)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>The artistic dimension (e.g. literature, music, art, etc.)</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Behavioral patterns of people (e.g. Customs, daily life, standard of living, religion, etc.)</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>All three of the above.</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have another definition? __________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intercultural Competence is:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>How to communicate interculturally with others.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Non-judgmental communication with other cultures.</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>A field of research that studies how people understand each other across group boundaries.</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>It is how two different cultures relate to each other in terms of differences and similarities.</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Analyzing and adapting one’s behavior when interacting with others.</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have another definition? __________________________________________________________
C. Teachers’ Awareness of the Importance of Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence.

In the next question, choose one answer for each statement from 5 to 1; 5 is “most agree with” and 1 is “least agree with”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>What do you understand by “culture teaching” in English language teaching context?</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Providing information about the history, geography and political conditions of the English speaking countries’ culture(s).</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Providing information about daily life and routines.</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Providing information about shared values and beliefs.</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Providing students with a rich variety of cultural expressions (literature, music, theater, films, etc.).</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Developing attitudes of openness and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures.</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Promoting reflection on cultural differences.</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Promoting increased understanding of students’ own culture.</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Promoting the ability to be empathetic with people living in other cultures.</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Promoting the ability to handle intercultural contact situations.</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Do you have the feeling that you would like to devote more time to “culture teaching” during your English language classes?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Sometimes

3. Do you have time for teaching it?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Sometimes
4. If you have the feeling you would like to devote more time to “culture teaching” but do not get round to it, what may be the reason(s) for that?

______________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________

Please, choose one answer for each statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.</th>
<th>What kind(s) of culture teaching activities do you practice during classroom teaching time?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>I ask my students to think about the image which the media promote of the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>I tell my students what I heard (or read) about the English speaking countries or their culture(s).</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>I tell my students why I find something fascinating or strange about the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>I ask my students to independently explore an aspect of the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>I ask my students to think about what it would be like to live in the English speaking countries.</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>I talk to my students about my own experiences in the English speaking countries.</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>I ask my students about their experiences in English speaking countries.</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>I ask my students to describe an aspect of their own culture in the English language.</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>I ask my students to participate in role-play situations in which they meet people from English speaking countries.</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>I comment on the way in which the English speaking culture(s) are represented in the English language materials I am using in a particular class.</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>I ask my students to compare an aspect of their own culture with that aspect in the English speaking culture(s).</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>I touch upon an aspect of the English speaking culture(s)</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
regarding which I feel negatively disposed.

| m | I talk with my students about stereotypes regarding English speaking countries’ people. | 25.6% | 55.9% | 18.5% |

Please, choose one answer for each statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.</th>
<th>Do you have the chance to create a multicultural environment in your language classroom?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>I use videos, CD-ROMs or the internet to illustrate an aspect of a multicultural environment.</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>I invite a person(s) originating from an English speaking country (ies) to my classroom.</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>I bring objects originating from an English speaking country to my classroom.</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>I decorate my classroom with posters illustrating particular aspects of the English speaking culture (s).</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please, choose one answer for each statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.</th>
<th>How extensively do you deal with particular cultural aspects?</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>History, geography, political system.</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Different ethnic and social groups.</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Daily life and routines, food and drink etc.</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Youth culture.</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Education, professional life.</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Traditions, folklore, tourist attractions.</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Literature.</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Other cultural expressions (music, drama, art).</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. In the next question, choose one answer for each statement from 5 to 1; 5 is “most agree with” and 1 is “least agree with”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a  In the language classroom, teaching culture is as important as teaching the language.</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Intercultural education is best undertaken within the curriculum.</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  A language teacher should present a positive image of the culture(s) and society.</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  Before you can teach culture(s) or do anything about intercultural dimension of language teaching, students have to possess a sufficiently high level of proficiency in the language itself.</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  Intercultural skills cannot be acquired at school.</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f  Intercultural education has no affect whatsoever on students’ attitudes.</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g  The more students know about the target language culture(s), the more tolerant they are.</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h  Language teaching should enhance students’ understanding of their own cultural identity.</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i  All students should acquire intercultural competence.</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j  When you have a limited number of teaching periods, culture teaching has to give way to language teaching.</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k  Every subject, not only language teaching, should promote the acquisition of intercultural skills.</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l  A language teacher should present a realistic image of the culture(s), and therefore, should also touch upon negative sides of this culture and the society.</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If one wants to be able to achieve anything at all as regards intercultural understanding, one should use texts written in the mother tongue (Arabic) and discuss these texts in the mother tongue, even when in a language classroom.

Teaching intercultural competence is important only if it is necessary for the students (e.g. travelling).

Language and culture cannot be taught in an integrated way. You have to separate the two.

Intercultural education reinforces students’ already existing stereotypes of other people and culture(s).

Language problems lie at the heart of misunderstandings in international contacts, not cultural differences.

Language teaching should not only touch upon English culture(s). It should also deepen students’ understanding of their own culture.

### D. Teacher Training and Professional Development

Please choose one answer regarding your training as an English language teacher; 5 is “most agree with” and 1 is “least agree with”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. During your pre-service training:</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a My pre-service training prepared me to teach cultural aspects in my English language classroom.</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Cultural awareness was an important component in my preparation as an English language teacher.</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c The need for a pre-service training about how to teach culture is important.</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d There was no need for me to be trained about how to teach culture.</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e It would be helpful to visit the target language countries during pre-service training.</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f It would be helpful to be taught by native speakers of the</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
language to acquire their culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Your in-service training:</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>My in-service training prepares me to deal with cultural aspects in my English language classroom.</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Cultural awareness is an important component in my in-service training courses.</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>The need for an in-service training about how to teach culture is important.</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>It is crucial to be trained in-service about how to integrate culture and language while teaching the English language.</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Teachers should be prepared to share meanings, and experiences with the culture(s) they teach.</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Teachers should have visits to the target language countries as in-service training to acquire their culture.</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there any other comments?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for giving me some of your precious time to participate in this survey
Appendix 9
Interview Question Sheet

Exploring Secondary Teachers Perceptions towards Teaching Intercultural Competence in English Language Classroom

A. Introduction

Presentation of the researcher, her research study, its purpose, estimated length of the interview, and finally, introducing the participants consent form to be signed by both parties.

B. Background Information

- Presentation of interviewee: name and age.
- Education: Where? When? What?
- Reasons for choosing teaching as a profession: the role of prior education in school on his/her choice.
- Her/his work experience: how many years? Place of working? Did or did not enjoy her/his work?
- Time spent abroad: how long? Where? Types of stay? Did it, or did not, affect you and your work?
- Other direct contact with the English language, for example, native speakers among family or friends?

C. Themes of Interest

1. Language Teaching Objectives

1. What is the most important objective for your teaching of English language?
2. Have your priorities changed during your teaching career?
3. What factors, in your opinion, have brought about a change in your objectives?

2. Teachers Definition of Culture, and Intercultural Understanding

4. How can you define the term “culture”? 
5. How do you see culture in ELT?
6. What does ‘Intercultural Understanding’ means to you?

3. Teachers’ Awareness of the importance of teaching Intercultural Competence

7. What does ‘Intercultural Competence’ means to you?
8. Do you think it is an important objective to work towards?
   ➢ Yes. Can you tell me why?
   ➢ No. Can you tell me why?
9. Do you teach intercultural competence in your classroom?
Yes. How?
No. Are there any obstacles preventing you from doing so?

10. Do you think your students are interested in culture learning?
   Yes. Can you explain more to me?
   No. Why do you think so?

11. Do you think that intercultural competence can be assessed?
   Yes. How can you assess it?
   No. Why?

4. Teachers’ Training and Development

12. Do you think your pre-service training prepared you to teach Intercultural Competence?
   Yes. How?
   No. Why didn’t it?

13. Do you think your in-service training prepared you to teach Intercultural Competence?
   Yes. How?
   No. Why didn’t it?

14. Have you reflected on the intercultural dimension of language teaching before?
15. Have you discussed it with your colleagues where you work now?
16. What kind of pre-service training do you think English language teachers should have in future regarding teaching Intercultural Competence?
17. What kind of in-service training do you think English language teachers should have in future regarding teaching Intercultural Competence?

D. Conclusion

- Do you have any questions or comments?
- Is there a possibility to contact you in future?
- Thank you for your precious time.
Appendix 10

Interview Sample 1

I’m … I have a BA from Tunisia 2001, and I had some training in Tunisia for two years. I’ve been sent to UK for 1 month by the government as a part of our studies. I stayed there with a family so I get to know the language and culture of them and master the language and accent. I came to Bahrain in 2006 and received also some training, I mean good training, and attended so many workshops; some of the training was designed by the British Council. This is my ninth year of teaching the English language. I don’t have experience at the primary level, but I taught intermediate level in Tunisia and my whole teaching experience is with teenagers 16 to 18 years old boys and girls, I mean in Tunisia.

Well, as I said for nine years, because even when I was teaching during my first year intermediate level, I was also teaching secondary level, too.

Yes, yes. It was in Lincolnshire, it is a small nice village which is in Stanford and the school was an old castle, it was in the south east of England, two hour’s drive from London.

Of course it did. It gave me a chance to get some fluency in the language; I believe that if you want to get the English milieu you have to live with an English family, and you speak with English native speakers it will really help. Like when Napoleon said “if you want to learn Russian, you have to get a Russian girlfriend”; I think what he means is the speaking with the native speakers. Also I had some native speakers’ teachers when I was in Tunisia; they were American teachers.

First, it is my bread and butter; don’t worry I need a job to eat. Then I liked the English language; I remember in 1989, I was 16 then, I heard the first English word. When I was in school we’ve been taught in French and when I entered the secondary level, the ministry of education started to teach English in intermediate level; unfortunately I skipped that. Then I met my English language teacher, he was a very good, inspiring and funny man, he inspired me to imitate him in my classroom now. I fall in love with the English language because of him.

First thing I believe that the teacher is a father or an older brother to his students and I like to help other people and my students, either with the English language or their personal lives. They trust me because I may look young; so they ask me how to improve their language. Sometimes I give them English books as presents to help them with their grammar or reading skills.

I still have the same aim of helping my students to acquire a good level of the language, and at the same time I’m not Bahraini and I think I have to represent my country and be good to others so they know that Tunisians are good. Academically, I had to change a little bit, because at the beginning I was enthusiastic and wanted to help my students, but the majority of them were not motivated enough to learn the language; and I’m sure you know that if they are not motivated you will never teach them anything. First you have to make them love the language itself, and I’m trying to achieve this goal by making them love the subject.
and I know that they will excel if they liked it’ don’t love me but also don’t hate me and let us give it a chance. They are in sensitive age where their feelings are not stable, but I’m glad that they trust me and like me, but also it affect the classroom management. I have to admit that I have some problems with that.

Well, it is the mother tongue of some countries such as England, America, and Australia and it is also claims to be an international and globalised language’ but it is an international language. For example, if we are talking about numbers, the Chinese out number any other nation, but English speakers outnumber even Chinese people. I’ve read that every four people around the world, one of them speaks English; and I give this information in my class every year to motivate them and ask them which you would prefer to be the one who speaks English or one of the other three. You know that it is the language of the internet so it is a globalised language.

Of course. For example, last week we had a lesson about the Greek civilization, and I asked them why you think they had a great empire, because they had science at that time. Also, I asked them about the Arab and Muslim civilization, why it was great, because they had science in their language, the Arabic language. It means that the people will follow the language of science; and now English is the language of science. I do say that in my class, if you want the science, it is in English, so you have to learn the language to acquire it.

Since I’m not a Bahraini, everything is new to me. I do ask my students about the different languages we have in the classroom, and about the customs of every ethnic group in the class; especially that we have lots of different culture in the same class. I do ask about what they do in Ramadan or the Eid; also, I ask them about the different dialects in the Arabic language as well.

The book that we use has a good variety of both cultures, the students’ and the target culture; and I use the information in the book and elaborate on them in my classroom.

I do really like to discuss the target culture in the classroom; not only the native speakers culture, but also the Bahraini culture, as well. Also my students are very curious with the cultural aspects and they ask lots of questions which I think are very important for their language learning.

Culture is everything which is not natural, everything you do in life, they way you speak, the way you eat, they way you wear clothe; all these are culture. Food, clothes, religion, your way of life, and your style of life; it all represent your culture.

It is very important for the students to understand the others. For example, when I talk about one of the characters in the classroom, they ask lots of questions about it and they bring some more information, as well, about this character; such as “Brave heart”, or “Titanic”. It makes them get near or close to the language they are learning.

The first obstacle is, of course, is motivation. I do my best to motivate students and makes them love the language, OK. And sometimes I make a comparison between what they learn and what they have in their own culture; for example, wedding ceremonies, when they do the comparison, they start to be aware of the
target culture. There are also linguistic obstacles; sometimes they are not that good in the language itself which prevent them from understanding the whole idea of the lesson. There are also some social obstacles, for example, I have rich students who went everywhere around the world, and other students who never travelled out of Bahrain; so, the first group are more aware of the English language culture and its speakers, while the others are on the opposite side. They even tell me that we never travelled out of our countries, how are we going to understand their culture which we saw it only on TV or in books. Sometimes I face religion obstacles; for example, I have Sunnis and Sheats in one classroom, and other nationalities, too. If I want to speak about culture I have to do that while I’m respecting each one of them. They need to understand each other’s before I introduce them to the target culture; and if they did learning about other culture will make the tolerant with each others before being tolerant with the target language culture.

I think it is yes. I was taught by American and British tutors, and I had the chance to go Britain and spend some time there; I realized that the world is big and wide and you need to learn the English language to travel this world and know about the differences between people. I’m sure that my studies prepare me in a good way to teach culture to my students, and giving the right tool to accept others.

I attended some in-service training course two or three of them concerned the teaching of culture and how we integrate it in our teaching of the language. Most of them didn’t say teaching culture, but they were discussing the content of the textbooks and how we integrate different aspects, either linguistic or cultural in our classrooms; but they were really helpful in understanding what we have to do n the classroom.

No we don’t have that, but what I do myself, is to integrate culture, for example, using a song to explain, let’s say, or test their listening; sometimes if I want to explain phrasal verbs, I even sing for them something from Bob Marley. I do that some times to make them interested in the lesson itself, and I assess their four skills. I try to integrate culture in the four skills, but not to measure their cultural awareness as much as testing the ability to use the language skills. We have for the reading skill we use wonderful texts and reading paragraph which talks about international culture, we use that, too. They sometimes feel shocked when I use the poem which talks about the broom and peeling an orange. But here I show them the difference between our poetry and the target culture poetry, between our difficult to understand poetry language and their simple wording poetry. But we don’t have a criterion to assess their cultural awareness, even though; we have lots of cultural aspect in the textbooks.

Why don’t you take the new teachers to Britain, for example? Or bring to them British or American tutors? Or Australian teachers so they speak with them about their culture so they become culturally prepared. I’m sure it will help, it helps.

We do speak; we are from different nations and different countries. And of course we do, we exchange films, for example, we speak about our experiences abroad; some of my colleagues spent training time in Scotland. One of them speaks highly about his experience there, and how his personality changed there when he spent 6 months. When we sit together even the newcomers to Bahrain we give them details about the Bahraini culture and how to be familiar with it in the classroom, even though they come from an Arab country, they need to understand that it is different from their culture.

No, thank you; it was a wonderful topic to talk about.
Interview Sample 2

I am -----and I have a BA in English language plus a diploma in translation and a higher diploma in education all from Bahrain University; and I’m doing my masters degree in human resources at the moment.

For six years now.

Because I like the language, and I think that dealing with students I wish to make them all use the language and acquiring it.

P7: No, never been to English speaking countries?

Of course maybe the methods they are using might be different than what we are using. Even the learning styles are different and I may get an idea of how they do it there, and how I will deal with students. Also I can learn about the culture, because sometimes we come across certain exercises which are very important and related to the English culture and I can’t explain it correctly because we are not a part of the culture. Dealing with different cultures will make me teach English in a better way.

When I graduated from secondary school, do you remember that the curriculum in the secondary school was not that much excellent or effective to enable us learn fluently and to participate freely with everyone in English, and one of my personal goals was to communicate appropriately without any fear with others in English. This is my major aim to learn and teach the language.

Nowadays, I think, especially in our school we’ve got a large number of students who are not aware of the importance of the English language; and what I really hope to achieve is to get them aware and let them use the language they need at the university.

Sure; because at the beginning I was not that much, I didn’t have that self confident. My aim at the beginning was to raise my self-confident and to become a good teacher, to come up with great teaching ideas and methods which will attract all the students. But now, once I got older, I’m focusing more on the students and focusing on their weak points, giving them chance to write their own aims and goals for their future; I’m concentrating more on students. Before I was only concentrating on improving myself, but now I’m concentrating on my students.

I think the experience. Because at the beginning I was not that much experienced, now I’m somehow experience, and that’s why my aims changed.
No, it’s an international language. Nobody nowadays I usually tell my students that anytime or anywhere you go in Bahrain, even in the cold store, you’ll need the language. It is an international language to communicate with everyone.

Do you mean by bringing real life examples? Yes, yes. But sometime we are stuck to the textbook, but also our textbooks designed in a way that it is very much related to our real life; but we don’t have conversation type.

Culture means language, traditions, thoughts, way of living, and lifestyle; and we can’t separate it, I mean culture, from the language. It is important to teach culture in our classrooms, because students sometimes need to understand idioms which are not related to our culture, but it is related to the English culture, so we have to bring part of the English culture to the classroom in order to make it clear to them.

We have a lesson about Ramadan, which is a part of our culture, and also we’ve got seasonal festivals such as Halloween and Christmas, but our students now are aware of these because of the globalization and using the internet they have friends from other countries, so we can’t isolate them from these aspects of culture. So, we teach all the festivals which are related to English.

Yes, it depends, for example celebrations, they are very excited and they want to talk more about it and specially Christmas and the Halloween, maybe the Easter they don’t have much information about.

No, I didn’t face such a thing, and as I said before it depends on the cultural aspects I’m dealing with in the classroom. Sometimes we come to clashes between students because we are in an Islamic country and we are not allowed to do such and such things, but at the end I made it clear to my students that these are different opinions if they think something and you think the opposite, it doesn’t mean that she or he is right and you are wrong, and of course the opposite is true. We try to solve these misunderstandings in the classroom, and everybody will give me their opinions.

No, we have to assess them only for the linguistic skills of the language. We don’t have anything about how to assess their cultural awareness, because it is not a part of the assessment criteria which we have from the directorate of curriculum and this is what we have to focus on.

No; but now at Bahrain University they have two English majors, one is the English literature and the other is the English and education, for example, I studied English literature, so we talked about the English culture, the history of England and the rest of it. But I can be sure when I say that we don’t have that clear image of the target language culture. I’m allowed to be a teacher when I take a diploma in education, while the second major is preparing English language teachers without teaching the culture of the target language; it’s only methodology and linguistic aspects.

No. But I think we need such a thing, to show us how to deal with culture in our classrooms.
To be frank, no I haven’t thought about this; because sometimes we get scared from the society, you are teaching our kids something very far from our culture. We had some parents who came and complained about such things. Sometimes we try to clarify to them that it is part of the textbook and we want our students to have some clear ideas about other cultures and societies; let them be open-minded and let them choose what is acceptable and unacceptable. But to tell you the truth, we can’t go very deep in the cultural aspects with students in the class.

No, it has been a thoughtful interview and you asked about everything that came to my mind about this topic.
Appendix 11

Sample Interview of the Preliminary Investigation Themes

Themes of Interest:

1. Teachers’ familiarity and contact with English culture(s).
2. The place of ICC within teaching objectives.
3. Teachers’ definitions of culture and intercultural understanding.
4. Teachers’ awareness of the importance of teaching ICC.
5. Teachers’ training and professional development.

➢ My name is A; I’m 43 years old. I got a BA in English as a major and education as a minor from Bahrain University in 1990. I’ve been teaching in secondary school for 15 years now. Frankly speaking, I was not planning to be an English language teacher. When I first graduated from secondary school, I choose to be a science teacher, actually; and I didn’t get my choice, then I shifted to be an Arabic language teacher, because I like Arabic more than English. Again I didn’t get my choice, and the only major that was available to me was to study English. I accepted it as a challenge, I can’t say I’m good at it, but so far so good, but I’m progressing and doing well.

➢ I’ve been involved or participating in the international visitors program organized by the American embassy. I went for the united states for three weeks, and visited different states; starting from Washington, New York, Iowa, Colorado, and California. And yes, of course it affected my teaching, because I saw so many things there that are good practices which I came up with and I brought them here with me and shared them with teachers. When I travel I meet many native speakers either from England or America and I always mingle with them and chat and speak about the Bahraini culture and the American culture, also the Bahraini culture and the British culture again, and face a lot of these situations.

➢ Well, through all my teaching years I always wanted to be a distinguish teacher in teaching English and improving the teaching of English in Bahrain not as the traditional way I was taught, and going through a lot of workshops and training changed my styles and my teaching strategies all this staff. So, they say that I became a distinguish teacher, but frankly speaking, I will describe myself as a teacher not a distinguish teacher, not yet; but in my class I always try to be different, I don’t depend on the book only or using the board, I usually do my own style.

➢ Well, in teaching English my objectives didn’t change, I still want to be a distinguish teacher, and also I want my students to be distinguish as well. I have my own notion of teaching English depending on the skills and how do I rank theses skills. I found out that most of the students lack confidence, that why I start by planting self confidence in the students thorough speaking and presentations and so on; and then I move to a little bet a higher skill, starting with speaking which is connected to listening and then I move to reading, so at the end I get a student who is able to listen, speak, read, and finally it affects his writing.
As I told you I have no change in the objectives, and I still work on being a distinguish teacher and try to make my students distinguish, and this is the main objective for me as an English language teacher.

Well, culture is, for me, is the accumulation of experiences that affects peoples behavior.

Well, for me there is sensitivity in teaching different cultures in Bahrain, especially, because many things in the other cultures are not accepted in our culture. I’ll give you an example, few years ago I was involved in choosing the textbook for Bahraini schools, and when were studying the books we found out lots of pictures and lots of terms, vocabulary, and so on, that are not accepted in our culture; for example, the word beer; so, we have to put into considerations all these factors. We are an Islamic country, and anything that affects our Islam is treated as very sensitive, and in this case we have to modify or delete it from the book. So this is very sensitive, but I don’t mind teaching any good practices, or let’s say good reflections of the other cultures. For example, we sometimes we get across some codes or proverbs from other cultures, and usually discuss them with students and we try to refer them to our own culture and our own language. Sometimes because experiences are more or less the same because we are all humans, and there is a universality in our behavior; so, many of the behavioral aspects that found in, let’s say in Britain or America or Brazil found again here in Bahrain. So, for me it is OK.

I will define intercultural understanding as cross culture. Yes I will define it as this. People in different countries have their own cultures, and people usually exchange these good things. If it is a good practice in any country why don’t we have it here? If we have good practices why don’t we share it with others? Showing other people that we have a good culture, and so on; this is, I think, normal for humanity, sharing good experiences.

I believe that intercultural competence means, that a person should represent his culture well, in order to spread it all around. So, he should be a model for his culture; being a model for your culture means that you are behaving in a certain way that they would say that you are an Arab, for example, wherever you go; because of your behavior; or you are a Muslim, which means you have the qualities or behavior, because it mainly related to behavior, for me of course. They will say that you are a Muslim because your behavior reflects it, so this is what I believe.

Yes, it is important; especially because it is mentioned in our Islamic culture (we created you as people and nations to know each other). this is very important. But one have to be selective of what, when and why to teach certain aspects, because sometimes we see our students when they go to the United States, for example, to study for one or two years and when they come back they turn into Americans, so they forget their own culture. And when they come back they want to spread American culture without knowing that we are unique in our culture, and there are things that are suitable for us and other things which are not suitable for us. I can’t say it is not important, but we have to be very selective. And when it comes to, I mean when we have cross cultural aspect, we always talk about it.

Some of my students are interested in culture learning but they are not aware of it. They just, and frankly speaking, our students come from certain area in Bahrain (Sanad; a village) and many cultural thing are not accepted easily; they just try to criticize. So it is our role now to discuss it with them and showing them why we thing it is good; they say it is bad without having a criteria of how saying that is bad, but we as teachers are aware of it and we set the criteria; why do we say it’s good, you know. So, we have show them the criteria, and according to this and this and this we as teachers say that this part or aspect of culture is good, I mean we say that to our students. Yes they are interested but only for criticizing.
It is very difficult to assess intercultural competence, because, as I believe, when it is a reflection of the behaviour, it is very difficult to assess in this call, maybe can be assessed outside the class because students will behave freely outside their classroom than they do inside; inside the school they are more disciplined and not acting freely, and this competence may not be reflected clearly. We have a checklist which concerned with the students' behavior in the classroom; for example, as a student is he punctual, does he participate, is a distributed student, does he bring his books, and does he do his homework all the time, and so on. It all regarding the behavior as a student but not as a human being, because if you are assessing students in culture you should assess them as human beings, so this is a little bit different; but sometimes your students may be outrageous and might show some of the cultural aspects you are looking for.

No, my pre-service training didn't prepare me to teach intercultural competence. Actually, I have not gone any training regarding culture or intercultural teaching; we were asked by the ministry to present it in our classrooms but not in a direct way. Our curriculum that we are using now is based on three theories one of them is the multiple intelligences; so this theory indirectly leads to cultural and intercultural teaching, and when we come across this theory you go through this kind of teaching, but were no told to use it directly. But as teachers we do, because students have a lot of input about cultures and cultural backgrounds. Sometimes some of the topics we are teaching and we want to extend the topic, we come to different cultural aspects; for example when they are talking about the festivals, in Bahrain we have very few festivals, but when we want to extend this topic we go beyond, for example, festivals in Brazil, in America, in Britain, in China, and so on. So, students get encounter these cultural aspects.

You see, we can't separate language from culture, and Frankly speaking, I have not focused on this matter, but from time to time I come across some topics which make me focus on culture, but not all the time. For example, during my career I may come across this aspect once a year, which is not enough. And I never talked about with my colleagues.

If they can design special courses for these things, I mean how to teach culture, of course, it will be helpful. And if the ministry of education also integrates this aspect in the curriculum it will be good. In-service training people usually design workshops for different things; why don't they include teaching culture and intercultural competence as well? Because two years ago the English unit at the curriculum department introduced the literature course for the secondary students, nobody was happy, because the teachers were interested in teaching literature, students, as well were not interested in learning it; so, they designed a workshop for the teachers showing them how to teach literature to their students which resulted in interested teachers, but the course failed because students were not interested in it.
Appendix 12

Consent Form

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation.

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.

If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form.

all information I give will be treated as confidential.

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

................................................................. .................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.................................................................
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s).

Contact phone number of researcher(s): ..................................................

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

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

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

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University’s registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.